

Open

Council

Agenda

6pm
Wednesday, 22 February 2023
Council Chamber
Wyre Forest House
Finepoint Way
Kidderminster



Council

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COUNCIL MEETING

14 February 2023

TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL AND HONORARY ALDERMEN

PRESS AND PUBLIC

Dear Member

YOU ARE INVITED to attend a meeting of the Wyre Forest District Council to be held **at 6.00p.m. on Wednesday 22 February 2023**, in the Council Chamber, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster.

The Agenda for the meeting is enclosed.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "I R Miller".

Ian Miller
Chief Executive

Declaration of Interests by Members – interests of members in contracts and other matters

Declarations of Interest are a standard item on every Council and Committee agenda and each Member must provide a full record of their interests in the Public Register.

In addition, alongside the Register of Interest, the Members Code of Conduct (“the Code”) requires the Declaration of Interests at meetings. Members have to decide first whether or not they have a disclosable interest in the matter under discussion.

Please see the Members’ Code of Conduct as set out in Section 14 of the Council’s constitution for full details.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) / Other Disclosable Interest (ODI)

DPI’s and ODI’s are interests defined in the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the District.

If you have a DPI (as defined in the Code) in a matter being considered at a meeting of the Council (as defined in the Code), the Council’s Standing Orders require you to leave the room where the meeting is held, for the duration of any discussion or voting on that matter.

If you have an ODI (as defined in the Code) you will need to consider whether you need to leave the room during the consideration of the matter.

(A) TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE COUNCIL

The Council

1. Is the ultimate decision making Body.
2. Determines the Budget (but reserves powers to itself in relation to requirements).
3. Is responsible for appointing (and dismissing) the Leader of the Council.
4. Appoints at its Annual Meeting, the Regulatory Committees, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and any other Committees/Forums necessary to conduct the Council’s business.
5. Decides on matters where the Cabinet is not minded to determine a matter in accordance with Council policy.

(B) MATTERS RESERVED TO THE COUNCIL

1. Those reserved by Law e.g. levying a rate, borrowing money, promotion of or opposition to a Bill in Parliament.
2. Matters reserved to the Council by financial regulations.
3. The adoption and amendment of Standing Orders, including the powers and duties of Committees and other forums.
4. Power to make, amend, revoke or enact or enforce any byelaws.
5. The determination of the objectives of the Council.
6. Matters of new policy or variation of existing policy as contained within the budget and policy framework.
7. Local Development Framework adoption.
8. Any function where a decision would be contrary to a plan, policy, budget or strategy previously adopted by the Council, which would be contrary to the Council’s Standing Orders, Financial Regulations or Executive arrangements.
9. The Scheme of Delegations to Officers.

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This meeting is being filmed* for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's website site (www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk).

At the start of the meeting the Chairman will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being filmed.

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By entering the meeting room and using the public seating area, you are consenting to be filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and or training purposes.

If members of the public do not wish to have their image captured they should sit in the Stourport and Bewdley Room where they can still view the meeting.

If any attendee is under the age of 18 the written consent of his or her parent or guardian is required before access to the meeting room is permitted. Persons under 18 are welcome to view the meeting from the Stourport and Bewdley Room.

If you have any queries regarding this, please speak with the Council's Legal Officer at the meeting.

* Unless there are no reports in the open session.

Wyre Forest District Council

Council

Wednesday, 22nd February 2023

Council Chamber, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster

Part 1

Open to the press and public

Agenda item	Subject	Page Number
1.	Prayers To be read by Rev. Sallie Butcher – Priest-in-Charge, Wyre Forest West (Mamble, Bayton, Rock, Heightington and Far Forest)	
2.	Apologies for Absence	
3.	Declarations of Interests by Members In accordance with the Code of Conduct, to invite Members to declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI's) and / or Other Disclosable Interests (ODI's) in the following agenda items and indicate the action that they will be taking when the item is considered. Please see the Members' Code of Conduct as set out in Section 14 of the Council's Constitution for full details.	
4.	Minutes To approve as a correct record and sign the Minutes of the last meeting held on 7 December 2022.	9
5.	Public Participation In accordance with the Council's Scheme for Public Speaking at Meetings of Full Council, to allow members of the public to present petitions, ask questions, or make statements, details of which have been received by 12 noon on Monday 13 February 2023. No requests for public participation were received by the deadline. <i>If you wish to speak on an urgent matter that has arisen since the deadline and you could not reasonably have known about it at the time, you should register your interest in speaking no later than 9am on the day of the meeting of Council. In the case of a request to speak on an urgent matter, the Solicitor to the Council will rule on whether or not the matter is urgent and that ruling will be final.</i>	
6.	Chairman's Communications To note the engagements of the Chairman of the Council since the Council's last meeting.	20

7.	<p>Leader of the Council Announcements</p> <p>To receive announcements from the Leader of the Council.</p>	
8.	<p>Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023-2026 & Capital Strategy 2023-2033</p> <p>To approve the Council’s budget for 2023-2026 having considered the proposed decision and budget reports recommended to Council by Cabinet.</p> <p>The report also seeks approval of the Capital Strategy for 2023-2033 including prudential indicators which set limits for non-financial investments and to fulfil the key requirements of the DLUHC Investment Guidance. As part of the overall approval sought the report of the Head of Resources in respect of statutory duties placed on Local Authority Chief Financial Officers in relation to budget setting and monitoring is considered.</p> <p><i>The appendices to this report have been circulated electronically.</i></p>	21
9.	<p>Council Tax Setting 2023-2024</p> <p>To consider and approve the formal resolution for setting the Council Tax for 2023-2024. This includes the 3% increase in the District Council’s element of Council Tax, as recommended by Cabinet on 7 February 2023, and the precepts and council tax increases in the elements of Council Tax set by the following bodies:</p> <p>Worcestershire County Council –increase +4.94% (including 2% adult social care) The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia (+5.94%) Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority (+5.59%)</p>	35
10.	<p>Policy and Budget Framework</p> <p>Matters which require a Decision by Council.</p> <p>(a) Recommendations from Treasury Management Review Panel – 30-01-2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treasury Management Strategy 2023-24 <p>Please note that the reports and associated documents, referred to above, have been circulated electronically to Members. Public inspection copies are available on request. Please refer to the front cover for contact details.</p>	46
11.	<p>Questions</p> <p>To receive questions submitted by Members of the Council and the replies of the Leader of the Council, or relevant Cabinet Member, in accordance with Standing Order 1.9, details of which have been received by 12 noon on Monday 13 February 2023.</p> <p>Eight questions have been received by the deadline</p>	48

	<i>In the case of an urgent matter that has arisen since the deadline above, and could not have been reasonably known at that time, it must be delivered in writing to the Solicitor to the Council no later than 9am on the day of Council.</i>	
12.	<p>Motions Submitted under Standing Orders</p> <p>To consider Motions in the order in which notice has been received.</p> <p>No motions were received by the deadline.</p>	
13.	<p>Emergency Motions submitted under Standing Orders</p> <p>To consider Emergency Motions submitted in accordance with Standing Order 4.1 (i).</p>	
14.	<p>To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Solicitor to the Council before the commencement of the meeting, which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.</p>	
15.	<p>Exclusion of the Press and Public</p> <p>To consider passing the following resolution:</p> <p>“That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of “exempt information” as defined in the paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act”.</p>	

Part 2

Not open to the Press and Public

16.	<p>To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Solicitor to the Council before the commencement of the meeting, which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.</p>	
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WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL

COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY,
KIDDERMINSTER

7TH DECEMBER 2022 (6PM)

Present:

Councillors: P Dyke (Chairman), C Edginton-White (Vice-Chairman), J Aston, G W Ballinger, C J Barnett, J F Byng, V Caulfield, S J Chambers, A Coleman, R H Coleman, B S Dawes, N J Desmond, H E Dyke, N Gale, I Hardiman, P Harrison, M J Hart, K Henderson, L J Jones, N Martin, F M Oborski MBE, T L Onslow, M Rayner, C Rogers, S E N Rook, D Ross, J W R Thomas, L Whitehouse and P W M Young.

C.49 Prayers

Prayers were said by Rev Sue Levitt, Stourport and Bewdley, Methodist Church.

C.50 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: B Brookes, S Miah, D R Sheppard and A Totty.

C.51 Declarations of Interests by Members

No declarations of interest were made.

C.52 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2022 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

C.53 Public Participation

There was no public participation.

C.54 Chairman's Communications

The Council received a list of functions attended by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman since the Council's last meeting.

C.55 Leader of the Council Announcements

The Leader of the Council referred members to her tabled report. A copy of the announcements is available for viewing on the Council's website.

https://forms.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/council/docs/doc58179_20221207_council_report.pdf

C.56 Review of Polling Places in the Wyre Forest District - report on the review and decision on changes

A report was received from the Chief Executive & Returning Officer for the Council to take decisions following the review of polling districts and places in Areley Kings & Riverside and Blakebrook & Habberley South, which was commissioned by Council on 21 September 2022.

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Health, Well-being and Democratic Services presented the report and formally moved the recommendations for approval.

The Leader of the Council seconded the proposals.

Upon a vote, the proposals were agreed.

