

Meeting of the Cabinet – 11th January 2024

Joint Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Legal

Medium Term Financial Strategy

Purpose

1. To consider the latest General Fund revenue position for 2023/24 and provisional Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to 2026/27.
2. Cabinet is not being asked to make final decisions on the MTFS. The proposals in this report will be the subject of public consultation and will be considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee before returning to Cabinet on 15th February and going to Full Council for final decisions on 4th March.

Recommendations

3. That Cabinet notes:
 - a. The forecast General Fund revenue outturn position for 2023/24 and the effect on General Balances at 31st March 2024.
 - b. The progress with delivery of savings as set out in Appendix B.
 - c. The actions of the External Auditors outlined in paragraph 12.
 - d. The various risks and issues which will need to be taken into account in finalising budget proposals for 2024/25 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy
4. That Cabinet considers the benefits and risks set out in paragraph 15 and decides whether to approve a specific override to the spending controls that it approved in October in order to allow the project to replace the Pens Meadow School to proceed.
5. That Cabinet approves the preliminary financial strategy outlined in this report as a basis for scrutiny and consultation.

Background

6. At 31st March 2022 our unringfenced revenue reserves as a proportion of net revenue spend were 19%. The average¹ for all Metropolitan Councils at the same date was 55%. Calculated on the same basis, our position at 31st March 2023 was still 19%. Comparisons with other councils are not yet available.

Forecast Revenue Outturn 2023/24

7. On 6th March Council set the 2023/24 budget. The budget was amended by Council on 10th July. The latest forecast performance against the amended budget is summarised below:

Directorate	Latest Budget £m	Outturn £m	Variance £m
Chief Executive	6.7	6.8	0.1
Adult Social Care	110.7	118.3	7.6
Children's Services	82.0	86.7	4.7
Health and Wellbeing	2.7	2.6	(0.1)
Finance and Legal Services	14.2	14.8	0.6
Digital, Commercial and Customer Services	16.6	16.6	0.0
Environment	48.7	49.9	1.2
Housing and Communities	2.5	2.3	(0.2)
Regeneration and Enterprise	14.4	16.4	2.0
Corporate, Treasury and Levies	13.9	7.0	(6.9)
Total Service Costs	312.4	321.4	9.0
Total Resources	(307.3)	(307.2)	0.1
Use of Balances	5.1	14.2	9.1

8. Appendix A gives further detail of forecast performance at service level. Appendix B summarises delivery on savings previously agreed. The significant reasons for budget variances are summarised as follows:

¹ The percentage quoted is based on the Median average of all Metropolitan Councils

- Vacancies net of pay award and agency costs (£4.2m).
- Additional net cost of Adults' and Children's care packages due to demand and price £12.3m.
- Adverse trading activity £2.7m.
- Utilities £1.6m.
- Home to School Transport £1.0m.
- Energy from Waste adverse variance £0.8m.
- Property £1.2m.
- Legal fees £0.4m.
- Release of contingency held mainly for revaluation of Business Rates adjustment released (£3.3m).
- One off income from Enterprise Zone / LEP and Black Country Consortium (£1.4m).
- Triennial pension overpayment recovery (£0.9m).
- Net favourable variance from capital slippage and higher interest rates (£2.0m)
- Other net adverse variances £0.9m.

9. The Cabinet should note that this is a significant adverse variance with severe implications for the ongoing Medium Term Financial Strategy. The immediate impact on the General Fund is outlined below.

	Budget £m	Latest Position £m
Forecast balance 31 st March 2023	20.8	20.8
2022/23 outturn (as reported to July Cabinet)		1.0
General Fund Balance at 31st March 2023	20.8	21.8
Planned use of Reserves approved by Council March 2023	(4.2)	(4.2)
Planned use of Reserves approved by Council July 2023		(0.9)
Adverse Forecast 2023/24 outturn		(9.1)
Forecast General Fund Balance at 31st March 2024	16.6	7.6

Dedicated Schools Grant

10. The majority of Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) services are met from the High Needs Block within the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). As previously reported, we (in common with many other councils) have been experiencing significant financial pressures from increasing demand for children that require additional educational support. Dudley is part of the 'Delivering Better Value in SEND programme' (DBV) that aims to support local authorities to improve delivery of SEND services for children and young people while ensuring services are sustainable.
11. Notwithstanding the high-level recovery plan that has been agreed, there is a forecast cumulative deficit of £34.0m on the High Needs Block, resulting in an overall DSG deficit at 31st March 2024 of £30.7m. The Government has regulated temporarily to ensure that this pressure does not impact the General Fund and has confirmed that this statutory override will be extended to 31st March 2026. If the statutory override is not extended beyond that point, then this further compounds the risk that the Council's General Fund will be exhausted.

External Audit

12. The External Auditors (Grant Thornton) have issued their Auditor's Annual Report 2021/22 and 2022/23. They have commented on financial decision making at the corporate level and on the deteriorating financial position. They have identified significant weaknesses in Financial Sustainability, Governance and Economy, Efficiency and Effectiveness.

Spending controls

13. In view of the financial position presented to October Cabinet spending controls were approved to reduce the deficit in the current financial year and the ongoing impact on future years. Spending controls apply even where budget has previously been approved by Council. It was proposed that these controls be reviewed after each financial year end, but remain in place at least until the Council's unringfenced reserves return to a level of 20% of net revenue spend.

14. Although the forecast outlook for the current year remains grave, it has improved from the deficit of £15.2m that was forecast in October to the deficit of £14.2m that is being forecast now (see paragraph 7). This movement reflects a range of favourable and adverse factors, not all of which are directly linked to the spending controls. However, it should be noted that the first phase of implementation of the controls has focussed on staffing and agency and that this element of the forecast has improved by £1.5m.
15. The existing MTFs includes provision to service debt (net of capital receipts from release of development land) from building a new Pens Meadow School to replace the current split site. The forecast debt charges rise to around £1m per year from 2026/27 onwards. Letting the contract for the new build at this time would not meet the criteria in the spending controls and, as such, officers currently have no authority to proceed. However, this is a high-profile project that would significantly improve the facilities and locate them on a single site. It is proposed that Cabinet weigh these benefits against the financial position and risks set out in this report and decides whether to approve a specific override to the spending controls to permit this project to proceed.

Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to 2026/27

16. In updating the Council's MTFs, Members will need to consider carefully:
 - (a) the levels of Government support allocated to the Council;
 - (b) proposals for additional spending, opportunities to free up resources (including savings), and Council Plan priorities;
 - (c) the implications of spending levels in later years as part of the Council's medium term financial plan;
 - (d) the views of consultees;
 - (e) the external factors and risks inherent in the Strategy;
 - (f) the impact on Council Tax payers;

- (g) the potential impacts on people with protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010. Members will need to have due regard to the public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010. (Further details are set out in the Equality Impact section below).

Government Funding

17. The Chancellor delivered the Autumn Statement on 22nd November and the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement was published on 18th December 2023. The settlement confirmed the following allocations of funding at the national level:
- Local Authorities will see an increase in baseline funding levels and compensation grants for locally retained business rates, to ensure that multipliers are in line with Consumer Price Index (CPI) of inflation.
 - The Non-Domestic Rating Act has decoupled non-domestic rating multipliers. Previously the standard multiplier was derived by adding a supplement (1.3p in 2022/23) to the small multiplier. In future, the small and standard multipliers will be set independently of each other.
 - At the Autumn statement, the Chancellor announced that for 2024/25 the small multiplier will be frozen at 49.9p for the fourth consecutive year, and that the standard multiplier will be updated in line with September CPI from 51.2p to 54.6p.
 - This decision increases the gap between the two multipliers and has consequences for the business rates retention system.
 - An additional £692m nationally of Social Care grant for Adults and Children's Services.
 - Maintaining existing Improved Better Care Fund allocations at 2023/24 levels.
 - Increasing the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund to £845m nationally and combining with Workforce Fund (£205m nationally in 2024/25) increasing the overall total value to £1,050m.
 - A reduction of £406m nationally for the Services Grant.
 - An additional £200m nationally of Discharge Funding for Adult Social Care.
18. Specific funding allocations for Dudley are reflected in the MTFs table under paragraph 33.

Council Tax

19. Accounting for Council Tax Collection Fund surpluses and deficits and associated grants is complex, particularly in terms of timing. Latest forecasts indicate a Council Tax surplus for 2023/24 of £1m, mainly as a result of a reduction in council tax reliefs.
20. Looking forward forecasts have been adjusted to reflect current numbers of households in receipt of discounts and exemptions. The assumptions for new house building and collection rates have been maintained. The position will continue to be monitored closely and any updated forecasts reported to Cabinet in February.
21. The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement set referendum limits for 2024/25 of a basic increase of up to 2.99% and in addition an Adult Social Care Precept of up to 2%. It is anticipated the similar limits will be set for future years. Forecasts in this report are based on a 4.99% Council Tax increase in 2024/25 onwards.

Business Rates

22. Accounting for Business Rates Collection Fund surpluses and deficits and associated grants is complex, particularly in terms of timing. Latest forecasts indicate a Business Rates deficit for 2023/24 of £5.1m. This reflects the brought forward deficit position in relation to Covid19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF), partly offset by reduction in reliefs provided and release of funds from the appeals and bad debt provisions. There is also a transfer in from the S31 grant reserve of £5.7m.
23. A revaluation of all properties for business rates took effect from 1 April 2023. There is still some uncertainty concerning the impact of the 2023 revaluation on our Business Rate and grant income, in particular the impact of appeals under the “Check, Challenge, Appeal” process. We have made a provision and kept this under review in the light of actual appeals received together with external advice on potential future appeals and comparisons with other councils.

24. Future year forecasts reflect actual levels of empty property and other reliefs, numbers of properties in rating and the ongoing impact of our review of appeals set out above. We have also adjusted forecasts of Business Rates and Section 31 Grant income to reflect the Consumer Price Index. The final budget and MTFs will include adjustments between retained business rates, business rates grant and tariff to reflect the precise impact of revaluation and inflationary uplifts (the combined value of these three lines in paragraph 33 is a reasonable forecast at this stage).

Combined Authority

25. The West Midlands Combined Authority (CA) receives three elements of funding via the constituent authorities as follows:
- The Transport Levy to fund its transport functions, allocated by statute on a population basis.
 - A contribution to reflect assumed real terms growth in the central share of business rates from 2016/17 onwards to fund its regeneration activities, under the terms of the Devolution Deal.
 - A further contribution to fund its non-transport functions currently allocated by agreement partly on a population basis and partly by equal shares.
26. Forecasts in this report assume that the Transport Levy will be uplifted by 3% year on year.

Base Budget Forecasts

27. The Base Budget reflects the impact on spending of forecast inflation and other anticipated changes, before directorate additional spending or savings proposals are taken into account. Details are as follows:

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	£m	£m	£m
2023/24 base	311.5	311.5	311.5
Pay (note 1)	9.3	12.4	15.5
General price inflation (note 2)	-	1.8	3.6
Utilities inflation (note 3)	1.4	2.2	2.8
Income uplift (note 4)	(1.1)	(2.3)	(3.5)
Combined Authority (see paras 24-25)	0.4	1.1	1.6
Treasury (note 5)	1.3	2.7	2.0
NNDR revaluation changes (note 6)	(3.0)	(3.0)	(3.0)
Other adjustments (note 7)	(3.5)	(3.6)	(3.2)
Base Budget Forecast	316.3	322.8	327.3

Notes:

(1) This allows for an average pay increase of 6.2% in the current year, 4% increase for 2024/25 and a further 2% increase for 2025/26. Note that Central Government does not control Local Government pay directly.

(2) No general provision has been made for 2024/25, with any specific inflationary issues being reflected in additional spending in paragraph 26 below. From 2025/26 a 2% per annum increase has been applied to general non pay lines (excluding utilities and social care costs).

(3) This allows for

- An increase of 14% for electricity and 32% increase for gas for 2024/25.
- An increase of 10% for electricity and 20% increase for gas for 2025/26.
- An increase of 5% for electricity and 10% increase for gas for 2026/27.
- An increase of 6.7% for business rates for 2024/25 based on September 2023, with 2% annual increases thereafter.

