

## Wiltshire Council

### Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

8 February 2022

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#### Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee Report on Proposed Amendments for the 2022/23 Budget

##### Purpose of report

1. To report to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee the proposed amendments from Cllr Ian Thorn and Cllr Gavin Grant to the budget recommended to Cabinet on 1 February 2022 for the committee to appraise and raise any comments to Full Council.

##### Background

2. This meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee provides an opportunity for non-executive councillors to question Cllr Ian Thorn and Cllr Gavin Grant, on the proposed amendments before the budget is considered by Full Council on 15 February 2022.

##### Proposed Budget Amendment from Cllr Ian Thorn and Cllr Gavin Grant

3. The proposal is to remove the following Car Parking savings:
  - Introduce Parking charges for Blue Badge holders
  - Introduce Sunday charges in all car parks
  - Remove free event parking from Town Councils
  - Increase car parking charges by 10p per hour on every tariff
4. The savings above total £0.710m in 2022/23 and an additional £0.120m in 2023/24. It is proposed to include an additional saving; to increase annual, half-yearly and Quarterly Season Tickets by CPI (4%) which would deliver £0.024m.
5. The net impact of the removal of the savings and introduction of the additional saving is £0.686m for 2022/23 and £0.120m for 2023/24 and is proposed to be met by an equal reduction in the £1m High Streets budget for those years. This would reduce the High Streets budget to £0.314m in 2022/23 and £0.194m in both 2023/24 and 2024/25. There is a forecast underspend in the current financial year (2021/22) against this budget of £0.600m that is expected to be available to fund associated activity in future years to provide additional funding alongside the reduced base budget.
6. The £1m High Streets budget is a temporary budget and no longer exists from the financial year 2025/26 onwards. Although outside of the MTFs period it is noted that the future year impact of this proposal will need addressing as part of the budget

setting process for latter years and has the effect of increasing the budget gap in 2026/27 as the £1m High Street fund budget is removed from the budget.

7. The above proposal has the following impact on the MTFS:

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Impact 2022/23 £m</b>	<b>Impact 2023/24 £m</b>	<b>Impact 2024/45 £m</b>
Removal of Car Parking savings listed above	0.710	0.120	0
CPI increase to Season Tickets	(0.024)	0	0
Reduction in High Street Budget	(0.686)	(0.120)	0
<b>Total Revenue Impact</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

### **S.151 Officer Comments**

8. The proposal has been costed and this has been included in the figures above. This identifies that the amendment balances and therefore does not impact on the net base budget proposed in the original paper to Cabinet and in doing so meets the financial test for an amendment to the budget to be considered by Full Council.
9. The amendment reduces the saving proposals put forward for increases in parking income and reduces the base budget held for supporting Wiltshire's High Streets by the compensating amount. It is therefore fully balanced over the period of the MTFS.
10. From a purely financial perspective the proposal would reduce the risk to the Council. Income sources are subject to potential fluctuations in demand, although these had been factored into the saving proposal, the replacement of this income source with a reduction in a cost budget, which will mean that cost will not materialise, therefore reduces risk. Equally though any upside from an increase in demand for parking that will outstrip the budget estimate will not be made.
11. There are tables in Appendix 1 – MTFS of the budget report that will be amended if the amendment is approved.

### **Monitoring Officer Comments**

12. As Monitoring Officer, I can confirm that having considered the proposal in advance and in consultation with the Section 151 Officer, I can confirm that bearing in mind the set of decisions that Council will be asked to consider in setting the budget for 2022/23, including the net budget requirement and the level of Council Tax, there is nothing in the proposals, as drafted, that could impact adversely on the Cabinet's budget recommendations. Clearly questions of policy are a matter for Members, but I can also confirm, that there is no legal reason that would prevent the amendment being implemented, were it agreed.

### **Head of Paid Service Comments**

13. As Head of Paid Service, I can confirm that officers have provided independent advice. We are aware of the full details of the amendments, and they are policy amendments in nature.

### **Conclusion**

14. Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee are asked to consider the proposed amendments to the financial plan 2022/23 and inform Full Council on 15 February 2022.