



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY 22ND FEBRUARY 2023, AT 6.00 P.M.

PARKSIDE SUITE - PARKSIDE

SUPPLEMENTARY DOCUMENTATION 1

The attached papers were specified as "to follow" on the Agenda previously distributed relating to the above mentioned meeting.

9. **Recommendations from the Cabinet meeting held on 15th February 2023**
(Pages 3 - 4)

Members are asked to note that under the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, the Council is required to take a named vote when a decision is made on the budget calculation at a budget decision meeting of the Council.

11. **Background Information on the recommendations from the Cabinet**

11c Council Tax Resolutions 2023/24 (Pages 5 - 20)

12. **To note the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 15th February 2023** (Pages 21 - 28)

K. DICKS
Chief Executive

Parkside
Market Street
BROMSGROVE
Worcestershire
B61 8DA

21st February 2023

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Recommendations from the Cabinet meeting held on 15th February 2023

Pay Policy 2023/24

RECOMMENDED that the Pay Policy be approved.

2023/24 Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan 2023/24 To 2025/26 (Including Treasury Management Strategy and Capital Programme)

RECOMMENDED approval of

- 1) the tranche 2 growth proposals.
- 2) the additional funding to the Council as per the Local Government Settlement on the 19th December 2022, including the estimated levels for 2024/5 and 2025/6.
- 3) the tranche 2 savings proposals, including an Increase of Council Tax at 1.99%.
- 4) the Capital Programme 2023/4 to 2025/6 and associated projects where outstanding budgets will be allowed to be carried forward at the end of the 2022/23 financial year.
- 5) the levels of reserve being carried forward into future years.
- 6) the level of General Fund balances being used to balance budgets over the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) period.

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COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTIONS 2023/24

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Geoff Denaro Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling Services
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Michelle Howell Head of Finance and Customer Services
Report Author	Name: Michelle Howell Job Title: Head of Finance and Customer services Contactemail: michelle.howell@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 64252
Wards Affected	Yes
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	Yes
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	All
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 Cabinet is asked to **NOTE** that at its meeting on 18th January 2023 they approved the calculated Council Tax Base 2023/24 as:
- (a) for the whole Council area as 37,919.44 [Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Act 1992, as amended (the “Act”)]; and
- (b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates the amounts as shown in Column 4 of the attached **Schedule 1**.
- 1.2 Cabinet is asked to **RECOMMEND** to Council that they approve:
- 1.2.1 the calculation for the Council Tax requirement for the Council’s own purposes for 2023/24 (excluding Parish precepts) as **£9,204,565**.
- 1.2.2 That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2023/24 in accordance with sections 31 to 36 of the Act:

- (a) £46,449,077 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (2) of the Act (taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils) (*i.e.*, *Gross expenditure*)
- (b) £36,113,337 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (3) of the Act. (*i.e.*, *Gross income*)
- (c) £10,335,740 being the amount by which the aggregate of 1.2.2(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 1.2.2(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A (4) of the Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act).
- (d) £272.57 being the amount at 1.2.2 (c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (1.1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts).
- (e) £1,131,175 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34 (1) of the Act (as per the attached **Schedule 3**).
- (f) £242.74 being the amount at 1.2.2 (d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 1.2.2 (e) above by Item T (1.1 (a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34 (2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates.
- (g) The amounts shown in Column 3 of **Schedule 1**. These are the basic amounts of the council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of the Council's area shown in Column 1 of the schedule respectively to which special items relate, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act. (District and Parish combined at Band D).
- (h) The amounts shown in Column 5 of **Schedule 1** being the amount given by multiplying the amounts at 2.2.2(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in

valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands;

- 1.2.3 It be noted that for the year 2023/24, Worcestershire County Council, Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia and Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority have issued precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwelling in the Council's area as indicated below:

	Valuation Bands							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Worcestershire County Council	977.19	1,140.05	1,302.92	1,465.78	1,791.51	2,117.24	2,442.97	2,931.56
Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia	176.33	205.72	235.11	264.50	323.28	382.06	440.83	529.00
Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority	62.93	73.42	83.91	94.40	115.38	136.36	157.33	188.80

- 1.2.4. That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 1.2.2(h) and 1.2.3 above, that Bromsgrove District Council in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 hereby sets the amounts shown in **Schedule 2** as the amounts of Council Tax for 2023/24. for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.