Decision: Council considered the report and consultation; and determined the polling places for the wards of Areley Kings & Riverside and Blakebrook & Habberley South with effect from 1 January 2023 as follows:

**AKR-SC – Stourport Community Centre, Lower Lickhill Road
BHS-4 – Trinity Methodist Church, Churchfields
BHS-5 – Habberley Social Club, Habberley Estate**

C.57 Report back on motions agreed at September 2022 Council

Council received a report from the Chief Executive which provided Council with reports back on two matters set out in motions agreed at its last meeting.

The Leader presented the report and formally moved the recommendation for noting. The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Community Safety seconded the proposal.

Upon a vote, the proposal was agreed.

Decision: Council noted the reports.

C.58 Policy and Budget Framework – Matters which require a decision by Council

(a) Recommendations from Treasury Management Review Panel, 31 October 2022

- **Annual Report on Treasury Management Service and Actual Prudential Indicators 2021-22**

In the absence of the Chairman of the Review Panel, Councillor F Oborski

Agenda Item No. 4

MBE presented the recommendations and formally moved them for approval. She thanked the Finance Team and the external advisors for all the help and expert advice they give to members.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Capital Portfolio seconded the proposals.

Upon a vote, the recommendations were agreed.

Decision: Council;

- 1.1 Approved the actual 2021-22 prudential and treasury indicators in the report;**
- 1.2 Approved the actual 2021-22 non-treasury prudential indicators for Capital Portfolio Fund properties;**
- 1.3 Noted the annual treasury management report for 2021-22, including information on the non-treasury prudential indicators for Capital Portfolio Fund properties.**

(b) Recommendations from Treasury Management Review Panel – 31 October 2022

- Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy Mid-year Review Report 2022-23**

Councillor F Oborski MBE presented the recommendations and formally moved them for approval. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Capital Portfolio seconded the proposals.

Upon a vote, the recommendations were agreed.

Decision: Council APPROVED the Mid-year Review and all updated Prudential Indicators & Ratios.

(c) Recommendations from Cabinet – 7 November 2022

- Council tax reduction scheme review 2023/24**

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Capital Portfolio presented the recommendations and formally moved them for approval. The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Community Safety seconded the proposals.

Upon a vote, the proposal was agreed.

Decision: Council AGREED that the minimum contribution for working age Council Tax Reduction Scheme claimants is reduced from 20% to 10% with effect from 1st April 2023.

(d) Recommendations from Licensing & Environmental Committee – 5 December 2022

Agenda Item No. 4

- **Review of Fees and Charges for the Council's Licensing and Regulatory Services Function 2023/24**

The Chairman of the Committee, Councillor L Whitehouse presented the recommendations and formally moved them for approval.

Councillor F Oborski MBE seconded the proposals. She said that it was important that the Council made these changes to the fees and charges to remain competitive, as the authority ran the risk of losing vehicle and driver licensing fee income to other neighbouring or nearby authorities, that had chosen to freeze fees or implement lower increases.

A discussion ensued. Several members spoke against the proposals and outlined their reasons for being unable to support the recommendations. The concerns raised included the negative impact on the council's medium term financial strategy (MTFS), and the lack of information to enable members to make an informed decision.

In response to the concerns raised, Councillor Whitehouse said that the radical realignment of the fees and charges was part of a package of reform that would address other concerns about aspects of licensing policy in Wyre Forest, and the need to see positive progress in moving towards a fleet that was not dependent on fossil fuels. He urged Council to support the proposals.

Upon a show of hands, the recommendations were agreed.

Decision: Council AGREED that the proposals for fees and charges within the Council's Licensing, Food, Health, Safety and Pollution Control functions for 2023/24, as detailed in the report, be included in the Council's 2023/24 budget strategy.

C.59

Questions

Nine questions had been submitted by members of the council in accordance with standing orders.

Councillor Hart advised that in the absence of Councillor B Brookes, question number three would be withdrawn.

1. Question from Councillor M Hart to the Cabinet Member for Operational Services

Since the last Full Council meeting held on 21st September when the Cabinet Member told this Council that he regularly met with the depot staff and was driven around the district looking at issues on a weekly basis could he tell this Council how many times he has visited the depot and how many times he has been out looking at issues?

Answer from the Cabinet Member for Operational Services

I can confirm that I have been meeting staff at the depot since the 12th July, mainly on a Tuesday first thing, so that meetings do not interfere too much

Agenda Item No. 4

with depot staff's working day. We would discuss any issues arising and then would go out around the district taking in either specific wards, or drive through several wards. A recent visit was to Kidderminster Foreign, where we looked at issues regarding fly tipping. I have also spent time driving around the district on my own looking at parks and open spaces, which I must say are a credit to the staff who look after these wonderful amenities and are an asset to the area. I also currently attend planning briefings to ensure that we have the resources available to build on the work that has been done this year. I have a further meeting with senior officers at the depot tomorrow.

Supplementary question

Would the Cabinet member agree with me, firstly, that I think I missed the answer to how many times he has visited the depot and would he kindly, if he is not able to provide that information orally to this chamber, give it to me in writing; and seeing that he is very keen to go out and visit various areas of this district could I invite him to join myself, Councillor Jones and Councillor Hardiman, and we will take him around the lovely Wyre Forest Rural ward and show him some of the very many important issues, in particular fly tipping, which is still yet to be tackled, which are blighting the lives of our rural voters and if he could give a commitment to come out and visit, I would be delighted.

Answer

I will provide you in writing the number of times that I have been out or visited the depot since the last meeting. I was asked this question at the last meeting about going out with councillors and, as I said at the time, I do it on my own or with staff etc. so, no I am afraid I will just stick to what I said last time.

2. Question from Councillor D Ross to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Capital Portfolio

Could the Cabinet Member advise this council, what is the maximum stake an individual is allowed to stake and, in the year, 2021-2022 and 2022 to date could we be advised; as to how much prize money in total has been paid, how much in grants to organisations and which organisations have benefitted?

Answer from the Cabinet Member for Finance and Capital Portfolio

The maximum number of tickets a player can buy in one transaction is 20 for each week, although it is possible to buy more. The support team at Gatherwell (our Lottery operators) check the accounts that have got more than 20 tickets and provide them with gambling awareness advice. So, anyone who holds more than 20 tickets is monitored. This is checked on a monthly basis, and they email anyone new who has bought that number of tickets. They will also email all existing players once every six months. The majority with over 20 tickets are syndicates. Gatherwell have advised us that the maximum number of tickets on a single account is 60, which is for a syndicate. The average number of tickets per player is 1.95, as of October 2022, which demonstrates that this important local lottery is not attracting people who buy large numbers of tickets.

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It would take up too much of the Council's time to list all the prizes that have been given out and all the participating organisations that have received funding from the lottery. I can provide a note for Councillor Ross and members.

In summary, I can say there have been many prizes in 2021-2022 including £5,000 cash prizes in money and four vouchers or gift cards worth £1,000 each. In 2022 to 2023 so far, the prizes included £2,025 of cash prizes and three vouchers or gift cards worth £1,000 each. Hundreds of people have won three extra tickets.

The other thing I would like to announce, which is really good news that happened last week is that a person in the Wyre Forest has just won £2,000, which is going to be announced through our newsletter. It is the first time that anyone has won a whole £2,000. As at October 2022, just over 1,000 tickets were being bought each week by a little over 500 players. It produces a total annual income of £53,000 of which £32,000 a year is being distributed between 68 registered good causes. These are on the increase all the time because I have recommended two in the last week to apply for the lottery. The amount each organisation receives is determined by how many people sign up to support that organisation. The idea of this lottery is it is enabling so the more advertising they do to people, the more people they get to pay for their organisation. Some of the major recipients include a couple of scout groups which are generating over £500 a year, Kidderminster Male Choir over £900, Leapgate Activity Centre over £700, the Pick-up Artists and Friends of St George's Park over £500 each and Cookley in Bloom is receiving over £1,600 a year. This is an excellent initiative that provides valuable funding for a wide range of voluntary organisations and activities at no cost to them.

Supplementary question

The lottery, as the Council will all know is governed by legislation, in fact it is governed by the 2005 Gaming Act which surpasses the 1963 Betting, Gaming and Lottery Act and the 1968 Gaming Act. At the forefront of the new Act in 2005 and the Act in 2007 was the concept of social responsibility, which is where we look after the vulnerable and ensure that gaming is done in a fair and open way, and for the protection of children. As the Councillor refers to this lottery is run by an External Lottery Manager and they are covered under Section 257 of the Act in terms of their requirements under social responsibility. This Council, however, is covered under section 252 of the Act, which requires this Council to have in place policies and procedures for social responsibility, therefore, could the Councillor please outline to this Council what policy procedures we have in place for social responsibility?

Answer

It is a very complex area and these sections are extremely complex. Therefore, we are going to give you a written response in full and if there is anybody else in this room that would like to know what our policies are they can have full written copy of the policy.

3. Question withdrawn

4. Question from Councillor T Onslow to the Cabinet Member for Operational Services

Could the Cabinet Member please give this Council an update on the Heritage Lottery Project for Brinton Park?

Answer from the Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Community Safety

You will be pleased to note the tender package is all ready to go. The designs and specifications are now all in place, value engineering work has been done on the project and accepted by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). Rising inflation and raw material costs have had a direct impact on the original specification so it is all having to be updated as it has gone along, the delay now extending over a year. None of us are happy about that as there has been such a delay which has been caused by protracted negotiations with the scout group. As you are aware they lease the Sons of Rest Pavilion building and that has been a key part of this whole debate. The HLF will not give the go-ahead for tendering until the lease documentation has been signed by the scouts and seen by them: the HLF have got to agree it. We are hoping to be able to begin the tender process as soon as we have written authority from the HLF, which we were hoping fingers crossed, will be before Christmas.

