

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	Current Budget £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	Total £'000	Type of saving	Description	Director and Service Area	Consultation/EQIA required?	Reason and proposed approach
Adults Services									
Review of funding to promote care as a career	170	170		170	Efficiency	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 this work has been covered by other posts in the restructure of the adults commissioning functions. 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 and the new Great Care Employer Scheme.	Director of Adults and Health Service area: Adults	TBA	Not clear what impact the proposal is to have on individuals or groups currently benefitting. If this is expected then likely to require limited consultation and focused EQIA.
Review of carer information, advice, assessment and support contract	3,220	322		322	Efficiency	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 reprocured. 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. Although there will be a reduction in the cost of the contract, the flexibility allowed in the new contract will mean that West Sussex carers will remain supported.	Director of Adults and Health Service area: Adults	TBA	Not clear what impact the proposal is to have on individuals or groups currently benefitting. If this is expected then likely to require limited consultation and focused EQIA. May also have supplier impact requiring focused engagement before implementation.
Review of the Quality, Practice and Development team	1,100	100		100	Efficiency	The Quality, Practice and Development Team functions are being reviewed. It is expected that this will identify some efficiency options that will enable a small reduction in posts to be made and allow the team to continue to deliver priority work areas.	Director of Adults and Health Service area: Adults	Staff consultation may be required.	Staff consultation may be needed, as identified.
Review of commissioning contracts	subject to specific contracts	3,288		3,288	Efficiency and Service reduction	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.	Director of Adults and Health Service area: Adults	Consultation and EQIA required.	If proposal leads to reduction or loss of service currently received or that which definable groups could reasonably expect to continue to be available there should be focused customer group and stakeholder consultation supported by EQIA.
Commissioning	3,800		520	520	Efficiency	The new commissioning staffing structure that commenced earlier this year had an additional budget allocation to recognise the additional work that needs to be undertaken as part of the delivery of the adult social care improvement programme. As the programme delivers the agreed improvements and efficiencies the work of the team can be reduced and the additional budget allocation reduced. A re-alignment of the work and the functions of the team will be undertaken during the next year.	Director of Adults and Health Service area: Adults	Consultation and EQIA not required.	Internal arrangements only.
Sub-total		3,880	520	4,400					
Children and Young People, Learning and Skills									
Family Safeguarding model	26,700 placements 18,100 staffing		1,820	1,820	Efficiency	The Family Safeguarding model will improve the main statutory provision of Children's Social Care. Through implementing this new social work model of practice, savings are expected to arise through a reduction in demand for statutory services (for children under 12 years of age coming into care on becoming subject to a child protection plan). This will result in reduced demand and a consequent reduction in the number of social work teams required which will provide a staffing savings of £240k in 2024/25 and £520k in 2025/26. The reductions in the number of children entering care are also expected to lead to savings against placement budgets for those under the age of 12 of £0.9m in 2024/25 and £1.3m in 2025/26. There will be no adverse impact on the quality of service provided or outcomes for vulnerable children because the reduction in staffing will be matched by reduced levels of demand that the family safeguarding model is expected to deliver.	Director of Children, Young People and Learning Service area: Children's SC	Consultation not required EQIA for decision report only.	Proposal is to extend current policy and systems for service provision to reduce demand for most costly provision. No impact on service users. No likely equality impact.
Fostering redesign	20,600		760	760	Efficiency	The Fostering Service improvement programme has delivered a service re-design that will provide efficiency savings. This is achieved through increasing the market share of the Council provided in-house foster placements and reducing the need for foster placements that are provided by external agencies at significantly higher cost. The new Fostering Service will also include dedicated specialist foster carer placements that will prevent the need for more children with complex needs to be placed in higher cost residential care. The new service also offers enhanced support for foster carers to prevent foster care break down which is both a better outcome for the child and prevents an additional expensive placement. Keeping children in foster care rather than residential care delivers better outcomes and is more cost effective. Key risks to achieving the savings include: 1) Unable to recruit enough foster carers to support the changes. There is currently a national shortage, but this has been mitigated by the enhanced fostering offer, improved advertising, assessment and registration process that the new service provides. 2) Other external factors, such as demand growth, will adversely impact on the market share of in-house carers. Mitigation of this risk is in place by providing more placements to meet the increased demand. 3) Delays in the recruitment of the specialist resource may delay the delivery of the full reductions planned. This will be monitored by senior managers.	Director of Children, Young People and Learning Service area: Children's SC	No consultation unless services to be lost or reduced. EQIA for decision report.	If no loss of service provision or legitimate expectation of continuing support/ funding at current levels then no. Any changes which lead to loss or reduction of service/fee levels, should include consultation with relevant providers.