- 1.2.5. That the Interim Director of Finance be authorised to make payments under Section 90(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 from the Collection Fund by ten equal instalments between April 2023 to March 2024 as detailed below:

	Precept £	Deficit on Collection Fund £	Total to pay £
Worcestershire County Council	55,581,557.00	(715,149.00)	54,866,408.00
Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia	10,029,691.88	(127,825.00)	9,901,866.88
Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority	3,579,733.94	(45,773.00)	3,533,960.94

1.2.6 That the Interim Director of Finance be authorised to make transfers under Section 97 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 from the Collection Fund to the General Fund the sum of £10,199,253 being the Council's own demand on the Collection Fund (£9,204,565) and Parish Precepts (£1,131,175) and the distribution of the Deficit on the Collection Fund (-£136,487).

1.2.7 That the Interim Director of Finance be authorised to make payments from the General Fund to Parish Councils the sums listed on **Schedule 3** by two equal instalments on 1 April 2023 and 1 October 2023 in respect of the precept levied on the Council.

1.2.8. That the above resolutions to be signed by the Chief Executive for use in legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court for the recovery of unpaid Council Taxes.

1.2.9 Notices of the making of the said Council Taxes signed by the Chief Executive are given by advertisement in the local press under Section 38(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

2. **BACKGROUND**

The report seeks approval of the appropriate formal resolutions to determine the levels of Council Tax for Bromsgrove District Council for Financial year 2023/24. The levels of tax take account of the requirements of Bromsgrove District Council, Worcestershire County Council, Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia, Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority and the various Parish Councils.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 It is necessary to formally set Council Tax levels throughout the area for the spending requirements of Bromsgrove District Council, Worcestershire County Council, Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia, Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority and the various Parish Councils.
- 3.2 Details have been received from the various precepting bodies to enable the Council to set the Council Tax for 2023/24. The amounts of the precepts are set out below:

	£
Worcestershire County Council	55,581,557.00
Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia	10,029,691.88
Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority	3,579,733.94
Bromsgrove District Council	9,204,564.87
Parish precepts	1,131,175.26
Total	79,526,722.95

The Parish Council Precepts for 2023/24 are detailed in the attached **Schedule 3**.

- 3.3 If the Council approves the recommendations set out above the average band D Council Tax in 2023/24 will be £2,097.25, made up as follows:

Authority	2022/23 £	2023/24 £	Increase %
Bromsgrove District Council	238.00	242.74	1.99
Worcestershire County Council	1,396.78	1,465.78	4.94
Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia	249.66	264.50	5.94
Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority	89.40	94.40	5.59
Parish Councils (average)	28.57	29.83	4.41
Total Council Tax	2,002.14	2,097.25	4.75

The % increases all relate to the change from current year levels.

Cabinet
2023

22nd February

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Localism Act 2011 made significant changes to the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and requires the billing authority to calculate a Council Tax requirement for the year, not its budget requirement as was previously the case.

5. STRATEGIC PURPOSES - IMPLICATIONS**Relevant Strategic Purpose**

- 5.1 The Strategic purposes are included in the Council's corporate plan and guides the Council's approach to budget making ensuring we focus on the issues and what are most important for the borough and our communities. Our MTFP and strategies are integrated within all of our Strategic Purposes.

Climate Change Implications

- 5.2 The green thread runs through the Council plan. The MTFP has implications on climate change and these will be addressed and reviewed when relevant by climate change officers to ensure the correct procedures have been followed to ensure any impacts on climate change are fully understood.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 6.1 Any impact on the customer of savings over the MTFP period will be managed via impact assessments and in discussion and consultation with the customer as to the most effective and supportive way of managing reductions in funding and potentially service delivery.

Operational Implications

- 6.2 The MTFP will enable services to be maintained and, where achievable, improvements to the community.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 The risks associated with the budget estimations are included in the MTFP report as presented to Cabinet on 15th February 2023.

Cabinet
2023

22nd February

8. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Council Tax Base Calculation Report 2023/24, report to Cabinet, 18th January 2023.

