



## **ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE**

**Thursday, 20 January 2022**

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>2022/23 BUDGET UPDATE</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE</b>

### **REPORT SUMMARY**

The report provides for consideration of the recommendations of the Policy and Resources Committee in respect of the 2022/23 Budget Update. The associated Report of the Director of Resources to the Policy and Resources Committee is attached at appendix 1.

### **RECOMMENDATION/S**

The Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee is recommended to:

- 1) note and comment on the 2022/23 draft budget proposals.
- 2) authorise the relevant director with portfolio to take the necessary action to consult on any proposals that require additional consultation and take necessary action to deliver the resulting service changes in consultation with the Chair and Group Spokesperson or reporting to the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee as the Director considers appropriate.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1.1 To provide the opportunity for the Policy and Services Committees to provide feedback on the budget proposals for the Policy and Resources Committee to take into consideration in recommending a legal budget to Full Council at its meeting of 28 February 2022.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 2.1 Other options have been considered as reported in the Policy and Resources Committee and appended report.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on Monday, 17 January 2021 will receive a report from the Director of Resources providing an updated position on the draft budget for 2022/23 and related statutory consultation. That report and associated appendices are appended to this report.

- 3.2 The budget proposals associated to Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee are detailed within section 3 of this report.

- 3.3 **PROPOSAL:** Highways Operational Services - Income exploration

**More about this option:** This proposal will explore the commercial opportunities and internal promotion of the various services available through Highway Operational Services in order to create additional income generation. It will also seek to further expand other departmental work requests within the council from Assets, Education, Parks & Countryside, and third party works currently undertaken for service partners such as NHS and Wirral Older People's Parliament.

**Income:** £30k

- 3.4 **PROPOSAL:** Standardisation of Residents Parking Permits

**More about this option:** This proposal will look to standardise charges for residents parking permits for existing and new residents parking schemes to cover all operational running costs including the council's set-up, maintenance, administration, and enforcement costs for existing and new schemes.

**Income:** £110k

- 3.5 **PROPOSAL:** Fleet Efficiencies in Transport - Going Green

**More about this option:** This budget saving option is to appoint an independent expert to undertake a no-cost 'Green Fleet Review'. This review will examine the existing fleet in terms of vehicle choice, fuel economy and recommend mileage reduction strategies.

**Saving:** £20k

3.6 **PROPOSAL:** Capitalisation of Highways Salaries

**More about this option:** All highways and transport approved schemes for 2021/22 are funded from the Combined Authority allocation for Integrated Transport Block (ITB), which is £1.15m. It is anticipated that the new City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement allocation for Wirral over 5 years from 2022 will be between £5m and £11m. Revenue savings can be achieved by increasing capital recharges – that is staff time spent on individual schemes.

**Saving:** £15k

3.7 **PROPOSAL:** Highway's Maintenance Contracts

**More about this option:** This proposal will see a reduction in the highway lining and the street furniture budgets. This will include seating, guard rails, signs, and bollards.

**Saving:** £25k

3.8 **PROPOSAL:** Streetlighting Service Savings

**More about this option:** Due to the introduction of the new LED lanterns programme savings can be made through ceasing night-time lighting inspections. In addition, the capital investment for illuminated signage has enabled us to replace all the illuminated bollards with reflective surfaces, therefore savings can also be made within the illuminated signage budget.

**Saving:** £50k

3.9 **PROPOSAL:** Car Park Maintenance - 1 Year Budget Reduction

**More about this option:** This proposal will see a revenue saving from the car parks maintenance budget for 1 year only. A budget will remain for essential safety repairs to potholes etc.

**Saving:** £50k

3.10 **PROPOSAL:** Transport Efficiencies

**More about this option:** This proposal will include a review of the in-house fleet, such as the outsourcing of the tyre fitting supply, repair, and fitting

service. A management restructure is also planned in order to realign the service and create workforce efficiencies.

**Saving:** £70k

3.11 **PROPOSAL:** Special Educational Needs (SEN) Transport Review

**More about this option:** This proposal focuses on the outsourcing of the in-house SEN adult transport service. Savings are based on the average cost of the current external provision compared to in-house provision, plus outsourcing of tyre supply, repair, and fitting service.

**Saving:** £0 in 22-23 then £118k in 23-24

3.12 **PROPOSAL:** Eco and Forest School Income

**More about this option:** The council provides a well-established and highly regarded Eco Schools programme and has been developing a Forest Schools initiative. Such provision is currently offered to schools free of charge. This proposal sets out an opportunity to implement a charge for parts of these programmes.

**Income:** £20k

3.13 **PROPOSAL:** Tree Management Team Commercial Offer

**More about this option:** The primary purpose and function of the Tree Risk and Inspection Team is to inspect and manage the council's tree stock (both highways and parkland) and mitigate any risk associated. However, there is some capacity within the inspection team to conduct tree inspections and provide management advice for partnering organisations and other landowners.

**Income:** £25k income

3.14 **PROPOSAL:** Income Increase on Allotments

**More about this option:** This option would seek to increase the income received from allotments by increasing the annual fees charged to allotment holders.