(4) Assumes a general increase of 2% per year on fees and charges, with exceptions being reflected in savings in paragraph 29 below.

(5) Impact of Capital Programme, treasury management and investment income forecasts.

(6) Changes to Business rate tariff, due to revaluation.

(7) Fall-out of previous one-off items, adjustments to Medium Term Financial Strategy following July cabinet, removal of severance costs provision and other adjustments.

Additional Spending

28. The following table outlines proposed additional directorate spending arising from a combination of demographic, inflationary and other unavoidable service pressures as well as improvements to services to residents and growth in organisational capacity. Further detail is provided in Appendix C.

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	£m	£m	£m
Chief Executive	0.1	0.1	0.1
Adult Social Care	12.6	20.4	28.4
Children's Services	7.8	10.5	12.5
Finance and Legal Services	0.1	0.2	0.5
Digital, Commercial and Customer Services	1.4	1.4	1.6
Environment	1.9	2.0	2.1
Housing and Community	0.0	0.0	0.0
Regeneration and Enterprise	1.2	1.2	1.0
Total	25.1	35.8	46.2

Savings

29. In total the following saving (including proposed increases to service income) proposals have been identified. Details are set out in Appendix D.

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	£m	£m	£m
Chief Executives	0.3	0.5	0.5
Adult Social Care	1.6	3.1	3.1
Children's Services	0.6	2.2	2.2
Finance and Legal Services	0.0	0.1	0.1
Health and Wellbeing	0.4	0.4	0.4
Digital, Commercial and Customer Services	0.4	0.9	0.9
Environment	3.2	3.4	3.4
Housing and Community	0.0	0.0	0.0
Regeneration and Enterprise	1.2	1.6	2.4
Total	7.7	12.2	13.0

Public Health

30. The 2023 Autumn Statement announced indicative Public Health allocations for 2024/25 which for Dudley is £23m representing an increase of 1.32%.
31. In 2023/24 there is a forecast surplus £0.6m on the Public Health Grant due largely to a contingency when negotiating new contracts with health partners. This surplus will be added to the ringfenced Public Health Reserve. Programmes of work are planned, in line with council priorities, to ensure that the best use is made of these reserves.
32. The overall forecast position for the Public Health Grant funded budget can be summarised as follows:

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	£m	£m	£m
Base budget forecast	23.0	23.3	23.6
One-off spending plans	0.9	0.1	0.1
GF switch family safeguarding	0.8	0.2	0.0
Total spend	24.7	23.6	23.7
Forecast grant	23.0	23.3	23.6
Deficit	(1.7)	(0.3)	(0.1)
Reserve brought forward	2.2	0.5	0.2
Reserve carried forward	0.5	0.2	0.1

Medium Term Financial Strategy

33. The MTFs reflecting the revised spending proposals set out above, and forecasts of likely resource availability can be summarised as follows.

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	£m	£m	£m
Base Budget Forecast – see para 27	316.3	322.8	327.3
Additional spending – see para 28	25.1	35.8	46.2
Savings – see para 29	(7.7)	(12.2)	(13.0)
Total Service Spend	333.7	346.4	360.5
Council Tax	155.6	164.5	173.8
Collection Fund Surplus/(Deficit) – Council Tax	1.0	-	-
Retained Business Rates	89.2	91.1	92.9
Business Rate Grant	34.6	35.2	35.9
Collection Fund Surplus/(Deficit) – Business Rates	(5.1)	-	-
S31 Grant Reserve	5.7	-	-
Tariff & Cap	(6.3)	(6.5)	(6.6)
Tariff – One Off Adjustment	(1.1)	-	-
New Homes Bonus	0.1	0.1	0.1
Improved Better Care Fund (IBCF)	16.6	16.8	17.0
Social Care Grant	32.9	33.3	33.6
Services Grant	0.4	0.4	0.4
Total Resources	323.6	334.9	347.1
Deficit funded from General Fund	10.1	11.5	13.4
General Fund (surplus)/deficit b/f	(7.6)	2.5	14.0
General Fund deficit c/f	2.5	14.0	27.4

34. The table above assumes that Council Tax increases by 4.99% in 2024/25. Based on proposed referendum limits, this would not require a referendum in accordance with Chapter 4ZA of Part 1 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. It is also assumed that Council Tax will continue to increase by 4.99% per year from 2025/26 onwards.

35. Based on the forecasts, additional spending and savings proposals set out above, we are forecasting significant deficits in all years. We are also currently forecasting a deficit position on the General Fund at the end of 2024/25. If this position does not improve, then it will be necessary to transfer funds from earmarked reserves to the General Fund so as to set a lawful budget for next financial year. From 2025/6 onwards, the outlook is unsustainable unless we identify additional income and/or savings going significantly beyond the proposals already built into this report.
36. It should be noted that the savings proposals in paragraph 29 and Appendix D are those that are quantifiable and deliverable at this time. The Council now has the urgent task of reviewing its Total Operating Model including:
- Review of leisure centres including the option to outsource.
 - Review of the ongoing viability of halls and associated catering facilities, including options to operate on a concession basis.
 - Review of the scope of the library service.
 - A strategic review of parking, including on-street and off-street charging options.
 - A review of waste and recycling, taking account of recent government guidelines on food waste.
 - A review of all other service areas considering options to cease, reduce, outsource, merge or otherwise transform those services so as to be as cost-effective as possible.
 - A consequent review of the overall structure of the Council.
37. No assumptions can be made about the financial impact of the reviews set out above. Given the urgency of the situation, officers will continue to liaise with officials at Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) about the potential for Exceptional Financial Support in the event that savings delivered from the Total Operating Model are insufficient in timing or value.

Consultation

38. Thousands of people have taken part in the budget consultation over the past few years. Last year there were more than 1,500 valid responses received after an extensive promotion period through the media, social media and through the e-bulletin. This year, the Council

will continue to consult far and wide using the extensive reach it has through a range of communications channels as well as working with partner organisations and community groups to encourage more people to have their say. The results will be reported back to Cabinet in the spring.