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In-house residential phase 2 - High Trees	5,800		127	127	Efficiency	<p>This initiative is Phase 2 of the Council's own In-house residential placement redesign which will refurbish High Trees Children's Home. This will result in increased capacity at High Trees from the current 4 to a planned 5 beds. Although this will require an additional staffing cost this will be more than compensated for by a net saving compared to the average cost of an external residential placement.</p> <p>The key risks are: 1) Construction delays due to industry problems in recruiting available staff which will impact on the building works being completed in time scale. Managers are working closely with colleagues in facilities management to limit this impact. 2) That the new capacity in the home does not meet the target occupancy of 85% across all 5 beds. However existing occupancy targets are being met and there is confidence that there is sufficient demand to utilise the additional bed.</p>	Director of Children, Young People and Learning Service area: Children's SC	Consultation and EQIA not required.	No change to services received or adverse impact.
In-house residential phase 3	26,700		30	30	Efficiency	<p>This initiative is Phase 3 of the redesign of residential services and cost reductions are expected to arise through greater use of further in-house capacity and reducing the need for external placements. However, these changes will require capital investment.</p> <p>The key risks are the same as those for phase 2: 1) Construction delays due to industry problems in recruiting available staff which will impact on the building works being completed in time scale. Managers are working closely with colleagues in facilities management to limit this impact. 2) That the new capacity does not meet the target occupancy of 85%. However existing occupancy targets are being met and there is confidence that there is sufficient demand to utilise any additional beds.</p>	Director of Children, Young People and Learning Service area: Children's SC	Consultation and EQIA not required.	This capital project will not have any adverse impact on services or residents.
Reduction in inspection team following positive Ofsted inspection	250		130	130	Efficiency	<p>As a result of the Ofsted ILACS outcome being announced in May 2023 which now judges Children's Services as 'requires improvement to be good', it is anticipated that the level of resources in the inspection team can be reduced from 2025/26. The programme of improvement has continued and will do so through 2024/25. It is anticipated that the service will be in a further improved position by 2025/26 and can therefore reduce the amount of resource required to meet regulatory demands of inspection readiness.</p> <p>Any reduction will be dependent on meeting performance standards so the main risks will be limited to not achieving the quality of service predicted. Performance management is not strong within the service to mitigate this.</p>	Director of Children, Young People and Learning Service area: Children's Services	Consultation and EQIA not required.	Internal resource changes only - usual HR consultation arrangements will be used if required.
Review of Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)	2,900		90	90	Efficiency	<p>The structure and the processes of the Integrated Front Door and Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) has been reviewed during 2023/24. More effective management of thresholds and demand have meant that staffing costs can be reduced safely with no impact on the service quality or provision. This financial saving can be delivered during 2024/25 (£410,000) as outlined in the MTFs that was agreed in February 2023. A further review is planned for next year to consider a potential further staffing cost reduction in 2025/26 which is expected to deliver an additional £90,000 saving.</p>	Director of Children, Young People and Learning Service area: Children's SC	Consultation and EQIA not required. Assumed partnership engagement is planned.	Proposal is structural, organisational and internal to service. It will require partner engagement as MASH is multi-agency but no direct impact on current or future service users.