Cabinet
2023

22nd February

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Denaro	
Lead Director / Head of Service	Peter Carpenter	
Financial Services	Michelle Howell	
Legal Services		
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)		
Climate Change Officer (if climate change implications apply)	n/a	

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**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL TAX
INCLUDING PARISH PRECEPTS 2023/24**

SCHEDULE 1

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	Column 5 – by valuation band							
				Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
Part of the Council's Area	Parish Band D £	Basic Amount of Council Tax Band D (District + Parish) £	Taxbase	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Alvechurch	86.85	329.59	2368.78	219.73	256.35	292.97	329.59	402.83	476.07	549.32	659.18
Barnt Green	68.44	311.18	1051.97	207.46	242.03	276.61	311.18	380.33	449.48	518.64	622.36
Belbroughton and Fairfield	56.45	299.19	1240.09	199.46	232.71	265.95	299.19	365.67	432.16	498.65	598.38
Bentley Pauncefoot	36.85	279.59	203.18	186.40	217.46	248.53	279.59	341.72	403.85	465.99	559.18
Beoley	35.24	277.98	470.41	185.32	216.21	247.09	277.98	339.75	401.52	463.30	555.96
Bournheath	52.07	294.81	218.92	196.54	229.30	262.05	294.81	360.32	425.83	491.35	589.62
Catshill & North Marlbrook	21.64	264.38	2347.28	176.26	205.63	235.01	264.38	323.13	381.88	440.64	528.76
Clent	87.82	330.56	567.67	220.38	257.10	293.83	330.56	404.02	477.47	550.94	661.12
Cotton Hackett	45.97	288.71	1183.85	192.48	224.55	256.63	288.71	352.87	417.02	481.19	577.42
Dodford with Grafton	30.85	273.59	410.26	182.40	212.79	243.19	273.59	334.39	395.18	455.99	547.18
Finstall	27.70	270.44	314.41	180.30	210.34	240.39	270.44	330.54	390.63	450.74	540.88
Frankley	45.21	287.95	49.21	191.97	223.96	255.96	287.95	351.94	415.92	479.92	575.90
Hagley	67.99	310.73	3221.22	207.16	241.68	276.21	310.73	379.78	448.83	517.89	621.46
Hunnington	63.63	306.37	243.60	204.25	238.29	272.33	306.37	374.45	442.53	510.62	612.74
Lickey & Blackwell	23.34	266.08	2142.12	177.39	206.95	236.52	266.08	325.21	384.33	443.47	532.16
Romsley	82.61	325.35	673.92	216.90	253.05	289.20	325.35	397.65	469.95	542.25	650.70
Stoke	32.27	275.01	1916.99	183.34	213.90	244.45	275.01	336.12	397.23	458.35	550.02
Tutnall & Copley	19.17	261.91	379.73	174.61	203.71	232.81	261.91	320.11	378.31	436.52	523.82
Wythall	33.07	275.81	4838.49	183.88	214.52	245.17	275.81	337.10	398.39	459.69	551.62
Urban	N/A	242.74	14077.34	161.83	188.80	215.77	242.74	296.68	350.62	404.57	485.48
Taxbase Total			37,919.44								

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**COUNCIL TAX SCHEDULE FOR THE BROMSGROVE DISTRICT AREA INCLUDING BROMSGROVE D C,
WORCESTERSHIRE C C, POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR WEST MERCIA, HEREFORD &
WORCESTER FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY, PARISH PRECEPTS 2023/24**