39. Detailed consultation will also be undertaken with groups identified as being potentially affected by the specific savings proposals, with a particular emphasis on equalities issues. Further information is set out in the Equality Impact section below.
40. A consultation document will be distributed to representatives of Non-Domestic Ratepayers setting out the provisional budget proposals in this report. Consultees will be offered the opportunity for a meeting to be held if there is sufficient interest. Further detailed information (as required in pursuance of the statutory duty to consult) will be distributed in February for comment before the Council Tax setting meeting.
41. The draft Budget will be presented to Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee in January. In framing their responses, the Committee will be asked to consider both the spending, service delivery and funding implications (including the impact on Council Tax) of any observations they may wish to make.

Finance

42. In the Section 25 report to Council on 6th March, the Director of Finance and Legal stated: “The financial reserves that will remain available to the Council as a result of agreeing the proposals contained in this report are adequate to enable the setting of a lawful budget for 2023/24. Although adequate to set a lawful budget for 2023/24, reserves are low by comparison with other councils. The rate of Council Tax (and as a result the level of spending) is also low compared to other councils. Forecasts already build in the maximum increase in Council Tax without a referendum for 2023/24. There are significant risks to the forecast and Members should note that, if these risks materialise, there could be a need to reduce spending plans and/or raise additional income in order to avoid imprudent reductions to the level of reserves. This would be challenging in view of the context set out above.”

43. The Council's finances have further deteriorated since the statement set out above. The Council is now at a point where any further deterioration runs the risk of triggering a formal report under Section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988. In view of this risk, the Director of Finance and Legal is liaising with officials at DLUHC to explore the potential for Exceptional Financial Support.

Law

44. The Council's budget setting process is governed by the Local Government Finance Acts, 1988, 1992, and 2012, and the Local Government Act 2003.
45. The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Chief Financial Officer to report on the robustness of estimates made for the purpose of final budget calculations, and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves and this will be included in the final budget report.
46. The Localism Act 2011 introduced a new chapter into the Local Government Finance Act 1992 making provision for Council Tax referendums to be held if an authority increases its Council Tax by an amount exceeding principles determined by the Secretary of State and agreed by the House of Commons.
47. The Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006 are designed to enable a local authority to compensate employees whose employment terminates on grounds of redundancy or in the interests of the efficient exercise of the authority's functions. Any local arrangements in place must also be compliant with the Employment Rights Act 1996 and the Equality Act 2010.

Risk Management

48. The proposals in this report are based on a number of estimates, assumptions and professional judgements, which are subject to continuous review:
 - i. that pay inflation does not vary materially from current forecasts;
 - ii. that the 2024/25 finance settlement and any specific grant income is in line with forecasts (noting in particular that there is uncertainty

around the assumed allocation of additional Autumn Statement funding to Dudley);

- iii. that the underlying impact of any local government funding reforms (if they occur during the life of this MTFs) is neutral;
- iv. that underlying net income from Business Rates rises in line with forecast CPI, and that income and expenditure in respect of the EZ is in line with current forecasts;
- v. that the impact of appeals against Business Rates is contained within the provisions assumed in this report;
- vi. that the cost of Council Tax Reduction awarded will not substantially exceed forecasts, and the underlying tax base will continue to grow as anticipated;
- vii. that cash limited non-pay budgets will be managed so as to absorb any price inflation not specifically provided for in 2024/25 and any inflationary pressures in 2025/26 and 2026/27 will be no more than the amount provided for;
- viii. that income and expenditure relating to treasury management activity are in line with forecasts;
- ix. that government policy on maximum underlying Council Tax increases without the need for a referendum will be in line with the levels announced at the Autumn Statement;
- x. that the Adult Social Care market is able to absorb National Living Wage pressures within the proposed provision;
- xi. that employer contributions to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) from 2026/27 onwards are in line with contributions in the current triennial review period;
- xii. that any impact of social care reforms at the end of the MTFs period can be met within the available funding;
- xiii. that there will be no material losses to the Council as a result of loans, guarantees and/or grant clawback;

- xiv. that spending pressures in relation to Special Education Needs and Disability can be contained within the Dedicated Schools Grant;
 - xv. that there will be no call on the Council to underwrite the commitments of the West Midlands Combined Authority beyond the contributions outlined in this report;
 - xvi. that the savings proposals set out in Appendix D will be delivered as planned;
 - xvii. that there will be no other unplanned expenditure (including any resulting from demographic, legislative or case law pressures) or shortfalls in income, which cannot be met from reserves.
49. The assumptions set out above are subject to uncertainty. In the event that outcomes are more negative than the assumptions in this report then, given the already adverse outlook, there is an increasing likelihood that this would trigger a report under Section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.
50. The Corporate Risk Register recognises the risk that the Council may be unable to set and/or manage its budget so as to meet its statutory obligations within the resources available. At the last review point, this risk was allocated the maximum rating of 25 (Extreme).

Equality Impact

51. Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 - the general public sector equality duty - requires public authorities, including the Council, to have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't;
 - foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.
52. Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic
- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it
- encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

53. The legislation states that "the steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities." In practice, this means that reasonable adjustments should be made for disabled people so that they can access a service or fulfil employment duties, or perhaps a choice of an additional service for disabled people is offered as an alternative to a mainstream service.
54. Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
- tackle prejudice, and
 - promote understanding.
55. Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act.
56. The duty covers the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
57. An initial assessment of the budget proposals has been made. Where proposals are likely to have a significant equality impact, they will undergo an equality impact assessment informed by consultation with the protected groups who may be adversely affected. The results of this process and any steps which emerge that might help to mitigate any potential impact of the budget proposals on the protected groups will be reported to Members so that they can pay due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty in making decisions on the budget. In

making decisions on budget proposals, Members will need to weigh the Public Sector Equality Duty against the forecast financial position, risks and uncertainties set out in this report.

- 58. With regard to Children and Young People, a substantial element of the proposed budget for the Children's Services Directorate will be spent on maintaining and improving services for children and young people. The expenditure of other Directorates' budgets will also have a significant impact on this group.

Human Resources / Organisational Development

- 59. The spending controls include controls over recruitment.

Commercial / Procurement

- 60. The spending controls include controls over the letting of contracts.

Environment / Climate Change

- 61. There are no direct climate issues arising from this report.

Council Priorities and Projects

- 62. The aspirations of the Council Plan can only be delivered if the Council is financially sustainable.



