

## Wiltshire Council

### Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

13 February 2025

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#### Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee Report on Proposed Amendments for the 2025/26 Budget

#### Purpose of report

1. To report to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee the proposed amendments from Cllr Jon Hubbard to the budget recommended to Cabinet on 4 February 2025 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 Jon Hubbard, on the proposed amendments before the budget is considered by Full Council on 25 February 2025.
3. The Member proposal is an amendment to the proposed Cabinet budget, as set out as follows:
  - To introduce free swimming for children and young people during school holidays across Council run facilities within Wiltshire. This covers all school holidays including half term breaks.
4. The above proposal has the following impact on the 2025/26 base budget:

Proposal	Impact £m
To introduce free swimming for children and young people during school holidays across Council run facilities within Wiltshire.	
2025/26 pressure of proposal	0.406
2026/27 pressure of proposal	0.429
2027/28 pressure of proposal	0.453
<b>Total pressure across MTFs</b>	<b>1.288</b>
<b>Funding Proposal of Pressure</b>	
Increase Council Tax by 0.115% in 2025/26 resulting in an impact of £1.288m over the MTFs period	1.288

5. The proposal has the effect of increasing budgets in the 2025/26 financial year which results in a revenue pressure in every year of the MTFs, with proposals for funding this pressure set out in the table above.

6. The impact of the funding of the proposal has the effect increasing Council Tax in 2025/26. This has a cumulative positive impact on the Council Tax income for the 2026/27 and 2027/28 financial years.

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

7. The proposal has been reviewed and an estimated assessment of the overall financial impact of the proposal indicates a loss of income and additional running costs, which are based on the current usage.
8. The pressure may not be as high as set out above as the assumption used is based on all those paying taking the option of free swimming, which they may not. There is however a risk of further loss on income from Junior memberships and Swim School memberships, but this is not deemed significant and estimates on running costs are based on a prudent basis which allows for additional income losses.
9. Funding this proposal by additional council tax income, which can be raised and falls within the limits of allowable increases set by government (up to 3% for basic council tax) provides greater certainty of income from local taxation in future years.
10. Year on year there will be increased pressure from the proposal due to inflationary increases on running costs and additional losses from increased charges but this is at least equally off-set by the additional council tax that will be raised in future years due to the cumulative impact of increased council tax in 2025/26.
11. This amendment therefore balances and does not impact on the 2025/26 base budget proposed in the original paper to Cabinet in a detrimental way and in doing so meets the financial test for an amendment to the budget to be considered by Full Council.

### **Monitoring Officer Comments**

12. Subject to the views of the Chairman of the Council and subject to this proposal being moved in accordance with the Rules of Procedure in Part 4 of the Constitution, this is an appropriate amendment within the meaning of Rule 20.6. There are no other legal implications.

### **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 2025/26 and inform Full Council on 25 February.