Supplementary question

When I asked this question in February of this year, the phrase that came back to me was 'the spade is about to go into the soil', so if we hadn't done the tenders and we hadn't sorted the lease out and we hadn't sorted the ownership out and we haven't sorted out the specification, the design and we haven't got the confirmation from the Heritage Lottery could he advise why somebody said in February 'the spade was about to go into the soil' please?

Answer

Yes, it is hovering at the moment. It is all about these extra costs that have come along. At the end of the day, the whole issue is down to these issues with the scout movement. HLF are fully aware of what the delay is. They have been going along with us fully. The delay is regrettable, but it really comes directly from the lease granted under a previous administration, not ours. They made that arrangement with the Scout group, and that's the one that's causing all the problems with the discussions and has been for a couple of years. No doubt it was well intended at the time, however it has meant that we have had to seek and to achieve progress by agreement rather than simply been able to impose our will, as that would have been inappropriate.

5. Question from Councillor F Oborski MBE to the Cabinet Member for Operational Services

Every year since 1974 Wyre Forest D.C. has granted Free Parking on the Kidderminster New Road Car Park to Uniformed Organisations and Veterans attending the Remembrance Day Parade organised by the Royal British Legion and has cordoned off part of the Car Park for their use.

Agenda Item No. 4

This year no such arrangements were made forcing attendees to purchase the 24 hour ticket as they were going to be there for over 3 hours. Could the Cabinet Member explain why the normal concession did not apply this year?

Answer from the Cabinet Member for Operational Services

Researching this question, I am not aware of the arrangements as you describe. Each town has its own arrangements in terms of Remembrance Sunday. However, there is a consistent approach from the district council, which is that car parking charges apply seven days of the week. What is taking place and has been available in terms of the Kidderminster event is the people taking part in the parade are directed onto the New Road car park as it is in close proximity to the starting point. Council Officers then simply employ a sensible and proportionate enforcement regime that takes account of the nature of the event. This has always proven successful in the past and we are not aware of any issues either this year or in previous years.

Supplementary question

I make a statement first of all. I checked with Walter Delin, previous Chief Executive of this Council, and Keith Bannister, previous Treasurer of this Council, and both of them assured me that that had been the situation since 1974 and that I was telling the truth. Therefore, could the Cabinet Member please ensure that what has historically always happened in Kidderminster on Remembrance Day, continues to happen, and if there are Officers here, who aren't aware of what used to happen, I suggest they check with Keith Bannister, who is now an Honorary Freeman of Kidderminster, and he will tell them what the situation was.

Answer

Thank you I will take your comments forward to the relevant officers.

Councillor T Onslow left the meeting at 7.06pm and returned at 7.07pm.

6. Question from Councillor C Rogers to the Cabinet Member for Operational Services

I am sure the Cabinet Member for Operational Services is aware that in years gone by, this Council allowed Stourport Town Council to retain the takings from the Stourport car parks on carnival day. That allowed, along with the bucket collections, to make donations to charities in the area the sum of £3,000. Therefore, would the Cabinet Member please explain to this Council why, this year this Council saw fit to keep the income from the car parks, meaning that money passed onto local charities was only £1,850?

Answer from the Cabinet Member for Operational Services

Rather like the previous question, the Council's clear policy is that car parking charges apply seven days a week without exception. It is appropriate to ensure that all the three towns are treated equally, as the Council does not allow organisations in other towns to run collections in lieu of users paying car parking charges. On a factual point, I am not aware of any involvement directly from Stourport Town Council, as all

communications were with the Stourport Carnival Committee.

Supplementary question

The fact remains that the policy changed this year for some completely unknown reason, so isn't the Cabinet Member ashamed that his administration shows no support for the town he represents and limits the amount of charitable works it can do.

Answer

As I said in my previous answer. We must apply charges consistently across the board seven days a week, I am sorry if things have changed, but then so be it, we must apply a consistent policy throughout the district.

7. Question from Councillor N Desmond to the Leader of the Council

The Corporate Risk Register plays an integral role to support the delivery of the Corporate Plan and sets out a number of top risks and uncertainties facing the Council. Could the Leader of the Council confirm if she agrees with all of the top risks and if so, is she working with CLT to address and mitigate these risks and uncertainties?

Answer from the Leader of the Council

Yes, is the answer, I do support the assessment of risks, including risk four. It is the job of all Councillors to ensure that the mitigating actions are supported in taking it forward. It is a Corporate Risk Register, so it is about all of us.

Supplementary question

Would the Leader agree with me that three out of the top nine risks as set out on the Corporate Risk Register which are for member behaviour, undermines Council's reputation and performance, number four on the risk register, not having stable and effective political leadership adversely impacts delivery of Council Plan strategies or services and members lack knowledge necessary for effective discharge of their responsibilities. Would she agree with me that those risks are totally unprecedented, are highly embarrassing and a very poor reflection on what senior officers think of this current administration and members of this authority.

Answer

I would say that, which is why I highlighted risk four, which you mentioned the stable and effective political leadership that has been noted as members in this chamber know it has been a very difficult past four years, because the electors who elect us to this chamber did not give a clear view as to which particular political party they wish to lead the council. So we have been in a difficult position for the last three plus years, which I admit, has been an issue at times. Unfortunately, we are where we are, I cannot be embarrassed about something that I did not choose: the electorate chose us to be here as we sit now in this chamber. I will work and continue to work with senior officers in this council to alleviate any risks that are possible and I will continue to do that but I cannot change where we are at the moment in this chamber with our political representation: it is what it is.

8. Question from Councillor M Hart to the Leader of the Council

Could the Leader of the Council assure this Council that she takes the Code of Conduct seriously and use her best endeavours to ensure that it is respected by all members of this Council?

Answer from the Leader of the Council

Yes

Supplementary question

Could she advise me what she is doing about the member in her group, of which was the subject of a report to the Ethics and Standards Committee on the 8th of September this year when there was a clear recommendation that was unanimously supported by that Committee that the said councillor should write a letter apologising for their conduct and manner towards said person and that that letter should be sent to Bewdley Town Council and read out by the Chairman of that meeting and therefore, could she confirm that she wholeheartedly regrets, on behalf of the group that she leads, that the said member hasn't done that, and what is she going to do about ensuring that the Ethics and Standards Committee's decision, which was supported by members of her own group, is respected and acted upon?

Answer

As far as my latest information the statement was read out at the beginning of the Town Council meeting. As far as I am aware, the wording on that statement was that it was now in the hands of the Town Council to see what they wish to pursue.

9. Question from Councillor F Oborski MBE to the Cabinet Member for Operational Services

Can the Cabinet Member tell me:

What types of weed killer are used on WFDC Parks and Open Spaces; what is the frequency of their use and how are decisions concerning use made?

Answer from the Cabinet Member for Operational Services

Thank you for your question or three questions for the price of one.

Highways and Parks - we use Glyphosate, this is used to control weeds on highways and path edges and around built infrastructure in parks. It is spot sprayed by trained operatives. The determination when it is used is an operational matter and taken by the Parks Supervisor, the chemical is used during the growing season between February and October.

Countryside Nature Reserves - we use a Clopyralid + Triclopyr. This is used to control ragwort, thistle and European gorse, in areas where there are plants that are endangering biodiversity and/or becoming a cause for concern in the nature reserves under the weeds Act 1959. We also use Glyphosate to control Giant hogweed, a non-native weed that presents a risk to the public. All chemicals are spot sprayed directly on the plant. The application is from spring to July. The determination when these are used is an operational matter taken by the Biodiversity Officer.

Supplementary question

I have been asked by Pesticide-free Wyre Forest, who are a growing group of local residents who are very concerned to ask how a Council that promotes insect and pollinator friendly planting can really use weed killers which have a drastic impact on the insect population. Would he, with the exception of giant hogweed, please ask the relevant operatives to look again at their policy of using glyphosate because it has the most horrendous impacts not just on insects and wildlife but on dogs and other animals which come in contact with them and actually on human beings and it really is a chemical we should not be using at all.

Answer

The Cabinet is going to meet with the Pesticide Action Network UK in early January to hear more about the work that they have been doing with other councils throughout the UK. From this, I hope we can look at actions to reduce the amount of pesticides this council uses. We also learnt that Worcester City Council have been trialling a system called Root-Wave which kills weeds using electricity. Council officers will be contacting Worcester City Council to hear about the outcomes of this trial and to see if it is available to use more widely.

C.60 Motions Submitted Under Standing Orders

No motions were received by the deadline.

C.61 Emergency Motions submitted under Standing Orders

There were no emergency motions

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 7.21pm.