.....
Balvinder Heran
Deputy Chief Executive



.....
Iain Newman
Director of Finance and Legal Services

Contact Officers: Rachel Cooper
Telephone: 01384 814844
Email: rachel.cooper@dudley.gov.uk

Laura Jones-Moore
Telephone: 01384 815680
Email: Laura.Jones-Moore@dudley.gov.uk

List of Background Papers

General Fund Revenue Forecast Outturn 2023/24

	Latest Service Budget £'000	Forecast £'000	Variance £'000	Comment
Chief Executive	6,675	6,786	111	
People and Inclusion	3,040	2,943	(97)	Staff car park permits (£55k), other net savings (£42k)
Communications and Public Affairs	1,000	1,096	96	Shortfall on Musicom £70k and Street vendors £16k, other £10k pressures
Chief Executives Office	2,635	2,747	112	Salary costs £162k and non pay pressures £50k offset by reduction in spend on strategic contingency (£100k)
Adult Social Care	110,723	118,317	7,594	
Dudley Disability Service	53,522	58,612	5,090	Bedbased pressure £1,841k arising from 7 long term placements £640k and £1,201k of short term placements, Community Services pressure of £3,622k arising from 177 extra clients and +£48 pw increase in costs, backdated Business Rates at Ladies walk £219k. Offset by net staff savings (£592k).
Assessment and Independence	42,834	44,396	1,562	Additional 295 clients £2,380k, salary pressures £19k, £156k other pressures. Offset by; additional grants & joint funding (£993k).

	Latest Service Budget £'000	Forecast £'000	Variance £'000	Comment
Access & Prevention, adults commissioning, Performance & complaints	9,906	9,651	(255)	Shortfall on Telecare income and additional staffing £84k, offset by net staffing savings within division (£239k), (£100k) Public Health switch for carers.
Adult Safeguarding & Principal Social Worker	1,828	1,644	(184)	Net salary savings (£184k)
Integrated Commissioning	4,285	4,285	0	
Other ASC	(8,194)	(8,224)	(30)	Net Salary savings (£30k)
Adult Mental Health	6,542	7,953	1,411	Supported living £685k, Residential care £494k, other care costs £233k, £170k Woodside pressure off set by net salary savings (£171k)
Children's Services	81,958	86,657	4,699	
Adolescent Safeguarding	4,465	4,328	(137)	Net salary savings (£137k)
Family Safeguarding	5,955	5,807	(148)	Net salary savings (£148k)
Through Care	41,593	45,781	4,188	External Residential Placements £3,927k, Fostering £224k, Legal fees £160k, Transport £77k, offset by other net savings (£200k).
Front Door and Partnerships	2,669	2,763	94	Agency costs £94k

	Latest Service Budget £'000	Forecast £'000	Variance £'000	Comment
Safeguarding Practice & QA	3,345	3,331	(14)	Net salary savings £14k
Other Children's Services	2,310	2,401	91	Agency and temporary staff £191k, use of reserve (£100k)
Family Solutions	8,165	7,384	(781)	Use of grants to fund staffing activity (£361k), use of reserve (£150k), Public Health grant reserve support (£270k)
Lead for Education Outcomes	8,927	10,110	1,183	Home to School Transport £1,000k, School Improvement Officers £80k, other net pressures £103k
Children's Disability Service and SEN Team	4,529	4,752	223	Direct payments £88k, other net pressures £135k
Health and Wellbeing	2,641	2,611	(30)	
Communities and Healthy Places	403	403	0	
Environmental Health and Trading Standards	3,196	3,174	(22)	Legal fees £53k, other net pressures £55k, offset by (£130k) switch from public health grant to trading standards.
H&W other	-958	-966	(8)	Other net savings (£8k)
Finance and Legal Services	14,183	14,776	593	

	Latest Service Budget £'000	Forecast £'000	Variance £'000	Comment
Law and Governance	5,015	5,663	648	Elections £220k, members allowances £83k, net cost of locums within legal £300k, other net pressures £45k
Financial Services	6,733	6,778	45	Legal fees £45k
Revenues and Benefits	1,808	1,712	(96)	Discretionary council tax discount £81k and other net pressures £78k, offset by release of reserves (£255k)
Audit and Risk Management	427	394	(33)	Net staff savings (£33k)
Data Protection and Information Governance	200	229	29	Software licence £14k and salary costs £15k
Digital, Commercial and Customer Services	16,623	16,623	0	
Commercial	210	223	13	Leisure service concession costs £30k, DCCS contribution towards Improvement Plan £40k offset by Dgfl contribution (£38k) and other savings (£19k)
Procurement	617	550	(67)	Vacancies (£67k)
Libraries	4,257	4,266	9	Legal fees.
Digital Customer Services	4,034	3,805	(229)	Net staff saving (£278k), utility pressures £31k, other savings (£12k), My Dudley marketing £10k and proposed reserve for My Dudley £20k.

	Latest Service Budget £'000	Forecast £'000	Variance £'000	Comment
Technology Systems and Services	7,604	7,830	226	Net staffing savings (£89k), dilapidation one off pressure £24k, one off pressure on premises costs £26k, recurrent pressure due to under recovery of income from Print Unit £265k.
DCCS other	(99)	(51)	48	Shortfall of traded service income £73k offset by other favourable variances (£25k).
Environment	48,731	49,906	1,175	
Waste & Transport Operations	10,984	12,129	1,145	Staffing £507k (of which pay award £225k, agency / sickness cover £1,682k, offset by vacancies (£1,400k)). Favourable Income (£106k); (of which Dry recycling plastics (£66k), vehicle sales (£40k)). Transport; Contracted out work £350k, increased costs of capital £150k, spot hire £115k, vehicles repairs £21k, bags and boxes £40k, barrier works £29k other net pressures of £203k which is mainly vehicle rechargeables, termination costs and security offset by fuel savings (164k).
Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change	6,739	7,715	976	Staff saving (£62k), Energy from Waste £808k (of which PPA income shortfall £652k, Commercial waste income (£87k), EfW R&M cost £1,435k, Increased fire suppression cost £91k, other operational costs £23k, release of disputed dilapidation provision (£243k), avoided landfill