Review of arrangements for children with complex needs	2,000	300		300	Efficiency	<p>A review of arrangements for supporting children with complex needs has been undertaken to provide a more effective and efficient service and to remove duplication in our processes. This has resulted in a realignment of the work of the Emotional Wellbeing & Mental Health Team by the Children's Commissioning service which will result in a consolidation of the Child and Adolescent Multi-disciplinary Service, Children and Young People's Enhanced Support Services and Intensive Planning Team & Youth Emotional Support to provide a more effective service offer. These changes will be complimented by further reviews across the service to ensure they provide the best outcomes to our children and young people.</p> <p>All key risks have been addressed and mitigated within the formal review and consultation processes.</p>	Director of Children, Young People and Learning Service area: Children's SC	Consultation with service groups and stakeholders, EQIA required.	Any proposal to alter current and established service provision and reasonable expectations that they will carry on will require consultation with those affected and other stakeholders involved in service provision. Protected characteristics groups likely to be affected.
Improved use of kinship placements	11,300	2,000		2,000	Efficiency	<p>The placement recovery plan has been implemented to address a reduction in the number of kinship placements which provide a better outcome for children and prevent the need for other types of care placement. The expansion in the number of kinship placements will specifically help to reduce the number and proportion of agency residential placements for looked after children. This initiative will also help to reduce the number of Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) placements by supporting more children to be placed through Kinship arrangements. The plans will increase the number of Kinship placements from the current 79 to 126. Each placement attracts an average weekly saving on the placements budget of £820 whilst also an improved outcome for the young person.</p> <p>The main risk is related to ensuring families can provide the increased numbers in kinship placements. This is mitigated by the improvements in the fostering service to provide more timely assessments and effective support arrangements to the carers.</p>	Director of Children, Young People and Learning Service area: Children's SC, Fostering & CLA	No consultation required but consider focused on current users to help proposal. EQIA for decision only.	No loss of current service, amenity or legitimate expectation. Need to ensure proposals equitable in terms of those with protected characteristics. May wish to consider consulting current kinship carers to help inform details of proposals.

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Second Local House Project in the Coastal region	22,400	1,000		1,000	Efficiency	<p>The Council has already successfully adopted and implemented a Local House Project in the Crawley area which has been extremely successful. 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. This proposal sees the implementation of a second Local House Project in the Coastal region, in response to the demand for this type of service in that area of the county.</p> <p>The proposal duplicates the first House project, and a successful implementation will result in fewer residential placements being required. The reductions and efficiency savings are based on supporting 12 young people through the project.</p> <p>The main risk is related to the mobilisation of the property, but work is underway with colleagues in facilities management to mitigate this and the service is confident that the expansion of the project will go ahead as planned.</p>	Director of Children, Young People and Learning Service area: Children's SC	Consultation and EQIA required focused on service users/stakeholders.	Likely to be limited to those affected where service provision will change living arrangements or service levels. EQIA to ensure equitable and fair proposals.
Improved joint working with Health	600 income	250		250	Income Generation	<p>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.</p> <p>Low risk as the work is already underway and agreements being developed with Health partners.</p>	Director of Children, Young People and Learning Service area: Children's SC and SEND	Consultation and EQIA not required.	No planned changes for service users or removal or reduction in expected service levels. Need to review likely scope of impact of changes arising from the dialogue with Health to see if consultation or EQIA suggested.
Historic teacher pension payments	1,200		50	50	Efficiency	<p>The number of historic teacher pension payments funded through the General Fund has been in decline over the last three years. The level of decline seen over this time is expected to continue and as a result, the budget set aside can be reduced. Low risk.</p>	Director of Children, Young People and Learning Service area: Education	Consultation and EQIA not required.	Engagement with affected individuals and representative groups and related EQIA already undertaken through development of proposals.
Review of Home to School Transport	25,300	800		800	Efficiency	<p>There are a range of initiatives which are being progressed which are expected to reduce the cost to the Council of providing home to school transport. This includes the increasing take up of independent travel training; review of single occupancy transport; pick up points; more efficient routes; increasing take-up of personal transport budgets; and income generation through greater use of the fleet during 'off peak' periods.</p> <p>Risks are related to the take up of the options and the plans are being progressed with a view to mitigate</p>	Director of Place Services and Director of Children, Young People and Learning Service area: Highways and Transport	Consultation and EQIA required. Limited and focused.	The proposal will mean changes to established service provision and loss of amenity. Likely to affect protected characteristic groups specifically. Focused consultation on service users/families/ schools and stakeholders advised.