The meeting is available for viewing on the Council's website
<https://wyreforestdc.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcasts>

Chairman's List of Functions – 2022/23

December 2022 to February 2023

1 st December	*Worcester Victorian Christmas Fayre at Worcester Cathedral
9 th December	The Worcester Male Voice Choir's Christmas Concert 2022 at Pershore Abbey
17 th December	Christmas Gala Concert with Kidderminster Choral Society at Kidderminster Town Hall
29 th January	Holocaust Memorial Service – St Mary's Church
10 th February	St Peters Community Church, Meredith Green, Birchen Coppice, Skittles Charity Night

* Denotes attendance by Vice Chairman

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL
22ND FEBRUARY 2023

Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023-2026
Capital Strategy 2023-2033

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor M Rayner
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Head of Resources
CONTACT OFFICER:	Helen Ogram, Ext 2907 Helen.ogram@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
Appendix 1 Appendix 2 Appendix 3 Appendix 4 Appendix 5	Base Budget Projections 2023-2026 Capital Programme, Renewals and Prudential Indicators Fees and Charges – Council Report of the Head of Resources/Chief Financial Officer in respect of Sections 25-28 Local Government Act 2003 Alternative Budget Proposals <i>The appendices to this report have been circulated electronically and a public inspection copy is available on request. (See front cover for details.)</i>

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update Council on the Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2023-2026 and consider Cabinet’s recommendations to Council on the proposed budget decision. This report also seeks approval of the Capital Strategy for 2023-2033 including prudential indicators which set limits for non-financial investments and to fulfil the key requirements of the DLUHC Investment Guidance. As part of the overall approval sought the report of the Head of Resources in respect of statutory duties placed on Local Authority Chief Financial Officers in relation to budget setting and monitoring is considered.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The **CABINET** having re-considered the Financial Strategy 2023-2026, the results of the Budget consultation exercise, alternative budget proposals and recommendations of the Strategic Review Panel **RECOMMENDS TO COUNCIL** that it:

2.1 THREE YEAR BUDGET, CAPITAL STRATEGY AND POLICY FRAMEWORK 2023-2026

- 2.1.1 **APPROVES** the updated Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2023-2026.

2.1.2 **APPROVES** the Cabinet Proposals – taking into account the impact on the Council’s Capital and Revenue Budgets for 2023-2026 as shown in the tables in paragraphs 6.1 and 6.3 and as set out below:

- a.) Approval to provide community leadership funding of £1,000 for each councillor in 2023-24, at a cost of £33,000 in 2023-24.
- b.) Approval to provide additional staffing resources to address capacity issues at a cost of £119,000 in 2023-24, £166,000 in 2024-25 and £189,000 in 2025-26.
- c.) Approve investment for a further 5 year period in the ICT strategy which has revenue implications of £6,000 in 2023-24, £49,000 in 2024-25 and £123,000 in 2025-26. The ICT Strategy will deliver £1.6m capital investment over the period 2023-24 to 2028-29.
- d.) Approval to fund 2 generic Civil and Environmental enforcement posts £65,140 in 2023-24 and £67,740 in 2024-25.
- e.) Approval to provide additional litter picking resource in Stourport and Bewdley, a £10,000 pa core element to cover six weeks in the summer and a £10,000 pa match funding element subject to match funding from the Town Councils.
- f.) Approval to provide a £5,000 Community Fund to provide grants of £100 - £500 to support community, charity and residents’ groups to deliver events to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III.
- g.) Approval to provide new culture/arts events grants to town councils £20,000 pa.
- h.) Approval of up to £1,000 pa for the costs of the No Barriers Awards scheme on the basis that there is an absolute minimum of administrative support provided by WFDC;
- i.) Approval of the inclusion of the Housing Fund grant offer in the Capital Programme. The grant offer of £706,000 will support capital expenditure in 2023-24 of £876,000. The balance to be met from the Evergreen Investment Fund.

2.1.3 **APPROVES** the fees and charges in line with this Strategy, and the impact on the Council’s Revenue Budget for 2023-2026, as shown in Appendix 3.

2.1.4 **APPROVES** the Council’s updated Capital Strategy:

- a) **Approval** of the Capital Strategy 2023-2033 set out in Appendix 1 of the December Cabinet report and the associated Quatitative Indicators set out in Appendix 2 of the same report.
- b) **Approval** of variations to the Capital Programme and Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewals Schedule as set out in Appendices 2A and 2B, of

this report (which updates Appendix 1 of the Capital Strategy report to December 2022 Cabinet).

- c) **Approval** of the limits for gross debt for non-treasury investments compared to net service expenditure and for commercial income as a percentage of net service expenditure as set out in Appendix 2C of this report.

2.1.5 **APPROVES** that any Final Accounts savings arising from 2022-2023, together with surplus Earmarked Reserves, be allocated by the Head of Resources in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Capital Portfolio.

2.1.6 The General Fund Revenue Budget be **APPROVED** including all updates from the position in December 2022 as set out in this report.

2.2 COUNCIL TAX AND BUSINESS RATES

2.2.2 That Council:

- a. **SETS** the Council Tax for Wyre Forest District Council on a Band D Property at £236.21 for 2023-2024 (£229.34 2022-2023) which represents an increase of 3% on Council Tax from 2022-2023.
- b. **ENDORSES** the provisional Council Tax on a Band D Property in 2024-2025 of £243.27 and £250.57 in 2025-2026, being increases of 3%.

2.2.3 **NOTES** the Head of Resources (as Chief Financial Officer) opinion on the budget proposals, recommended by the Cabinet in this report, as detailed in Appendix 4 of this report.

3. KEY ISSUES

3.1 On 20th December 2022, Cabinet considered reports on proposals for the Budget Strategy for the period 2023-2026 including the intrinsically linked Capital Strategy 2023-2033. The Final Local Government Finance Settlement has now been issued. There are no major changes from the provisional settlement issued on 19th December 2022. This report provides an updated position following receipt of the Final Settlement, subsequent checks and due diligence review, and a proposed budget decision for Council to consider on the 22nd February 2023.

3.2 The increase in the District Council's tax from 2011-12 to 2023-24 taking into account the latest proposal is only 19.5% compared to a CPI increase of 41.5% between 2010 and 2022 demonstrating that households within Wyre Forest have enjoyed sub inflation increases across that period.

3.3 The Budget Consultation survey was launched on Tuesday 8th November 2022 and ran until Tuesday 6th December 2022. The results of this consultation were reported as part of the December 2022 MTFs report to Cabinet and have informed the proposals in this report. The Strategic Review Panel meetings on the 12th and the 26th January received Alternative Budget Proposals for consideration by

Cabinet in formulation of their final proposals and an updated version of the Conservative Group's proposal is included in this report at Appendix 5.

- 3.4 A revised **Capital Programme**, including the associated Quantitative Indicators, as set out in Appendix 2 of the February 2022 Cabinet report is in Appendix 2 for Council approval.
- 3.5 The approach to be taken to **fees and charges** within the financial strategy recommended by Cabinet this year continues to have regard to demand and other market conditions. As a result, some fees and charges may be frozen or increased by less than the average of 5%. Cabinet decided in December that car park fees and season ticket prices will be frozen this year on an exceptional basis due to cost of living pressures; and that a 30 minutes ticket will be introduced and the arrangements for evening charges will be changed, with the current hourly tariff ending at 6pm and a flat charge of £2 introduced for the period between 6pm and 8am.
- 3.6 Fees and Charges requiring Council approval are detailed in Appendix 3.

Spending Proposals

- 3.7 The Cabinet Proposals are revised following careful consideration of Alternative Budget proposals considered by the Strategic Review Panel on the 12th and 26th January 2023 and further dialogue with the opposition groups. The revised proposals demonstrate investment to support the Council's priority of "supporting a successful local economy" and in particular the other priority of a "safe, clean and green living environment".
- 3.8 In addition to the proposals that would have implications for the revenue budget if agreed, there are two issues that have been raised which do not have revenue implications in 2023-24. The first is that **webcasting for Cabinet meetings will be resumed** in the new municipal year following a review of usage of the free allowance under the revised webcasting contract. Based on usage in 2022, this is expected to be possible within existing budgets. The second is that the Cabinet will invite the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the new municipal year to undertake a **review of inclusive play equipment in the parks owned by WFDC** in order to assess the appropriate level of provision and to recommend how any investment should be financed, including contributions from S106 moneys, other sources such as councillors' community leadership funds and provision within the capital programme for 2024 onwards.
- 3.9 There are nine Cabinet Proposals this year as set out below:
 - 3.9.1 provision of community leadership funding of £1,000 for each councillor in 2023-24, at a cost of £33k in 2023-24. The new council elected in May 2023 will decide whether any funding should be made available in subsequent years and at what level, in light of affordability, the lack of support for this measure in the budget consultation (which was also expressed in consultations in earlier years) and the Council's financial position;

- 3.9.2 additional staffing resources to address capacity issues, at a cost of £119k/£166k/£189k comprising two corporate policy officers (to be filled by National Graduate Development Programme participants); additional posts within North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration and to allow for a potential move to a company structure for this important shared service; and £20kpa to fund capacity to support continuation of the green agenda.
- 3.9.3 ICT Strategy 2023-28, which has revenue implications of £6k/£49k/£123k. Investment for a further 5 year period as set out in detail in the separate report presented to Cabinet in December 2022, proposes capital investment of £1.6m for the delivery of the ICT Strategy over the period 2023-24 to 2028-29. Major expenditure will be subject to specific approval by the ICT Strategy Board and due diligence including a business case for each proposal.
- 3.9.4 Two new generic Civil and Environmental enforcement posts will be created at a cost of £65k in 2023-24 and £68k in 2024-25 to further deliver on the priority of a “safe, clean and green living environment”. These two posts will match fund the Police and Crime Commissioner’s grant offer to “address mutually agreed priorities at community level around prevention, crime, safety and vulnerability”. This will build on an initiative in Telford that reduced reported levels of crime, anti-social behaviour and fly tipping.
- 3.9.5 To increase staffing levels over the summer period for litter picking and bin emptying in Stourport and Bewdley. The proposal will provide an element of core funding (£10,000 pa) that would allow a higher level of activity over the main summer holiday and a further £10,000 pa match funding to unlock match funding from the Town Councils to enhance the provision yet further.
- 3.9.6 To provide a £5,000 Community Fund to provide grants of £100 - £500 to support community, charity and residents’ groups to deliver events to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III, similar to the approach adopted for the Platinum Jubilee last year. Parish councils will not be eligible for this fund.
- 3.9.7 To support new culture and arts events grants to town councils by providing automatic funding for the three town councils to spend on culture/arts events of their choosing, the events to be additional to those the town councils would have funded in any case (£10k pa. Kidderminster, £6k pa Stourport, £4k pa Bewdley).
- 3.9.8 Approval of up to £1,000 pa. for the costs of the No Barriers Awards scheme on the basis that administrative support comes from outside WFDC;
- 3.9.9 The inclusion of the Housing Fund grant offer in the Capital Programme. The grant offer of £706,000 will support capital expenditure in 2023-24 of £876,000. The balance to be met from the Evergreen Investment Fund.