	Latest Service Budget £'000	Forecast £'000	Variance £'000	Comment
				costs (£320k), reduced payments to contractor due to lower income (£242k), reduced insurance premiums (£221k), release PPA reserve (£280k)). Household Waste Recycling Centre contract uplift inflation £150k, Pop up £80k.
Neighbourhood Services	11,950	10,946	(1,004)	Net staffing savings (£1,912k), shortfall in pay and display income £164k, Street fines £621k, season tickets £46k, street scene income £43k, staff and council funded passes £117k, equipment £91k, other (£74k), part release of Ash die back reserve (£100k).
Transport & Highways Services	19,058	19,116	58	Net staff savings (£654k), offset by utilities £413k, under utilisation of in house staff £361k, potholes £188k, release of signs reserve (£250k).
Housing and Communities	2,507	2,351	(156)	
Maintenance	(80)	20	100	Under recovery of staff time £29k and high incidence of sickness resulting in under recovery 71k
Community Safety	1,276	1,108	(168)	Maximising use of grants (£168k).
Housing Strategy	814	745	(69)	Staffing savings net of pay award (£111k), Other net pressures including Tenants Perception Survey £42k.
Housing Options	290	290	0	

	Latest Service Budget £'000	Forecast £'000	Variance £'000	Comment
Housing Assets & Development	207	188	(19)	Net staffing savings (£19k).
Regeneration and Enterprise	14,418	16,421	2,003	
Culture, Leisure & Bereavement Services	236	1,592	1,356	Bereavement £424k (of which utilities £130k, shortfall of income £255k, other £39k). Halls, Himley, Market & Museums £273k (of which net staffing costs (£2k), Utilities 67k, shortfall of income £218k, other (£10k)). Leisure Centres £523k (of which £348k net staff costs, utilities £352k, other supplies & services £79k, increased income (£256k)). Executive Support £136k (of which net cost of interims £160k, less other s&s savings (£24k)).
Planning	1,920	2,261	341	Net staff savings (£198k) offset by income shortfall £350k, consultants and other pressures £189k
Economic Growth & Skills	2,346	893	(1,453)	One-off windfall re Black Country Legacy funds (£555k), maximising Adult and Community Learning external funding (£200k), Other favourable variance being mainly Enterprise Zone budget (£198k), review of earmarked reserves (£500k).

	Latest Service Budget £'000	Forecast £'000	Variance £'000	Comment
Corporate Landlord Services	7,499	9,208	1,709	Catering Commercial £674k (of which Staffing £161k, external income £775k, provisions (£252k), other (£10k)). Catering & Cleaning Other £240k (of which Staffing (378k), internal income £559k, external income £337k, catering provisions (£209k) other (£69k)). Property £795k (of which Staffing (£104k), utilities £308k, Admin buildings including churn costs £130k, Construction and Design fees shortfall £163k, other internal income £79k, voids and NNDR £134k, Facility management £30k, CCTV £40k, external income £15k).
Projects and Placemaking	901	951	50	Other net pressures £50k due to shortfall of income.
Regeneration Projects	1,516	1,516	0	
Corporate & Treasury	13,918	6,992	(6,926)	
Treasury	19,860	17,982	(1,878)	Lower borrowing costs and MRP compared to MTFS due to slippage and lower interest rates (£1,490k) offset by higher HRA balances on usable reserves and high interest rates £829k. Higher interest rates on interest paid on trust balances £56k. Higher interest rates and

	Latest Service Budget £'000	Forecast £'000	Variance £'000	Comment
				payments compared to budget (£1,365k) Reduction in income from fleet re internal borrowing and increased interest paid to Paragon for internal balances £92k.
Levies	15,020	14,369	(651)	Reduced share of Transport Levy (£51k), Surplus due to latest profile re EZ modelling of the black Country (£600k)
Corporate	(20,962)	(25,359)	(4,397)	BR revaluation contingency released (£3,013k), Pensions GF Over Recovery (£942k), other pension savings (£77k) general contingency released (£334k), other (£31k),
Total Service Costs	312,377	321,440	9,063	
Total Funding	(307,271)	(307,192)	79	Less S31 grant than budgeted £79k
Use of Balances	5,106	14,248	9,142	

Appendix B

Delivery of Savings in current MTFS

The extent of progress is reflected within the Forecast General Fund Outturn (Appendix A) and any ongoing deficits are built into the Additional Spending Pressures for the future Medium Term Financial Strategy (Appendix C).

2022/23 Savings		2022/23 £'000	Feb 23 Cabinet	Latest Update 2023
Adults	Review and update the charging policy for transport	60	In progress	Delivered
Chief Executive	Income from Boundary signs	40	In progress	Delivered
Regen & Enterprise	Halls - net increase in income from ticket sales, bar, and food because of increased number of shows following additional capital investment per recent Business Case	100	In progress	In progress
Regen & Enterprise	Bring bars back in-house for Stourbridge Town Hall & Cornbow Hall	10	In progress	In progress
Total		210		

2023/24 Savings		2023/24 £'000	Latest update
Adults	Income generation through fairer cost policy change, financial reviews and implementing charge on first day of confirmation permanent stay in a care home	30	Delivered
Adults	Increase in joint funding agreements	600	In progress
Adults	Transformation of service structures	370	In progress
Adults	Application of eligible grant funding to support services	50	In progress
Adults	Deploy pre-payment cards and apply new approaches to the financial oversight of Direct Payments	100	Delivered

2023/24 Savings		2023/24 £'000	Latest update
Adults	Review, assessment, and appropriate financial packages of care	230	In progress
Adults	New bed based banding framework	120	Delivered
Adults	Increase charges to Private residents for Telecare services	130	In progress
Adults	Introduce charges to Council tenants for Telecare services	130	In progress
Adults	Reduce the Creative Support contract by 50% when current extension ends	160	Delivered
	Total	1,920	
Children's	Efficiency savings - review of expenditure budgets for low/medium risk areas inclusive of car mileage (post lockdown), supplies and services, premises, and a review of terminated pension agreements. Staffing savings arising from vacancy review	350	Delivered
Children's	Youth Justice Service - reorganisation following changes to service delivery	90	Delivered
Children's	Redirection of grant funding via partnership delivery to support Early Help	40	Delivered
Children's	Cessation of voluntary sector contract	30	Delivered
Children's	Education Business Partnership - vacancy review	30	Delivered
Children's	Families Come First - prior year growth funding released now service embedded	110	Delivered
Children's	Efficiency as a result of implementing market forces and avoiding excessive use of agency staff	100	Delivered
	Total	750	
CEX	Vacancy management in HR&OD	60	Delivered
CEX	Remove vacant Corporate PMO & Performance Support Assistant post	30	Delivered
	Total	90	
DCCS	Removal of ADSL on completion of Fibre Optic installations	10	Delivered
DCCS	Not recruiting a role on digital and a role in technology	70	Delivered
DCCS	Reduction in printing costs	30	In progress