SCHEDULE 2

	Taxbase	Precept £	Council Tax per Valuation Band							
			Band A £	Band B £	Band C £	Band D £	Band E £	Band F £	Band G £	Band H £
Worcestershire County Council	37,919.44	55,581,557.00	977.19	1,140.05	1,302.92	1,465.78	1,791.51	2,117.24	2,442.97	2,931.56
Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia	37,919.44	10,029,691.88	176.33	205.72	235.11	264.50	323.28	382.06	440.83	529.00
Hereford & Worcester Fire & Rescue Authority	37,919.44	3,579,733.94	62.93	73.42	83.91	94.40	115.38	136.36	157.33	188.80
Bromsgrove District Council	37,919.44	9,204,564.87	161.83	188.80	215.77	242.74	296.68	350.62	404.57	485.48
Total Unparished			1,378.28	1,607.99	1,837.71	2,067.42	2,526.85	2,986.28	3,445.70	4,134.84
		Precept £	Total Bill Band A £ (6/9)	Total Bill Band B £ (7/9)	Total Bill Band C £ (8/9)	Total Bill Band D £ (9/9)	Total Bill Band E £ (11/9)	Total Bill Band F £ (13/9)	Total Bill Band G £ (15/9)	Total Bill Band H £ (18/9)
Parish										
Alvechurch	2,368.78	205,738.00	1,436.18	1,675.54	1,914.91	2,154.27	2,633.00	3,111.73	3,590.45	4,308.54
Barnt Green	1,051.97	72,000.00	1,423.91	1,661.22	1,898.55	2,135.86	2,610.50	3,085.14	3,559.77	4,271.72
Belbroughton and Fairfield	1,240.09	70,000.00	1,415.91	1,651.90	1,887.89	2,123.87	2,595.84	3,067.82	3,539.78	4,247.74
Bentley Paucefoot	203.18	7,488.00	1,402.85	1,636.65	1,870.47	2,104.27	2,571.89	3,039.51	3,507.12	4,208.54
Beoley	470.41	16,575.00	1,401.77	1,635.40	1,869.03	2,102.66	2,569.92	3,037.18	3,504.43	4,205.32
Bournheath	218.92	11,400.00	1,412.99	1,648.49	1,883.99	2,119.49	2,590.49	3,061.49	3,532.48	4,238.98
Catshill & North Marlbrook	2,347.28	50,805.00	1,392.71	1,624.82	1,856.95	2,089.06	2,553.30	3,017.54	3,481.77	4,178.12
Clent	567.67	49,850.00	1,436.83	1,676.29	1,915.77	2,155.24	2,634.19	3,113.13	3,592.07	4,310.48
Cofton Hackett	1,183.85	54,420.00	1,408.93	1,643.74	1,878.57	2,113.39	2,583.04	3,052.68	3,522.32	4,226.78
Dodford with Grafton	410.26	12,654.60	1,398.85	1,631.98	1,865.13	2,098.27	2,564.56	3,030.84	3,497.12	4,196.54
Finstall	314.41	8,710.00	1,396.75	1,629.53	1,862.33	2,095.12	2,560.71	3,026.29	3,491.87	4,190.24
Frankley	49.21	2,224.62	1,408.42	1,643.15	1,877.90	2,112.63	2,582.11	3,051.58	3,521.05	4,225.26
Hagley	3,221.22	219,000.00	1,423.61	1,660.87	1,898.15	2,135.41	2,609.95	3,084.49	3,559.02	4,270.82
Hunnington	243.60	15,500.00	1,420.70	1,657.48	1,894.27	2,131.05	2,604.62	3,078.19	3,551.75	4,262.10
Lickey & Blackwell	2,142.12	50,000.00	1,393.84	1,626.14	1,858.46	2,090.76	2,555.38	3,019.99	3,484.60	4,181.52
Romsley	673.92	55,675.00	1,433.35	1,672.24	1,911.14	2,150.03	2,627.82	3,105.61	3,583.38	4,300.06
Stoke	1,916.99	61,855.04	1,399.79	1,633.09	1,866.39	2,099.69	2,566.29	3,032.89	3,499.48	4,199.38
Tutnall & Cobley	379.73	7,280.00	1,391.06	1,622.90	1,854.75	2,086.59	2,550.28	3,013.97	3,477.65	4,173.18
Wythall	4,838.49	160,000.00	1,400.33	1,633.71	1,867.11	2,100.49	2,567.27	3,034.05	3,500.82	4,200.98
Urban	14,077.34		1,378.28	1,607.99	1,837.71	2,067.42	2,526.85	2,986.28	3,445.70	4,134.84
Total	37,919.44	1,131,175.26								