3.10 The financial impact of the Cabinet Proposals is shown in table 6.1 below.

- 3.11 Business Rate projections based on participation in a Herefordshire and Worcestershire Pool for 2023-24 are shown in table 6.2 below. These take into account the impact of revaluation following examination of the draft valuation list that will come into effect on 1st April 2023, completion of the NDR1 return, confirmation from Government that there won't be a reset until 2025-26 at the earliest and that pooling will again be available in 2024-25. Accurate forecasting is extremely difficult, but it should be possible to manage any significant variations by drawing on the Business Rates Equalisation Earmarked Reserves if necessary. Estimates take into account the Council's share of forecast growth from major redevelopments, appeals, reliefs, economic regeneration work, forecast increases in the multiplier for inflation, revaluation and other Business Rates market intelligence. A collective Herefordshire and Worcestershire Business Rates Pool approach to provisions for appeals may result in outturn variances to these forecasts which will be reported as part of the Final Accounts process.
- 3.12 LG Futures were commissioned to undertake detailed financial modelling of the potential Pooling proposals for 2023-24. Extensive sensitivity and risk analysis has been undertaken as part of the work. This showed that it is unlikely that participation in the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Pool would not be beneficial.
- 3.13 Taking these items into account the projected Base Budget net expenditure for 2023-2024 is estimated to be £13.528m (see paragraph 6.2). This is £159k more than currently estimated to be raised from Council Tax, Business Rates Income retained, Collection Fund Surplus, New Homes Bonus and all other grants based on a 3% pa Council Tax increase. This total is net of savings targets from Wyre Forest Forward and Localism work streams.

4. LOCAL AUTHORITY REVENUE FINANCE SETTLEMENT FOR 2023-2024

- 4.1 The Final Local Government Settlement was announced on the 6th February 2023. There were no significant changes compared to the Provisional Settlement although there was a £19.1m increase to the services grant nationally and a £2.7m reduction in the Funding Guarantee. Whilst some welcome additional one-off funding was confirmed in the Final Settlement this has not significantly changed the longer-term financial forecast. It does though provide some additional time for the necessary transformation work to close the funding gap to be undertaken.
- 4.2 The 2023-24 local government finance settlement is for one year only, with some principles rolling over to 2024-25, and is based on the Autumn Statement 2022. The provisional settlement confirms these previous announcements; the main points, now confirmed in the Final Settlement are set out below followed by further analysis:
- **Council Tax** – the council tax referendum limit is set at 3%, with social care authorities allowed an additional 2% social care precept. The final settlement confirmed that districts will be allowed to apply the higher of the referendum limit or £5.
 - **Business Rates Retention** – As previously announced, the government has changed the inflation measure used to increase the local government funding amount within the Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA). CPI (September increase of 10.1%) has been used, instead of RPI (September increase of 12.6%).

The under-indexing multiplier grant has increased (by £930m), in order that local authorities do not lose what would have been the increase to the multiplier

- **Revenue Support Grant** – For authorities still receiving RSG, this has been increased by 10.1%, in line with what would have been the increase to the multiplier; there have also been existing grants worth £78m rolled into the RSG amounts.
- **Services Grant (Previously the 2022/23 Services Grant)** – This grant has been reduced from £822m to £464m. This reduction is due to the cancellation of the increase in National Insurance Contributions and to move funding to the Supporting Families programme. The methodology for the grant remains unchanged.
- **New Homes Bonus** - The 2023-24 allocations have been announced at £291m; a reduction of £265m on 2022-23. There have been no changes to the design of the scheme for 2023-24, with a single year's new allocation. The large reduction in funding from the scheme is due to all prior years' legacy payments having now been paid. The policy paper issued by DLUHC on 12th December indicated the future of the scheme will be announced this year.
- **Lower Tier Services Grant** – This grant (worth £111m in 2022-23) has been removed and replaced by the Minimum Funding Guarantee of 3% for 2023/24.
- **Funding Guarantee** – This £136m grant replaces the Lower Tier Services Grant. This grant is intended to provide a funding floor for all local authorities, so that no local authority would see an increase in Core Spending Power that is lower than 3% (before assumptions on council tax rate increases, but includes those on Council Tax base).
- **Local Government Funding Reform** – Confirmation that funding reform will be deferred until after the General Election.

a. Core Spending Power – Overall

“Core Spending power” is a headline figure used by MHCLG to represent the key revenue resources available to local authorities, including an estimate of actual and potential council tax

The National Core Spending Power figures for the period 2015-16 to 2023-24 are shown in Table 4.2.1 below. It shows an increase of 9.2% for 2023-24 and an overall change for the period 2015/16 to 2022/23 in flat cash terms of 7%. It should be remembered that the increase for individual authorities will be different to the national figures and the government figures also contain assumptions around council tax base change that may not be reflected in local projections. This Council's core spending power will increase by 4.9% in 2023-24 compared to 2022-23 as shown in Table 4.2.2. This compares with the average for shire districts of 5% as shown in Table 4.2.3.

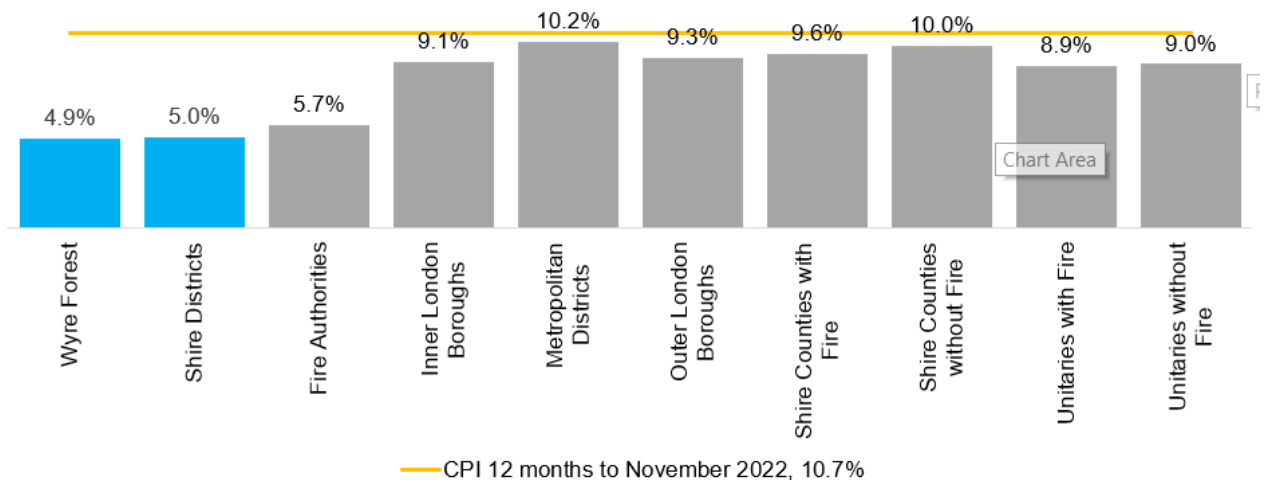
Table 4.2.1 Core Spending Power figures for England 2015-16 to 2023-24

England											
Table 1: Core Spending Power	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	Change	
	£ millions	£ millions	£ millions	£ millions	£ millions	£ millions	£ millions	£ millions	£ millions	£ millions	%
Settlement Funding Assessment	21,250	18,602	16,633	15,574	14,560	14,797	14,810	14,882	15,671	789	5.3%
Compensation for under-indexing the business rates multiplier	165	165	175	275	400	500	650	1,275	2,205	930	72.9%
Council Tax Requirement excluding parish precepts	22,036	23,247	24,666	26,332	27,768	29,227	30,308	31,922	33,838	1,916	6.0%
Improved Better Care Fund (including former Winter Pressures Grant)			1,115	1,739	2,077	2,077	2,077	2,140	2,140		
New Homes Bonus (incl. returned funding)	1,200	1,485	1,252	947	918	907	622	556	291	(265)	(48%)
Rural Services Delivery Grant	16	81	65	81	81	81	85	85	85		
Social Care Grant (incl. former Adult / Social Care Support Grant)			241	150	410	1,410	1,710	2,346	3,852	1,506	64.2%
ASC Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund (incl. former Market Sustainability & Fair Cost of Care Fund)								162	562	400	247%
ASC Discharge Fund									300	300	
Services Grant (incl. 2016/17 and 2017/18 transition grant)		150	150					822	464	(358)	(43.5%)
Lower Tier Services Grant							111	111		(111)	(100%)
Grants rolled in	209	257	248	239	232	232	238	239		(239)	(100%)
Funding Guarantee									136	136	
Core Spending Power Total	44,876	43,986	44,544	45,337	46,445	49,231	50,611	54,541	59,544	5,003	9.2%