2023/24 Savings		2023/24 £'000	Latest update
DCCS	Reduction in print and mailing costs	30	In progress
DCCS	Virtualisation and consolidation of servers	30	Delayed
DCCS	Advancing to E5 Technology provides the most advanced functionality of Microsoft Office applications and additional security, giving an opportunity to rationalise other applications that are no longer required	100	In progress
	Total	270	
F&L	Reduced costs of self-insurance	100	Delivered
F&L	Vacancy management in Revenues and Benefits	80	Delivered
F&L	Adjust Members' Allowance budget to reflect entitlement to no more than one responsibility allowance	50	Delivered
	Total	230	
H&W	Continued work on Public Health Grant funded substance misuse preventative measures, to reduce use of rehabilitation beds.	100	Delivered
	Total	100	
H&C	Staff costs to be met from Homelessness grants.	40	Delivered
H&C	Reduce abortive fees for Disabled Facilities Grants	10	Delivered
H&C	Reduce costs incidental to Disabled Facilities Grants	20	Delivered
	Total	70	
ENV	Review Depot security	40	Unachieved
ENV	Parking - Review of charges (free hours remain)	140	Unachieved
ENV	Utilise Symology as the IT system for Street Lighting and end the contract with Mayrise as from 31st March 23	10	Delivered
ENV	Review of current free surface car parks	40	Reversed July 2023
ENV	Street Lighting Energy- Invest to save proposal, LED lighting across the Borough	140	In progress
ENV	Efficiencies for MOT's	50	In progress

2023/24 Savings		2023/24 £'000	Latest update
ENV	Stores review	170	Delivered
ENV	Fleet review	150	In progress
ENV	Energy For Waste arrangements	2,000	In progress
ENV	Review of parking enforcement	100	Unachieved
ENV	Reducing Market Saturday Rounds from 2 to 1	10	Delivered
ENV	Savings from not deploying waste to HWRC	200	Delivered
ENV	Trade Waste - Round Optimisation	50	Delivered
ENV	Review of Green Care working practices.	80	Delivered
ENV	Savings from Directorate Restructure phase 1	30	Delivered
ENV	Depot review - Blowers Green	10	Delivered
ENV	Street Lighting efficiency review	70	Delivered
ENV	Changes to standby/call out arrangements for winter gritting	20	Delivered
ENV	Review of HWRC operating hours	210	Reversed July 2023
	Total	3,520	
R&E	Review and reduction in cleaning consultancy services	20	In progress
R&E	Dell Stadium - to implement price changes from September 2022	30	Delivered
R&E	Saving of annual subscription to the Black Country Consortium as a result of the winding up of the BCLEP/BCC	50	Delivered
R&E	Leisure Centres - savings	560	Delivered
R&E	Himley - net increase in car park income and secondary spend due to increased visits as a result of the installation of Play Area.	70	Unachieved
R&E	Halls - net increase in income from ticket sales, bar and food as a result of increased number of shows following additional capital investment of £550k	50	Unachieved
R&E	Estate rationalisation - Regent House Dudley	100	Delivered

2023/24 Savings		2023/24 £'000	Latest update
	Total	880	

	Grand Total	7,830	
--	--------------------	--------------	--

Where savings have been partly implemented or delayed, the financial impact is reflected in the 2023/24 outturn forecast in Appendix A or is being met from directorate earmarked reserves.

Appendix C

Additional Spending

Adult Social Care	Category	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Additional placements in excess of budget forecast for people within Assessment and Independence	UN	1,660	1,660	1,660
Additional placements in excess of budget forecast for people within Dudley Disability Service	UN	1,250	1,250	1,250
Additional placements in excess of budget forecast for people within Mental Health Service	UN	450	450	450
Sustainable rates for residential and nursing care for older people	UN	2,870	5,750	8,630
Inflation uplifts across all care packages	UN	6,340	11,270	16,420
Total		12,570	20,380	28,410

Children's Services	Category	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
External Residential Placements for children in care - increase in number of placements	UN	1,320	1,320	1,320
Supported Accommodation - increase in placement numbers	UN	560	560	560
Increase in placement costs across Residential, Supported Living, Foster care	UN	4,160	6,440	7,920
Increase in Direct Payments for Children with disabilities to meet inflationary pressures and align with Adult Social Care rates	UN	280	340	410
Additional costs of home to school transport for children with special educational needs and disabilities	UN	1,300	1,680	2,080
Increase in savings rates for children in care to be in line with national rates	UN	180	180	180
Total		7,800	10,520	12,470

Chief Executive	Category	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Budget Pressures arising from loss of income from HR and Payroll Traded services linked to academisation	UN	140	140	140
Total		140	140	140

Finance and Legal Services	Category	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Increased cost of Section 13A Council Tax relief due to increased numbers of care leavers living in the Borough.	UN	110	110	110
Universal Credit migration impact on Housing Benefit recovery and subsidy.	UN	-	80	330
Increased non-pay costs for Electoral Registration as a result of high inflation and additional demands owing to new legislation.	UN	40	40	40
Total		150	230	480

Digital, Commercial and Customer Services	Category	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Loss of income because of schools academisation and failure to buy back core services.	UN	70	180	315
Adjustment of print budget income	UN	425	425	425
Cloud hosting application 1 (e.g. business world/business world replacement)	UN	250	130	130
RPI increase on contracts: Agresso (Unit 4), BACS Subs (Bottomline), Axway Automation (Axway), LiquidLogic Integration	UN	20	20	20
Fund permanent security contractor for DC+ walk in centre (currently Dudley Council Plus, 259 Castle St).	UN	50	50	50