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Parish Precepts 2023/24

SCHEDULE 3

	2022/23 Precept	2022/23 Taxbase	2022/23 Levy per Band D Equivalent	2023/24 Precept	Percentage Change in Band D	Percentage Change in Precept Amount	2023/24 Taxbase	2023/24 Levy per Band D Equivalent
	£			£	%	%		£
Alvechurch	188,195.00	2,328.59	80.82	205,738.00	7.46%	9.32	2,368.78	86.85
Barnt Green	68,000.00	1,027.52	66.18	72,000.00	3.41%	5.88	1,051.97	68.44
Belbroughton and Fairfi	70,000.00	1,213.49	57.68	70,000.00	-2.13%	0.00	1,240.09	56.45
Bentley Pauncefoot	7,131.00	202.24	35.26	7,488.00	4.51%	5.01	203.18	36.85
Beoley	16,576.00	456.93	36.28	16,575.00	-2.87%	-0.01	470.41	35.24
Bournheath	10,680.00	221.48	48.22	11,400.00	7.98%	6.74	218.92	52.07
Catshill & North Marlbro	52,021.00	2,340.85	22.22	50,805.00	-2.61%	-2.34	2,347.28	21.64
Clent	49,850.00	545.75	91.34	49,850.00	-3.85%	0.00	567.67	87.82
Cofton Hackett	51,830.00	1,158.74	44.73	54,420.00	2.77%	5.00	1,183.85	45.97
Dodford with Grafton	12,052.00	405.19	29.74	12,654.60	3.73%	5.00	410.26	30.85
Finstall	8,090.00	318.66	25.39	8,710.00	9.10%	7.66	314.41	27.70
Frankley	2,180.88	46.84	46.56	2,224.62	-2.90%	2.01	49.21	45.21
Hagley	208,000.00	3,211.78	64.76	219,000.00	4.99%	5.29	3,221.22	67.99
Hunnington	13,775.00	242.50	56.80	15,500.00	12.02%	12.52	243.60	63.63
Lickey & Blackwell	50,000.00	2,129.67	23.48	50,000.00	-0.60%	0.00	2,142.12	23.34
Romsley	55,675.00	667.48	83.41	55,675.00	-0.96%	0.00	673.92	82.61
Stoke	59,476.00	1,891.93	31.44	61,855.04	2.64%	4.00	1,916.99	32.27
Tutnall & Cobley	7,280.00	366.39	19.87	7,280.00	-3.52%	0.00	379.73	19.17
Wythall	141,000.00	4,805.26	29.34	160,000.00	12.71%	13.48	4,838.49	33.07
Total	1,071,811.88	23,581.29		1,131,175.26		5.54	23,842.10	

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY 15TH FEBRUARY 2023, AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors K.J. May (Leader), G. N. Denaro (Deputy Leader), P.L. Thomas, M. Thompson and S. A. Webb

Officers: Mr. K. Dicks, Mrs. S. Hanley, Mr P. Carpenter, Mrs. C. Felton (on Microsoft Teams), Ms M. Howell, Mr. M. Bough (on Microsoft Teams), Ms. A. Delahunty (on Microsoft Teams) and Mrs J. Gresham

68/22 **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor M. Sherrey.

69/22 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

70/22 **TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON 18TH JANUARY 2023**

The minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 18th January were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 18th January 2023 be approved as a true and accurate record.

71/22 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**

There were no updates or recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Board on this occasion.

72/22 **HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION GRANT 2023/24**

The Housing Strategy and Enabling Manager presented the Homelessness Prevention Grant 2023/24 report for Members' consideration.

The Council had been awarded a Homelessness Prevention Grant 2023/24 by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUCH) totalling £165,612. It was highlighted that the DLUCH funding had been ringfenced in order to provide schemes to prevent homelessness and to enforce the Homelessness Reduction Act. The funding would also be used to reduce the numbers of families in temporary accommodation and eliminate the use of unsuitable Bed & Breakfast accommodation for families for longer than the statutory six week limit. In addition to the DLUCH funding, Members were advised that a budget of £112,000 had been allocated for the 2023/24 Homelessness Grant. Furthermore, as a result of an underspend in the previous year's funding allocation, additional funding of £40k was available. Therefore, the total grant available was £317,612. Members were reminded that the Council had a statutory duty under the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) to assist those who were threatened with homelessness or experiencing homelessness.

The report outlined a number of local schemes that Officers proposed should receive funding for 2023/24. These included schemes working with young people, the provision of new furniture for ex-offenders, volunteering opportunities and targeted debt intervention. It was reported that these schemes assisted the most vulnerable members of the community. The total proposed expenditure for the allocation of grant funding was £306,307. Officers explained that this was less than the total allocation of funding, however clarified that the underspend of £11,305 was to be held in reserve in order to cover any anticipated additional Bed & Breakfast costs for the coming year.

In terms of risk, Members were advised that should these proposals not be agreed it could result in increased Bed & Breakfast costs, increased rough sleeping and have a significant physical and mental health for those who were threatened with or experiencing homelessness.

Following the presentation of the report Members noted that this was an important report and highlighted the increased need for affordable housing within the District in order to prevent further homelessness and rough sleeping.

The Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing and Health and Well Being thanked the Officers for their report and noted that their passion in carrying out work in respect of the prevention of homelessness was very much appreciated.

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RESOLVED that the following initiatives receive allocation funding for 2023/24

Grant Allocation	2023/24 £ (up to)
Housing Agency Agreement Top Up	52,475
Young Persons Pathway Worker – support to prevent homelessness for under 25's	18,811
Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership Co-ordinator – contribution towards county-wide development and delivery of housing initiatives in partnership with other agencies	8,300
Single Person and Childless Couples Homelessness Prevention Service	18,347
St Basils Crash Pad – provide a unit of emergency accommodation to young homeless people	12,409
NewStarts - Provide Furniture and Volunteering Opportunities for Ex-Offenders – supports tenancy sustainment and provides future employment opportunities/reduces risk of reoffending	10,000
GreenSquare Accord Housing Related Support – helping ex-offenders remain housed/seek employment	24,114
St Basils Foyer – provides stable accommodation/support for young people - 14 units – fully occupied during last financial year	30,000
CCP- outreach and prevention service targeting rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping.	27,852
North Worcestershire Basement Project - Support for young people at risk of homelessness	26,666
Step Up – Private Tenancy Scheme	22,000
Sunrise Project intensive support (2 year project agreed 2021)	39,000
Citizens Advice – Targeted Debt Intervention	16,333
Total committed expenditure	306,307

2. That delegated authority be granted to the Head of Community and Housing Services following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing and Health and Well Being to use any unallocated Grant during the year or make further adjustments as necessary to ensure full utilisation of the Grants for 2023/24 in support of existing or new schemes.

73/22

PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2023/24

The Interim Section 151 Officer presented the Pay Policy 2023/24 report and in doing so stated that the Council had a legal requirement to produce a Pay Policy statement each year under the Localism Act (2011). Officers confirmed that the Statement must be approved by Full Council by 31st March each year for the subsequent financial year. The Statement must set out the relationship between the highest and lowest paid staff at the Council and included within the report was the breakdown of remuneration of all Officers across the Council.

Cabinet was advised that the grading structure of employees at the Council was between 1-11 and included in these grades were a number of pay points. It was explained that there were two managerial grades, two Heads of Service grades, Executive Director, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Executive. The Council did not apply bonuses or performance related pay to its Chief Officers and that progression through the incremental scale of a relevant grade was subject to satisfactory performance assessed on an annual basis. Information was provided to Members regarding the job allocation within the structure and it was stated that posts for Managers and above were evaluated by an external assessor. In respect of new appointments, it was noted that these would normally be made at the minimum of the relevant grade. Officers stated that the current lowest salary at the Council, as at 1st April 2022, was £20,441 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) and that the Council was committed to the Local Government Employers national pay bargaining framework.

RECOMMENDED that the Pay Policy be approved.

74/22

2023/24 BUDGET AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2023/24 TO 2025/26 (INCLUDING TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME)

The Interim Section 151 Officer presented the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2023/24 to 2025/26 (including the Treasury Management Strategy and the Capital Programme for the Cabinet's consideration.

During presentation of the report Members were asked to note the following:

- Tranche 1 of the budget was published on 17th October 2022 and agreed at Full Council on 7th December 2022. This report stated that £1.6m of savings had been required and that these savings had been made. However, due to the cost of living crisis and other additional pressures a £1.6m gap had been identified in 2023/24 and needed to be mitigated.
- An assumption had been made that the Council would agree a 1.99% increase for Council Tax for 2023/24. It was noted that the Council Tax Resolutions 2023/24 report was due to be considered at Full Council on 22nd February 2023.
- There was an additional pressure of £718k as a result of the 2022/23 £1,925 pay award increase.
- An assumption of general inflation increases of 10% had been made and that the 200% allocation for Utilities remained. However, this would now be allocated 100% to the base budget and 100% to earmarked reserves and drawn down as required. Any surplus would be returned to the General Fund.
- The Local Government settlement had been announced on 19th December 2022 totalling £1.198m. This, it was confirmed included New Homes Bonus funding (£127k), Services Grant (£68k), Funding Guarantee (£1.027m) and Reduction in Council Tax Base amounting to a £24k pressure. It was noted that unlike in previous years, the Local Government Settlement was only for 1 year. Therefore, for planning purposes an assumption had been made that the grant levels for financial years 2024/25 and 2025/26 would remain at £1m.
- Following receipt of the final Triennial Pension Fund Valuation from the actuaries additional savings of £356k had been made.
- In December 2022, the Corporate Management Team (CMT) had reviewed the earmarked reserves, which had remained unchanged for some time. As a result, a reduction in the base budget of £351k per annum for the next three years had been identified.
- A review of the base budget across Business Rates, Investment Income, and Investment payments had identified a net benefit of £1.255m. This was in part due to the significant increase of Section 31 grant funding allocated this year increasing from £1.126m to £3.120m. It was clarified that the net benefit figures were based on NNDR3 forms and would be allocated over the next three financial years. Officers reported that £855k of this