Table 4.2.2 Core Spending Power figures for Wyre Forest District Council

Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2023/24: Appendix											
Wyre Forest											
Core Spending Power	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	Change	
	£ millions	£ millions	£ millions	£ millions	£ millions	£ millions	£ millions	£ millions	£ millions	£ millions	%
Settlement Funding Assessment	4.600	3.781	3.165	2.836	2.798	2.843	2.843	2.844	3.100	0.256	9.0%
Compensation for under-indexing the business rates multiplier	0.038	0.038	0.040	0.063	0.091	0.114	0.148	0.291	0.502	0.212	72.9%
Council Tax Requirement excluding parish precepts	6.533	6.721	6.784	7.004	7.234	7.445	7.578	7.848	8.129	0.281	3.6%
Improved Better Care Fund (including former Winter Pressures Grant)											
New Homes Bonus (incl. returned funding)	1.693	2.356	1.895	1.265	0.906	0.262	0.243	0.464	0.240	(0.224)	(48.2%)
Rural Services Delivery Grant											
Social Care Grant (incl. former Adult / Social Care Support Grant)											
ASC Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund (incl. former Market Sustainability & Fair Cost of Care Fund)											
ASC Discharge Fund											
Services Grant (incl. 2016/17 and 2017/18 transition grant)		0.043	0.043					0.196	0.110	(0.086)	(43.7%)
Lower Tier Services Grant							0.121	0.130		(0.130)	(100.0%)
Grants rolled in	0.130	0.150	0.150	0.144	0.135	0.144	0.152	0.150		(0.150)	(100.0%)
Funding Guarantee									0.430	0.430	
Core Spending Power Total	12.994	13.089	12.078	11.311	11.164	10.809	11.085	11.922	12.512	0.590	4.9%

Table 4.2.3 - Change in CSP by authority type (2022-23 to 2023-24) – WFDC 4.9% increase



- b. **Council Tax** – For 2023-2024, there will continue to be differential limits that will trigger the need for a council tax referendum.

A referendum limit of up to 3% will represent the trigger for all authorities, except Shire Districts and Fire and Rescue authorities (higher of £5 or 3%) Parishes (no limit), Police and Crime Commissioners (£15), and Mayoral Combined Authorities (no limit). As previously announced, an adult social care precept of up to 2% will also be available in 2023-24.

Business Rates - The application for a 50% Herefordshire and Worcestershire Business Rates Pool, including the Fire Authority has been confirmed.

- c. **New Homes Bonus** - the **allocations have been announced**, for 2023-24. The Core Spending Power figures for 2023-24 include these allocations. There are no changes to New Homes Bonus this year. However, there are a number of points to note:

- The allocations are provisional and subject to final confirmation and checks;
- The overall allocation for each authority is based on a single allocation for 2023-24. There are no legacy payments included in the allocation.
- The government have confirmed that the future of NHB will be announced during 2023.

- 4.3 Councils continue to face significant financial uncertainty and resultant risk. Clarity and certainty about how all local services will be funded over the next few years and beyond is needed. The 2023-24 settlement was the fifth one year settlement, albeit with a set of policy principles for 2024-25.

- Core settlement will continue in a similar manner.
- RSG will continue and be uplifted in line with Baseline Funding Levels.
- Social Care Grant and other social care grants will increase as set out at the Autumn Statement 2022.
- Business Rates Pooling will continue.
- Council Tax referendum principles will continue the same as 2023-24.

Whilst this enables councils to plan for these elements of funding, one-off grants, the uncertainty around New Homes Bonus and funding of waste reforms through the Extended Producer Responsibility Scheme cause significant difficulties in forecasting. A multi-year settlement is needed for forward planning and long term stability.

- 4.4 The forecast position in relation to total Government grant taking into account the one-year Spending Round for 2023-2024 and subsequent Finance Settlement is shown in the Tables at 6.2.

5. COUNCIL TAX BASE

- 5.1 The Council Tax Base previously reported for 2023-24 has now been confirmed; this has increased from the 2022-23 level of 34,220 to 34,738 being an increase of

518 or 1.5%. This has been due to growth in the housing stock and is net of the increase in Council Tax Reduction Scheme awards following revision to the scheme. It is forecast to rise over the term of the Strategy, informed by data from planning applications, resulting in increases of circa 1.4% or 500 additional properties each year in 2024-25 and 2025-26.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The Cabinet Proposals were confirmed at its meeting on 7th February 2023. The final proposals are summarised below and included in the table in paragraph 6.2.

ACTIVITY AND DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSALS	KEY	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	After 2025-26
		£	£	£	£
Community Leadership Fund Provision of a community leadership fund in 2023-24, this funding to be £1,000 per Member.	C R S	33,000			
ICT Strategy Inclusion the ICT Strategy 2023-28 in the capital programme and the revenue implications of the Strategy which will provide a resilient, secure and reliable service.	C R S	6,000	250,000 49,000	912,000 123,000	257,000 150,000
Additional Staffing resource Enhance the capacity in NWEDR to deliver additional capacity and support delivery of major regeneration projects; Corporate Policy resource through the national graduate apprentice scheme and to provide additional staffing capacity to support continuation of the Green Agenda.	C R S	119,000 2.50	166,000 3.50	189,000 3.50	190,000 3.50
Civil and Environmental Enforcement Two additional generic posts, also to match fund the PCC's initiative on Safer Streets Partnership Working, net of income (£5k per post).	C R S	65,140 2.00	67,740 2.00	-	-
Seasonal Litter Picking Resource To work in partnership with Stourport and Bewdley Town Councils to enhance litter picking in Tourist Areas over the summer holiday period. Additional match-funding element to extend the season/increase the activity if matched by funding from the town councils.	C R R S	10,000 10,000 0.30	10,000 10,000 0.30	10,000 10,000 0.30	10,000 10,000 0.30
Community Fund A Community fund to enable communities to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III (parish Councils not eligible).	C R S	5,000			
Culture/arts events Culture/arts grants to town councils (£10k Kidderminster TC, £6k Stourport TC and £4k Bewdley TC).	C R S	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
No Barrier Awards Inclusion of funding for the costs of the No Barrier Awards scheme, on the basis that there is an absolute minimum of administrative support provided by WFDC	C R S	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Housing Fund Inclusion of the Housing Fund grant offer in the Capital Programme. The grant offer of £706k will support capital expenditure of £876k. The balance will be met from the Evergreen Investment Fund. The scheme will support the Government's refugee schemes.	C R S	876,000			
TOTALS	C R S	876,000 269,140 4.8	250,000 323,740 5.8	912,000 353,000 3.8	257,000 381,000 3.8

6.2 The following tables demonstrate the updated position for the Council when the revisions are incorporated into the Base Budget. The Council is forecast to hold a balance of £1,956k at the end of 2025-26 (see reserves table in 6.4) based on a Council Tax increase of 3% pa.

Table 6.2 - Updated MTFS Position (Council Tax Increase of 3% pa)

	Revised 2022-23 £	2023-24 £	2024-25 £	2025-26 £
Total Net Expenditure on Services	12,401,530	13,418,350	13,483,970	13,959,940
Less:				
Cabinet Proposals	0	269,140	323,740	353,000
Net Expenditure	12,401,530	13,687,490	13,807,710	14,312,940
Contribution (from)/to Reserves	(372,750)	(159,010)	(394,850)	(939,040)
Net Budget Requirement	12,028,780	13,528,480	13,412,860	13,373,900
Less:				
Revenue Support Grant	0	150,380	150,380	150,000
Business Rates	3,356,940	4,392,250	4,590,130	3,697,830
Business Rates - National levy redistributed	23,850	0		
New Homes Bonus	463,760	240,030	0	0
Lower Tier Services Grant	130,070	0	0	0
3% Funding Guarantee	0	425,370	0	0
Collection Fund Deficit	10,150	0	0	0
Council Tax Income	7,848,010	8,205,460	8,572,350	8,954,870
One off Services Grant	196,000	114,990	100,000	0
Transitional Funding (assumption)	0	0	0	571,200
WFDC Council Tax: 3% increase per annum	229.34	236.21	243.27	250.57
Percentage increase in Council Tax	2.23%	3%	3%	3%

6.3 Reserves available as part of the three-year financial strategy are as shown in the following table.

Table 6.3. - Reserves Statement

Reserves Statement	Revised 2022-23 £	2023-24 £	2024-25 £	2025-26 £
Reserves as at 1st April	3,841	3,468	3,309	2,914
Contribution to/(from) Reserves	(373)	(159)	(395)	(939)
Reserves as at 31st March	3,468	3,309	2,914	1,975

