

Report of	Assistant Director, Corporate & Improvement	Author	Paul Cook ☎ 505861 Darren Brown ☎ 282891
Title	Budget Strategy 2022/23 and Transformation		
Wards affected	All		

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 Scrutiny Panel is invited to consider the 13 October 2021 Cabinet report and make recommendations to Cabinet.

2 Reason for Scrutiny

- 2.1 To review progress to date on the 2022/23 Budget and Medium Term Financial Forecast.
- 2.2 To comment to the Cabinet.

3 Reason for Cabinet Report

- 3.1 To set out transformation savings to date.
- 3.2 To permanently restore annual Locality Budgets to £2,000 per councillor.
- 3.3 To commit to long term funding for Arts Partners
- 3.4 To update the Medium Term Financial Forecast.
- 3.5 To delegate authority to the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Resources in liaison with the Head of Finance to make various returns, set the tax base, determine membership of the Essex Business Rates Pool, determine the use of reserves in 21/22 and 22/23, and opt in to Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd external audit procurement for 22/23 audits onwards.

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 The Council is obliged to balance its budget on an annual basis. There are no alternatives.

5 Overview

- 5.1 See Cabinet Report attached.

6 MTFF Consultation

- 6.1 The budget strategy and timetable ensure that information is available for scrutiny and input from all Members.
- 6.2 Budget workshops are being held so that all members may share in the task of meeting the budget challenge. The first took place on 20 September 2021.
- 6.3 The Leader of the Opposition has been offered the opportunity to meet with officers to assist with consideration of any alternative budget proposals.
- 6.4 The normal statutory consultation with business ratepayers and parish councils will take place.

7 Financial implications

- 7.1 As set out in the Cabinet report.

8 Environmental and Climate Change Implications

- 8.1 All budget measures are assessed for their likely environmental impact, reflecting the Council's commitment to be 'carbon neutral' by 2030. Environment and Climate Change is an essential cross-cutting theme in the Council's recovery planning and a core theme of the new Strategic Plan.

9 Equality and Diversity Implications

- 9.1 Consideration will be given to equality and diversity issues in respect of budget changes proposed as part of the budget process. This will be done in line with agreed policies and procedures including production of Equality Impact Assessments where appropriate.

10 Other Standard References

- 10.1 There are no direct Publicity, Human Rights, Community Safety or Health and Safety implications as a result of this report.