would be kept in reserves in the event that the Government made changes to the allocation of funding in future years.

- The replacement of the fleet was considered a significant pressure for the Council. Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil (HVO) was already being used in order to reduce carbon emissions, however the cost of HVO had increased and currently the fleet was using half HVO and half diesel in its vehicles.
- The Leisure contract was identified as a pressure and in light of Covid-19 the expected levels of payment had not been as anticipated.
- Further pressures were identified as funding for apprentices, additional staffing, Planning Enforcement costs and increased costs for Worcestershire Regulatory Services. The Interim Section 151 Officer explained that the use of apprentices in the future was important in order for the Council to 'grow their own' workforce.
- The recruitment of a Data Analyst role in order to help improve processes across the Council through use of automation and robotics.
- The impact on collection rates for Council Tax totalled £1.020m. The Council was responsible for £132k (13%) of this amount.
- In terms of the General Fund there was a £250k deficit in 2023/24, a £44k surplus in 204/25 and a £431k deficit in 2025/26. As a result, it was anticipated that the levels of the General Fund Reserve Levels at 31st March 2026 would be £5.58m.
- Rationalisation of the Council's asset estates needed to be considered. This was particularly important in light of the need to ensure all Council buildings had an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of at least E by 2026.
- The Capital Programme and the large schemes that were currently being undertaken by the Council. These included the Levelling Up Funding and UK Shared Prosperity schemes. It was noted that the Burcot Lane scheme would be completed by the mid-2023.

Following the presentation of the report, the Interim Section 151 Officer commented on the Robustness Statement included in the report. In doing so, he explained he was satisfied with the amount of Reserves and that the Council would be looking to make ongoing investments in the future. However, it was noted that the Council must manage several significant risks in the future.

These included:

- The outstanding closure of the 2021/22 accounts.
- The 2022/23 overspend position of £1.472m which needed to be managed down.
- The loss of key personnel.
- The time limited nature of the Levelling Up and UK Shared Prosperity Funding.
- Business Rates income
- The ongoing impact of inflation.

Cabinet was informed that the Council may take out some borrowing within the next few months. It was clarified that this had not happened in recent years and would probably be on a short term basis.

Members queried the replacement of the Council's fleet. It was reported that the details of the Green Paper had not yet been released however it was understood that it would be necessary for the Council to be carbon neutral by 2030. Therefore, the Council would be required to make a decision on the replacement fleet within the next two years as any implementation of new vehicles would need to commence at least two years prior to 2030.

Following consideration of the report the Leader requested an update regarding the progress of the external auditors. Officers reported that information in respect of balances had been sent to the auditors, however the Council needed to wait to receive Grant Thornton's view on these balances before providing the draft Statement of Accounts for 2021/22. At the time of the meeting these views had not yet been received. It was noted that the external auditors were currently still undertaking work with officers both in the office and remotely.

RECOMMENDED approval of

- 1) the tranche 2 growth proposals.
- 2) the additional funding to the Council as per the Local Government Settlement on the 19th December 2022, including the estimated levels for 2024/5 and 2025/6.
- 3) the tranche 2 savings proposals, including an Increase of Council Tax at 1.99%.

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- 4) the Capital Programme 2023/4 to 2025/6 and associated projects where outstanding budgets will be allowed to be carried forward at the end of the 2022/23 financial year.
- 5) the levels of reserve being carried forward into future years.
- 6) the level of General Fund balances being used to balance budgets over the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) period.

RESOLVED that

- 7) The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Opinion on Estimates and Reserve Levels – the Robustness Statement (Section 25 Statement) – be noted.

The meeting closed at 6.44 p.m.

Chairman