6.4 The table below shows a funding gap of £1.770m in 2025-26,

Table 6.4 – Funding Gap

Financial Gap	2022-23 £	2023-24 £	2024-25 £	2025-26 £
Wyre Forest Forward Savings not yet achieved	71,430	177,240	388,310	357,810
Generic Localism Savings	78,770	304,230	475,400	473,270
SUB- Total	150,200	481,470	863,710	831,080
Use of reserves from proposed 2023-26 Strategy	372,750	159,010	394,850	939,040
TOTAL	522,950	640,480	1,258,560	1,770,120

7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 EIAs will be undertaken as appropriate as part of reviews of service delivery arrangements and implementation of new models. There are no proposals in this report that require an assessment, because of their generic nature.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 Achieving financial sustainability is the most significant challenge facing the Council. The Strategic Review Panel provided some options for the Cabinet to consider in making its recommendations on the medium-term financial strategy. The principal risks were outlined in Appendix 5 of the report to Cabinet on 20th December 2022 and are summarised and refreshed where appropriate in Appendix 4 of this report.
- 8.2 The increased Council Tax Base from 2023-24, the development and regeneration of Kidderminster and the wider district following the successful award of grant under both the Future High Streets fund and the Levelling Up Fund, Cabinet Proposals and continuing progress with the Wyre Forest Forward Transformation savings contribute as far as possible to the mitigation of the financial risk within this budget strategy.
- 8.3 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require Local Authorities to fully consider and manage Risk as part of the Budget process. Appendix 5 of the December 2022 report showed an analysis of the significant financial risks which are affecting the Council. This has been reviewed and remains current subject to the comments and updates provided in Appendix 4 of this report.
- 8.4 Local authorities are required to formalise their approach to risk management and evidence it more directly as part of the budgetary process. Further statutory safeguards designed to prevent an authority from over-committing itself financially are as follows:
- Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 which requires the authority to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and that the Chief Finance Officer has personal responsibility for such administration.
 - Section 32 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 which requires the authority to set a balanced budget.
 - The prudential framework, introduced as part of the Local Government Act 2003, covers the way an authority must manage its investments including affordability considerations. The of affordability of financial plans requires a judgement about risk. Prudential Indicators are the monitoring tool to assess performance and risk.
 - The external auditor's duty to satisfy itself that the authority has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

- CIPFA Guidance on Reserves and Balances highlights the need to consider risks facing the authority; the risks posed by the continuing economic uncertainty, supply chain issues exacerbated by global unrest and departure from the EU and continued uncertainty about funding reform place pressure on the Council to hold higher levels of reserves to ensure ongoing sustainability.
- To reinforce these obligations section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 requires the Chief Finance Officer to report to all councillors, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, if there is or is likely to be unlawful expenditure or an unbalanced budget.

- 8.5 CIPFA issued a Financial Management Code (FM Code) in October 2019 which provides guidance for good and sustainable financial management in local authorities provides assurance that authorities are managing resources effectively.
- 8.6 The Treasury Management Code and Prudential Code provide guidance to support the management of risks associated with Treasury and Capital Financing strategies.
- 8.7 The on-going principle of the Prudential Code is that capital plans must be affordable and proportionate, and an authority must not borrow to invest primarily for financial return.
- 8.8 The financial projections suggest deficits in funding across all three years under consideration, leading to an overall projected net deficit over the three years of some £1.8m. In broad terms this can be explained by the combination of cost pressures and reduced income not met by government grant, and historic reductions in Revenue Support Grant and New Homes Bonus receipts.

9. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Local Government Act 2003

- 9.1.1 The Local Government Act 2003 (Sections 25-28) places duties on Local Authorities on how they set and monitor budgets.
- 9.1.2 Sections 25-27 require the Section 151 Officer to report on the robustness of the estimates and the adequacy of its proposed financial reserves. This is reported to Council as Appendix 4 of this report.
- 9.1.3 Section 28 places a statutory duty on an Authority to review its budget from time to time during the year. If the Budget Monitoring Report shows that there has been deterioration in the Authority's financial position, the Authority must take such action as it concludes necessary. The Council currently reviews the Budget on a quarterly basis, with CLT/Cabinet receiving monthly budget monitoring reports, and this practice will continue.

10. CONSULTEES

Corporate Leadership Team
Cabinet

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.
- 11.2 Cabinet Report on the Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2023–2026 20th December 2022.
- 11.3 Cabinet Report on updated Capital Strategy 2023-2033 20th December 2022.
- 11.4 Agendas and Minutes of the Strategic Review Panel.
- 11.5 Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2023-2024.
- 11.6 Cabinet Report on the Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2023–2026 7th February 2023.
- 11.7 Prudential and Treasury Management Codes December 2021
- 11.8 Strong Leader Cabinet Report – October 2022 – Business Rates Retention Business Rate Pool bid. Delegated Decision Notice 17th January 2023.

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

REVENUE BUDGET TOTAL REQUIREMENTS - DISTRICT COUNCIL PURPOSES

SERVICE	2022/23		2023/24			2024/25			2025/26		
	Original Estimate £	Revised Estimate £	At Nov.22 Prices £	Inflation £	TOTAL £	At Nov.22 Prices £	Inflation £	TOTAL £	At Nov.22 Prices £	Inflation £	TOTAL £
CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND SOLICITOR TO THE COUNCIL	1,293,870	2,313,470	2,108,840	81,020	2,189,860	1,650,890	150,340	1,801,230	1,668,080	221,630	1,889,710
COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT	4,659,590	4,837,110	5,052,290	270,880	5,323,170	4,973,150	494,260	5,467,410	4,825,580	722,580	5,548,160
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & REGENERATION	(93,790)	283,770	131,260	42,690	173,950	3,480	78,880	82,360	(7,190)	117,680	110,490
RESOURCES	2,939,970	2,610,850	2,431,700	16,420	2,448,120	2,097,740	38,110	2,135,850	2,056,700	52,480	2,109,180
REVENUES, BENEFITS & CUSTOMER SERVICES	977,580	1,033,640	1,312,430	77,560	1,389,990	1,328,400	141,240	1,469,640	1,319,990	206,500	1,526,490
STRATEGIC GROWTH	1,894,040	1,847,480	1,960,280	103,490	2,063,770	1,985,630	177,670	2,163,300	1,990,420	230,950	2,221,370
CABINET PROPOSALS	0	0	263,140	0	263,140	274,740	0	274,740	230,000	0	230,000
	11,671,260	12,926,320	13,259,940	592,060	13,852,000	12,314,030	1,080,500	13,394,530	12,083,580	1,551,820	13,635,400
LESS: CAPITAL ACCOUNT	275,420	325,210	575,070	4,420	579,490	856,220	7,960	864,180	987,560	11,580	999,140
INTEREST RECEIVED	(55,000)	(850,000)	(750,000)	0	(750,000)	(500,000)	0	(500,000)	(444,600)	0	(444,600)
CABINET PROPOSAL	0	0	6,000	0	6,000	49,000	0	49,000	123,000	0	123,000
CAPITAL PORTFOLIO FUND AND DEVELOPMENT											
LOANS FUND	135,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE ON SERVICES	12,026,680	12,401,530	13,091,010	596,480	13,687,490	12,719,250	596,480	13,807,710	12,749,540	596,480	14,312,940
LESS: CONTRIBUTION (FROM) TO RESERVES	(21,750)	(372,750)			(159,010)			(394,850)			(939,040)
NET BUDGET REQUIREMENT	12,004,930	12,028,780			13,528,480			13,412,860			13,373,900
LESS: REVENUE SUPPORT GRANT	0	0			(150,380)			(150,380)			(150,000)
BUSINESS RATES INCOME	(2,956,940)	(2,956,940)			(3,442,050)			(3,590,130)			(3,697,830)
BUSINESS RATES GROWTH	(400,000)	(400,000)			(950,200)			(1,000,000)			0
BUSINESS RATES - NATIONAL LEVY REDISTRIBUTED	0	(23,850)			0			0			0
FUNDING GUARANTEE	0	0			(429,920)			0			0
COLLECTION FUND (SURPLUS)/DEFICIT	(10,150)	(10,150)			0			0			0
NEW HOMES BONUS	(463,760)	(463,760)			(240,030)			0			0
TRANSITIONAL FUNDING (assumption)	0	0			0			0			(571,200)
LOWER TIER SERVICES GRANT	(130,070)	(130,070)			0			0			0
ONE OFF SERVICES GRANT	(196,000)	(196,000)			(110,440)			(100,000)			0
GENERAL EXPENSES -											
COUNCIL TAX INCOME	7,848,010	7,848,010			8,205,460			8,572,350			8,954,870
COUNCIL TAX LEVY		229.34			236.21			243.27			250.57
COUNCIL TAX BASE		34,220			34,738			35,238			35,738