Digital, Commercial and Customer Services	Category	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Fees for online payments	UN	20	20	20
Implement Civica ICON payment Webpaystaff	UN	60	10	10
Procure up to 70 more Microsoft E5 licences	UN	20	20	20
Library further inflation uplift	UN	170	250	330
Migration of Umbraco to hosting in cloud.	OR	70	30	30
Upgrade or replacement of Council contract management system.	OR	60	30	30
Microsoft E5 licensing model to enable additional benefits of using the enhanced security, telephony, business intelligence, and data management.	OR	130	150	150
Royal Mail price increase	UN	10	20	20
Total		1,355	1,335	1,550

Environment	Category	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Car Park Income - External Season Tickets	UN	90	90	90
Car Park Income - Pay and Display	UN	140	140	140
New Roads and Street Works Act - Sampling Legislation Change	UN	30	30	30
Concessionary contract for kerbside collection of mattresses', carpets, Underlay and bed-bases.	UN	250	250	250
Household Waste Recycling Centre & Green Waste Disposal Inflation	UN	190	220	280
Energy from Waste (EfW) Life Cycle review	UN	690	690	690
EFW contract inflation	UN	90	160	210
Weed Control Measures	EM	25	25	25

Environment	Category	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Staffing resources to enhance grounds maintenance and Street Cleansing	EM	168	168	168
Clean Teams for rapid response to environmental concerns.	EM	127	127	127
Waste Disposal	EM	60	120	120
Total		1,860	2,020	2,130

Regeneration and Enterprise	Category	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Re-basing income - Bereavement Services	UN	300	300	300
Re-basing income - Non-schools catering - Brookes Bistro	UN	200	-	-
Re-basing income - Non-schools catering - Leisure Centre cafes	UN	250	250	250
Re-basing income - Non-schools catering - Town Hall Bars	UN	150	150	150
Voids Management Budget for Corporate Landlord Services	UN	120	120	120
Dudley Market - re-base income plus maintenance budget	UN	40	20	0
Burial land requirements – debt charges relating prudential borrowing of £3.9m in relation to the cost of land purchase and subsequent works required	UN	80	150	150
Dudley Canal Maintenance Agreement with Dudley Canal Trust	UN	10	10	10
Additional budget required - more deployable CCTV cameras	EM	0	30	30
Dudley Local Plan	UN	10	130	0
Impact of National Living Wage on outsourced Cleaning Contract for Admin Buildings	UN	20	40	40
Total		1,180	1,200	1,050

Key

UN – Unavoidable cost pressures

EM – Elected Member priority

OR – Officer recommendation

Appendix D

Proposed Savings

Adult Social Care	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Relocation of service at Woodside to Community Centre	10	10	10
Eligible grant funding to support services	100	100	100
Income generation through fairer cost policy change, financial reviews and implementing charge on first day of confirmation permanent stay in a care home	40	70	70
Increase in joint funding agreements	440	1,100	1,100
Transformation of service structures	200	280	280
Application of eligible grant funding to support services	20	20	20
Deploy pre-payment cards and apply new approaches to the financial oversight of Direct Payments	110	110	110
Review, assessment and appropriate financial packages of care	140	230	230
Efficiencies arising from the procurement of residential and nursing care for older people	130	230	230
Re-provision of the Unicorn Day Centre to alternative Council Day Opportunities	460	930	930
Total	1,650	3,080	3,080

Children's Services	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Family Safeguarding	540	2,000	2,000
Review of Sycamore site	0	30	30
Additional income target from traded services	0	150	150
Total	540	2,180	2,180

Chief Executive	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Remove Strategic Contingency Fund	200	200	200
Vacancy management in HR&OD	30	70	70
Vacancy management and reduced hours / posts in Communication and Public Affairs team (including Graphic Design and Forging the Future support)	-	160	160
Switch funding of Forging the Future post	30	30	30
Reduce frequency of Your Borough Your Home Magazine	40	40	40
Total	300	500	500

Health and Wellbeing	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Existing staff to be funded from the Public Health Grant	130	130	130
Remove discretionary grant funding per ward distributed via Community Forums	240	240	240
Total	370	370	370

Finance and Legal	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Vacancy management in Revenues and Benefits	40	130	130
Total	40	130	130

Digital, Commercial and Customer Services	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Net saving from mobile phone contract	110	160	160
Reduction in printing costs	10	20	20
Reduction in print and mailing costs	120	180	180
Virtualisation and consolidation of servers	10	20	20
Northgate cloud migration savings	60	60	60
Reduction in c.4 customer service advisors in DC+. Increase customer self serve	120	470	470
Total Savings	430	910	910

Environment	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Charging for Green Waste collections	1,310	1,360	1,340
Reduction of opening hours of the Household Waste Recycling Centre Facility	30	30	30
Redesign of weed control services with a newly created street scene team.	60	75	75
Redesign of street cleansing and grounds maintenance with a newly created street scene team.	510	510	510
Redesign of clean teams with a newly created street scene team.	380	380	380
Street Cleansing – reduction in funding or replacing litter bins and general maintenance work.	200	200	200
Green Care – reduction in funding for In Bloom floral displays.	100	100	100
Street Lighting energy- upgrade to LED lighting across the Borough (invest to save).	160	310	310
Review of car parks maintenance.	30	30	30

Environment	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Closing Narrow Boat Way facility and move to Lister Road – (lease expires March 2024) and efficiencies for MOT's	40	40	40
The closure of the inhouse stores and the procurement of a parts contract.	40	40	40
Fleet Review	40	40	40
Review of parking enforcement	100	100	100
Growth in Commercial Waste Business Unit	170	170	170
Total	3,170	3,385	3,365

Regeneration and Enterprise	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Rationalisation of office buildings.	0	0	810
Himley - net increase in car park income and secondary spend due to increased visits because of the proposed installation of Play Area.	0	20	20
Review of School Catering	900	1000	1000
Alternative provision of food and beverage at leisure centres	180	200	200
Deferral of Metro complementary measures work. Until Sept 2025	100	400	400
Total Savings	1,180	1,620	2,430