Sub-total		4,350	3,007	7,357					
Community Support, Fire and Rescue									
Record office - opening hours	853	100		100	Efficiency	<p>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 to better reflect the use of the in-person services provided, by removing Saturday openings.</p>	Director of Place Services Service area: Libraries and Archives	Consultation required with current service users.	Suggests loss of or reduction in current service levels. Not likely to affect large numbers. Should be possible to limit to engagement with current service users or groups as part of remodelled service.
Fire and Rescue - Additional income from Horsham Training Centre	N/A	150		150	Income generation	<p>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.</p> <p>The key risks are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Demand for the new facilities is lower than expected as training requirements for other FRS may be more than available capacity, work is ongoing to look at a more flexible offer to support other services around their existing arrangements. 2) Capacity if not sufficient to meet the demand of external requirements - work is being undertaken in the planning of training and use of the facilities to understand the capacity available so that this is maximised. 3) Costs incurred cannot be fully covered - there is a known level of fixed and variable cost outlaid to enable the commercial use of the facility. This has been considered and factored into the cost of hire to ensure this is understood. 	Chief Fire Officer Service area: Fire and Rescue Service	Consultation and EQIA not required.	Impact on service users or residents.
Sub-total		250	0	250					

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Environment and Climate Change									
Introduction of booking system extension to all Waste & Recycling Sites across the County	21,300	200		200	Efficiency	<p>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.</p> <p>There are two risks to highlight with this proposal: 1) The booking system is not available because the third party website is down - the system has been available for 99.99% of the time since being live and therefore this risk is considered very small. If a serious issue did exist, the booking scheme could be suspended whilst the issue was resolved. 2) Resident arrives without a booking - same day bookings are available.</p>	Director of Place Services Service area: Waste	Consultation and EQIA already undertaken	Changes to the service levels already implemented following public consultation and EQIA. This extension can use output from previous engagement.
Solar Panel and Battery Project	2,700	50	200	250	Income generation	<p>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.</p>	Director of Place Services Service area: Energy	Consultation and EQIA not required.	impact on service users or residents.
Sub-total		250	200	450					
Finance and Property									
Review of operational estate - Early Help	4,300	100		100	Income generation/Efficiency	<p>In 2021, a decision was taken to close 41 Children and Family Centres and youth centres. This resulted in opportunities for income generation, lease handbacks, savings on operational costs, community asset transfers or disposal resulting in savings on business rates and rents. This will be the final savings to be achieved and all 41 properties have now been resolved.</p> <p>The risk associated with this proposal is outcomes are delayed by the completion of legal agreements.</p>	Director of Place Services Service area: Property and Assets	Consultation and EQIA not required.	Planned use of capital assets following earlier decisions. No impact on residents.
Review of operational estate - Corporate Estate	4,300	240		240	Income generation/Efficiency	<p>Vacant properties provide opportunities for new income generation, lease handbacks, savings on operational costs, community asset transfers or disposal resulting in savings on business rates and rents. 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.</p> <p>There are two risks associated with this proposal: 1) Services bring forward business cases to reoccupy vacant properties which may be the best use of the building but will negate these planned savings. 2) Properties are not vacated on time and therefore delaying savings or income generating opportunities.</p>	Director of Place Services Service area: Property and Assets	Consultation and EQIA not required.	Planned use of capital assets following earlier decisions. No impact on residents.
Sub-total		340		340					
Highways and Transport									
Increased Street Works Enforcement	4,900		300	300	Income generation	<p>The County Council can impose fixed penalties on utility companies and other organisations for non compliance of rules relating to working on highways. Additional resource will be allocated to increase monitoring and additional income is anticipated.</p>	Director of Place Services Service area: Highways and Transport	Consultation and EQIA not required.	The proposal is a method of income generation which looks unlikely to impact on services that residents receive.