**Income:** £50k

3.15 **PROPOSAL:** Increase in Charges for Waste and Environmental Services

**More about this option:** This proposal would see an increase in charges (income) for a range of services provided by Waste and Environmental Services (including garden waste collection service subscription, skip permits, collection of bulky items, collection of waste and recycling from schools and

cost to supply a new wheelie bin), as well as freezing the litter bin budget for one year and annual contract efficiency savings.

**Income:** £462k

3.16 **PROPOSAL:** Removal of Vacancies in Environmental and Waste Team

**More about this option:** This option seeks to approve a post for early voluntary retirement (EVR) from the Waste and Environmental Services Team, plus not filling of existing or new vacancies.

**Saving:** £100k

3.17 **PROPOSAL:** Suspension of Climate Emergency Initiatives

**More about this option:** This saving proposal would see the suspension of the budget for climate emergency action plan projects, for the period of one year. External funding will be sought to continue environmental projects where available.

**Saving:** £250k

3.18 **PROPOSAL:** Remodelling of Street Cleansing, Plus Special Events

**More about this option:** This option would see the removal of the additional community permanent presence street cleansing service in some areas of the borough, as well as the removal of the budget for cleansing of special events e.g., River of Light, Cycling Tour of Britain, Giants etc. Removing this budget would result in cleansing costs for special events being charged out to promoters/organisers.

**Saving:** £214k

3.19 **PROPOSAL:** Cease Overtime Budget in Parks

**More about this option:** This Savings option would review the use of the additional hours budget, given the reduced maintenance and cessation of green spaces.

**Saving:** £15k

3.20 **PROPOSAL:** Re-Design Parks Service Reducing Maintenance and Service Costs

**More about this option:** This option will focus on service reduction and maintenance in parks. It will include the cessation of public firework displays, a reduction in maintenance cuts from 10 to 8 per annum, ceasing maintenance in open spaces including up to 10-15 local parks, and ceasing maintenance of 50% of the remaining parks. Local parks which also have play areas, football pitches or bowling greens etc have been excluded from this list.

**Saving:** £655k

3.21 **PROPOSAL:** Income Strategy - Cemeteries and Crematorium Service

**More about this option:** This option would provide increase choice for bereaved families with regards to burials and memorials and offer corporate sponsorship opportunities within Wirral's Cemeteries and Crematorium grounds for funeral directors.

**Income:** £53k income

3.22 **PROPOSAL:** 50% Reduction in School Crossing Patrol Service

**More about this option:** The service has 80 established sites but traditionally carries a number of vacancies due to difficulties in recruiting to the role. This option will require the permanent deletion of the 18 vacant sites plus the closing of at least a further 25 sites to be achieved by reprioritising of sites into highest risk areas / highest number of peds crossing.

**Saving:** £100k (22/23) £40k (23/24)

3.23 **PROPOSAL:** Deletion of Vacant Posts

**More about this option:** There are a number of vacant posts across the Neighbourhoods Directorate. This option would see these posts deleted to achieve the savings.

**Saving:** £302k

3.34 **PROPOSAL:** Reduction in The Budget for Office Related Expenditure Page

**More about this option:** This proposal is made up of a reduction in Neighbourhoods budgeted expenditure for office related expenses such as printing and paper services, lighting, electricity, heating, etc.

**Saving:** £23k

3.35 **PROPOSAL:** Review of the Neighbourhood Services Directorate

**More about this option:** A fundamental review of the Neighbourhood Directorate will take place in order to drive efficiencies and realign service. This will be achieved through an EVR process that will commence in early January. Statutory services within this Directorate will not be affected by the review.

**Saving:** £360k

**4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 This report is to ensure that a fully balanced legal budget can be recommended by the Policy and Resources Committee to Full Council at its meeting of 28 February 2022.

## **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 As detailed in the appended report to the Policy and Resources Committee.

## **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS**

- 6.1 As detailed in the appended report to the Policy and Resources Committee.

## **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

- 7.1 As detailed in the appended report to the Policy and Resources Committee.

## **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 As detailed in the appended report to the Policy and Resources Committee.

## **1.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 As detailed in the appended report to the Policy and Resources Committee.

## **10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 As detailed in the appended report to the Policy and Resources Committee.

## **11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 As detailed in the appended report to the Policy and Resources Committee.

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## **APPENDICES**

- Appendix 1 Report to Policy and Resources Committee, 17 January 2022  
Appendix 2 Detailed Draft 2022-23 Budget Position  
Appendix 3 Briefing Note: Local Government Finance Settlement 2022/23  
Appendix 4 2022/23 Budget Setting Proposals Pack  
Appendix 5 Full Budget Consultation report

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Pressure and Growth Business Cases  
Savings and Income Business Cases  
DLUHC External Assurance Reports

## **SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

Council Meeting	Date
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Policy and Resources Committee	17 March 2021
Policy and Resources Committee	25 October 2021
Policy and Resources Committee	01 December 2021
Policy and Resources Committee	17 January 2022