



TOURISM, COMMUNITIES, CULTURE & LEISURE COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 18 January 2022

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

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 Tourism, Communities, Culture & Leisure 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 Tourism, Communities, Culture & Leisure 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 Tourism, Communities, Culture & Leisure Committee are detailed within section 3 of this report.

3.3 PROPOSAL: Review of Leisure Service

More about this option: This proposal includes a full-service review of the council's Leisure Services Division to consider all elements delivered and focus on removal of unnecessary cost and duplication, improved commissioning, and a lean target operating model.

It is likely that there will be staffing implications as a consequence of the review, the totality of which cannot be identified at the present time. Any reduction in staffing numbers would be attempted to be achieved through EVR/VS, redeployment and/or retraining.

Saving: £178k

3.4 PROPOSAL: Closure of Europa Fun/Leisure Pool & Enhanced Gym Offer

More about this option: This proposal includes the closure of the Leisure Pool ('Fun' Pool) at Europa Pools (wave machine, swimming pool features, flumes, etc). The option does not include the closure of the centre nor competition swimming pool which would continue to remain open. The service would also seek to repurpose the Leisure Pool, using the space to create a larger indoor gym offer and therefore increased income.

Saving: £246k Plus £20k increased income from Gym offer

3.5 PROPOSAL: Increased Catering Across all Leisure Sites

More about this option: This saving proposal would see an increase in income generation at the Sail Loft site through maximisation of customer numbers and sales. Further income could be generated through expansion of the service at different sites across the borough.

Income: £60k

3.6 **PROPOSAL:** Outdoor Water Sports Offer at West Kirby Marine Lake

More about this option: This budget option is an income generation scheme that would utilise the Marine Lake for new outdoor activities. These activities have become popular during the pandemic as people have sought alternatives to indoor activities whilst restrictions were in place.

Additionally, there will be more opportunities for residents to become involved in new sports activities, as well as having the potential to attract additional customers at the Sail Loft site

Income: £15k

3.7 **PROPOSAL:** Catering Pod at Leasowe Leisure Centre for Football Traffic

More about this option: This proposal will look to establish an outdoor catering offer (catering pod) at Leasowe Leisure Centre. An extension of the council's expanded in-house catering offer, the unit will primarily serve the high footfall football league traffic during the months of September – May. There is also scope to expand operation by re-locating the unit during the remaining months of the year.

Income: £21k

3.8 **PROPOSAL:** Permanent Closure and Demolition of Woodchurch Leisure Centre

More about this option: This option is for the closure of Woodchurch Leisure Centre. Due to the condition of the site, its low usage levels comparable with other sites, the required level of investment and the subsidy it carries, is proposed that the centre is then demolished to make way for a growth in outdoor leisure provision. The site adjacent to the Leisure Centre will see the construction of a new 3G Artificial Grass playing pitch and accompanying pavilion during the 2022-23 financial year.

Saving: £402k

3.9 **PROPOSAL:** Temporary Closure and Remodelling of Bidston Tennis Centre

More about this option: The option would see the closure of the Tennis Centre (indoors) in Bidston for a 12-month period whilst a facility upgrade takes place at the site within the core of the building. It has been identified by an independent leisure consultant that the facility mix within the building does not complement local need or local demographic. Consequently, a redesigned centre will meet the needs of the local population and provide additional income. The new development would take out 3 indoor tennis courts and replace with extensive soft play and gymnastics offer. A second new 3G

Astroturf pitch would also be built within the outside grounds of the site in a funding partnership between the Football Foundation and the Council with further income potential.

Saving: £114k

3.10 **PROPOSAL:** Review of Golf Offer

More about this option: This proposal will seek to generate savings through the closure of the two lowest income generating 18-hole golf courses, two leisure based recreational New Brighton sites and introduction of a new pricing/membership model for municipal golf. Brackenwood and Hoylake golf courses will close, along with Wallasey Beach and Kings Parade leisure sites. The two remaining golf courses will still provide a sufficient 'golf offer' to the residents of Wirral whilst substantially reducing the financial subsidy to the authority.

Saving: £328k

3.11 **PROPOSAL:** Exercise on Referral Programme

More about this option: Wirral's Leisure Services Team has a pool of qualified professionals who will be commissioned by health partners to provide patients with an opportunity to engage in a structured programme of physical activity or exercise by working with a qualified exercise professional to provide a positive introduction to being active.

Income: £100k

3.12 **PROPOSAL:** Reprovision of the Library Service

More about this option: This saving is associated with the development of a new operating model in libraries which will consolidate and realign the current libraries estate and resources to provide a comprehensive and efficient service for all who wish to use it.

The new operating model will retain four central libraries and four community libraries, as well as Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) only provision co-located in community assets. The home reader service will remain for residents who cannot access a traditional library, as will the council's digital library and online offer.

In addition, the service will invest in a Mobile Library with a 3000-book capacity to ensure hard to reach communities have access to a library service.

The saving will be achieved through library closures, service realignment and a staffing restructure.

Full details of the new Libraries Operating Model will be available from 10th January via:

<http://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=956&MIId=9051>

Saving: £814k

3.13 **PROPOSAL:** Floral Pavilion – New Operating Model

More about this option: This option would reduce the operational budget for the Floral Pavilion Theatre and Conference Centre, whilst increasing the amount of income generated by the venue. The venue does attract a subsidy however this has diminished in recent years due to improved management and this trend of working towards a leaner operating model with greater income potential is expected to continue.

Saving: £350k - £400k

3.14 **PROPOSAL:** Review of Anti-Social Behaviour Team

More about this option: This option will involve an alternative service delivery model and reduction of one post. The Team will continue to prioritise the statutory functions and consider the impact on the Community Safety Strategy.

Saving: £50k

3.15 **PROPOSAL:** Review Engagement Officer Secondment

More about this option: This proposal will seek agreement to not backfill an Engagement Officer for one year secondment to Regeneration.

Saving: £35k

3.16 **PROPOSAL:** Reduction in Community Patrol Service

More about this option: This option would see a redesign of the Community Patrol Service to an Out of Hours / High Demand service only (the CCTV and Control Room Function will remain 24/7, 365).

Saving: £150k

3.17 **PROPOSAL:** Cessation of Constituency Team and Remodelling of Section

More about this option: This saving presents the deletion of the Constituency Team and Redeployment of officers where possible. The saving will be achieved through associated staffing reductions.

Saving: £346k

3.18 **PROPOSAL:** Introduction of an Overnight Camper Van Parking Charge in New Brighton

More about this option: This option will focus on income generation from introducing an overnight parking charge for leisure vehicles (motorhomes / campervans) on the coastal areas of New Brighton.

There is currently no charge for overnight parking. New Brighton has seen regeneration and an increase in tourism in recent years. The proposal will help to manage overnight parking in this area which has also seen a significant growth particularly since the start of the pandemic.

Income: £35k

3.19 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

3.20 PROPOSAL: Reduction in The Budget for Office Related Expenditure

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

3.21 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
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