Potential new parking restrictions (CPZs)	4,200		50	50	Efficiency	<p>The County Council can introduce parking restrictions on the highway network. This proposal would increase the length of road managed through a controlled parking zone. Additional income raised will be used to support traffic management and transport budgets. The location of these new zones will be subject to full consultation with local members, residents and businesses.</p>	Director of Place Services Service area: Highways and Transport	Consultation and EQIA required focused on groups or areas directly affected.	It will have direct impact on identifiable groups/residents within a defined area. Suggests need to consult those likely to be affected and any relevant stakeholders. May also have more impact for some protected characteristic groups.
Street Lighting LED conversion	9,400		300	300	Efficiency	<p>The Street Lighting LED Conversion Programme and Remote Monitoring System Programme will change all street lights to LED lanterns which will deliver the following benefits: 1) reduction in energy consumption 2) reduction in frequency of maintenance visits and traffic management 3) reduction in upward light emissions from improved design supporting dark sky policy 4) reduction in carbon emissions in line with the County Council's Climate Change Strategy. There remains a risk around securing legal agreement with all parties to the Deed of Variation.</p>	Director of Place Services Service area: Highways and Transport	Consultation and EQIA not required.	No impact on residents.

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Reduction in the budget for removal of Ash trees	1,600	400		400	Use of Reserves	An annual budget for the removal of Ash trees was put in place in 2021/22 together with a reserve of £1.2m. A stable programme is in place and can now be partly funded through the reserve that remains until 2026/27 and therefore the base budget can be removed over the next two years. The budget and the use of the reserve will be reviewed annually to ensure there is sufficient funding to meet the need for the number of trees to be removed.	Director of Place Services Service area: Environment	Consultation and EQIA not required.	No impact on residents.
Increase in parking fees and charges	4,200	200		200	Efficiency	Additional income raised through raised fees will be used to support traffic management and transport budgets.	Director of Place Services Service area: Highways and Transport	No EQIA required for decision report.	Fee increases are planned, expected and standard as part of this type of service. Provided increases reasonable and within expected range should be no need for
Reduction in the demand for concessionary fares travel	11,200	1,000		1,000	Efficiency	Bus companies are currently reimbursed for journeys made under the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme based on pre-Covid patronage. This is in line with DfT guidance. The current underspend at the end of 2022/23 is expected to continue with reduced journey numbers remaining and therefore the budget can be reduced with no impact on those using buses across the County. If bus patronage increases in the future, the County Council would need to fund and this would be considered as part of future budget setting processes.	Director of Place Services Service area: Highways and Transport	Consultation and EQIA not required, review need to engage with suppliers.	No impact on service users or legitimate expectations. Budget changes reflect reduced service use. May require stakeholder engagement if changes have impact on supplier arrangements or funding.
Sub-total		1,600	650	2,250					
Support Services and Economic Development									
Review of support services	3,113	390	80	470	Efficiency	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. This is expected to result in some staff reductions across such services through the deletion of vacant posts or other posts no longer required as a result of improved processes. All changes will be subject to full consultation in line with the Council's HR processes.	Director of Law and Assurance and Chief Executives Office Service area: General staffing	Consultation and EQIA not required.	Staff consultation needed in specific areas as advised by HR. No impact on residents or outside the Council. There will be some member engagement for details of proposals.
IT services – following transfer from Capita	500	500		500	Efficiency	In 2021, the IT service was transferred from Capita. At the time, budget was set aside for any changes required. The transfer of staff is now complete and the remaining budget 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.	Director of Finance and Support Services Service area: Finance and Support Services	Consultation and EQIA not required.	No impact on residents.
SSO (Support Services Outsource) contract – following transfer from Capita	300	300		300	Efficiency	In October 2022, the final services were insourced from Capita into the County Council when the SSO contract ended. This process is now complete and therefore the remaining budget provision set aside for the insourcing of all services included in the 2022/23 budget can be released now as a saving.	Director of Finance and Support Services Service area: Finance and Support Services	Consultation and EQIA not required.	No impact on residents.
Sub-total		1,190	80	1,270					
Overall total		11,860	4,457	16,317					