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2023 TO 2033

APPENDIX 2A

Detail	2022-23		2023-24 Estimate £	2024-25 Estimate £	2025-26 Estimate £	2026-27 Estimate £	2027-28 Estimate £	2028-29 Estimate £	2029-30 Estimate £	2030-31 Estimate £	2031-32 Estimate £	2032-33 Estimate £	Prior to 01/04/2022 £	Total £
	Original £	Revised £												
COMMITTED EXPENDITURE														
1. CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND SOLICITOR TO THE COUNCIL														
Headquarters - Office Accommodation	413,610	-	413,610	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9,586,390	10,000,000
SUB TOTAL	413,610	0	413,610	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9,586,390	10,000,000
2. COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES														
Parking Facilities: Improvement to Car Parks	54,530	25,000	29,530	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	419,970	474,500
Stourport Riverside	20,000	28,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	122,000	150,000
Community Safety CCTV Upgrade (Grant Funded)	-	5,460	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19,400	24,860
Brinton Park HLF Scheme (subject to successful HLF bid)	887,520	500,000	1,931,190	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	168,810	2,600,000
Innovation Fund - Capital*	395,390	210,390	185,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	54,610	450,000
* Subject to Business Cases & approval by the Cabinet/CLT														
SUB TOTAL	1,357,440	768,850	2,145,720	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	784,790	3,699,360
3. STRATEGIC GROWTH														
Housing Strategy:														
Disabled Facilities Grants (subject to confirmation 23-24 onwards)	2,055,460	1,918,560	2,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	15,494,550	28,413,110
Housing Fund	-	-	876,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	876,000
BCF Energy Efficiency	150,000	200,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	200,000
BCF Disabled Adapted Units	-	150,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	150,000
Property Flood Grants	-	137,950	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	132,640	270,590
Castle Road Development	3,353,360	1,453,360	2,000,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,453,360
Housing Assistance - Private Sector Measures (including Decent Homes Grant)	106,000	69,800	290,230	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,970,510	2,330,540
Flood Relief	-	-	28,410	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	170,590	199,000
Flood Recovery Support (BEIS Funded)	-	40,000	150,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	190,000
Green Homes Grants Phase 2	-	61,620	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	61,620
Local Authority Delivery Scheme Phase 3 (LADS3)	-	460,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	460,000
Home Upgrade Grant Phase 1 (HUGS1)	-	260,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	260,000
Future Investment Evergreen Fund (unallocated balance)*	-	145,000	890,470	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	21,600	1,057,070
Acquisition of Land at Horsefair, Kidderminster	-	-	49,590	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	410	50,000
Electric Vehicle Chargepoints	-	271,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	271,000
Capital Projects Fund*	8,000,000	500,000	3,500,000	4,267,750	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8,267,750
* Subject to Business Cases & Due Diligence														
SUB TOTAL	13,664,820	5,667,290	9,784,700	5,267,750	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	17,790,300	46,510,040
4. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION														
Levelling Up Fund**	14,900,000	8,775,110	5,517,050	3,607,290	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	550	17,900,000
Industrial Units Frenco Development - Silverwoods	-	10,860	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	997,150	1,008,010
Capital Portfolio Fund*	-	-	6,050,830	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16,754,620	22,805,450
Future High Streets Fund**	7,201,110	8,033,670	9,751,920	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,975,010	21,760,600
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	-	158,500	178,890	275,210	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	612,600
* Subject to Business Cases & Due Diligence														
**Any Co-funding subject to full Business Case following the principles of the Capital Portfolio Fund														
SUB TOTAL	22,101,110	16,978,140	21,498,690	3,882,500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	21,727,330	64,086,660
5. RESOURCES														
ICT Strategy (Cabinet Proposal subject to approval 2023-24 onwards)	325,000	784,140	250,000	912,000	257,000	97,000	84,000	-	-	-	-	-	4,150,640	6,534,780
SUB TOTAL	325,000	784,140	250,000	912,000	257,000	97,000	84,000	0	0	0	0	0	4,150,640	6,534,780
6. VEHICLE, EQUIPMENT & SYSTEMS RENEWAL SCHEDULE														
Vehicles & Equipment & Systems Renewal Schedule	482,720	900,900	1,012,040	752,890	1,421,290	1,429,690	366,490	467,690	933,690	544,690	122,890	122,890	7,708,940	15,784,090
SUB TOTAL	482,720	900,900	1,012,040	752,890	1,421,290	1,429,690	366,490	467,690	933,690	544,690	122,890	122,890	7,708,940	15,784,090
TOTAL COMMITTED EXPENDITURE	38,344,700	25,099,320	35,104,760	10,815,140	2,678,290	2,526,690	1,450,490	1,467,690	1,933,690	1,544,690	1,122,890	1,122,890	61,748,390	146,614,930

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2023 TO 2033

APPENDIX 2A

Detail	2022-23		2023-24 Estimate £	2024-25 Estimate £	2025-26 Estimate £	2026-27 Estimate £	2027-28 Estimate £	2028-29 Estimate £	2029-30 Estimate £	2030-31 Estimate £	2031-32 Estimate £	2032-33 Estimate £	Prior to 01/04/2022 £	Total £
	Original £	Revised £												
FINANCING														
Capital Receipts: Funding Approved	1,075,520	779,710	1,815,760	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,595,470
Prudential Borrowing for Capital Projects Fund	8,000,000	500,000	3,500,000	4,267,750	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8,267,750
Prudential Borrowing for Capital Portfolio Fund	-	-	6,050,830	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6,050,830
Prudential Borrowing for additional Capital Portfolio Fund allocation (Future High Streets Fund Scheme)	-	-	1,250,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,250,000
Prudential Borrowing for Castle Road Development	2,738,360	838,360	2,000,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,838,360
Prudential Borrowing for Brinton Park HLF Scheme	-	-	176,380	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	176,380
Prudential Borrowing for ICT Strategy	325,000	784,140	250,000	912,000	257,000	97,000	84,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,384,140
Prudential Borrowing for Innovation Fund - Capital	395,390	210,390	185,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	395,390
Prudential Borrowing for Stourport Riverside	20,000	28,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28,000
Prudential Borrowing for Electric Vehicle Chargepoints (scheme subject to Council approval)	-	271,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	271,000
Better Care Fund Grant (from Worcestershire County Council - subject to confirmation 23-24 onwards)	2,081,160	2,144,260	2,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	-	13,144,260
Housing Fund Grant	-	-	706,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	706,000
HLF Partner External Funding	887,520	500,000	1,754,810	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,254,810
Future High Street Fund	7,201,110	8,033,670	8,501,920	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16,535,590
Levelling Up Fund	14,900,000	8,775,110	5,517,050	3,607,290	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17,899,450
DEFRA Flood Grant Funding	-	-	28,410	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28,410
S.106 Funding (Parking - Contractual Agreement)	52,670	25,000	27,670	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	52,670
S.106 Funding (Castle Road Development)	185,250	185,250	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	185,250
Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) Fundingm(Phase 2)	-	61,620	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	61,620
Local Authority Delivery Scheme Phase 3 (LADS3) Grant Funding	-	460,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	460,000
Home Upgrade Grant Phase 1 (HUGS1) Grant Funding	-	260,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	260,000
Flood Relief Grant (from DLUHC)	-	137,950	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	137,950
Flood Support Grant	-	40,000	150,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	190,000
CCTV Grant (PCC)	-	5,460	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,460
UK Shared Prosperity Fund Grant	-	158,500	178,890	275,210	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	612,600
Vehicles, Equipment & Systems (Prudential Borrowing)	482,720	900,900	1,012,040	752,890	1,421,290	1,429,690	366,490	467,690	933,690	544,690	122,890	122,890	-	8,075,150
	38,344,700	25,099,320	35,104,760	10,815,140	2,678,290	2,526,690	1,450,490	1,467,690	1,933,690	1,544,690	1,122,890	1,122,890	-	84,866,540

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**FEES AND CHARGES 2023-2024****COUNCIL**

Cost Centre	ACTIVITY AND DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE OPTION	KEY	CHANGES IN RESOURCES		
			2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
R605	<u>STRATEGIC GROWTH</u>				
	<u>Development Management - Planning Advice</u>	C	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	Increase charges by 5% in line with Council Policy.	R	£30.00	£30.00	£30.00
		S	0.00	0.00	0.00
R605	<u>Development Management - High Hedges</u>	C	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	Increase charges by 5% in line with Council Policy.	R	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
		S	0.00	0.00	0.00
R605	<u>Development Management - Pre-application Advice</u>	C	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	Fees and charges reviewed and commercial judgement used.	R	£1,230.00	£1,230.00	£1,230.00
		S	0.00	0.00	0.00
R605	<u>Development Management - Sale of Documents</u>	C	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	Increase charges by 5% in line with Council Policy.	R	£200.00	£200.00	£200.00
		S	0.00	0.00	0.00
R625	<u>Building Control - Decision Notices</u>				
	To increase charges by 5% for copies of decision notices held by the Council prior to the formation of the North Worcestershire Building Control Shared Service.	C	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
		R	£10.00	£10.00	£10.00
		S	0.00	0.00	0.00
R310	<u>RESOURCES</u>				
	<u>Council Tax and NNDR</u>	C	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	Summons Costs £50	R	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	Liability Order Costs £30 £80	S	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Bi-annual review of summons costs and liability orders to reflect inflation and additional Magistrates Court costs.				
	TOTALS	C	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
		R	£1,470.00	£1,470.00	£1,470.00
		S	0.00	0.00	0.00



Service	Planning	Service Manager	Planning Manager
Service Area	Strategic Growth	Cabinet Member	Economic Regeneration, Planning and Capital Investments

PROPOSAL OF SCALE OF FEES AND CHARGES

INCOME DESCRIPTION	Current Charge TO 31-03-2023 Charges inclusive of VAT (if applicable)	Proposed Charge FROM 01-04-2023 Charges before VAT	Proposed Charge FROM 01-04-2023 Charges inclusive of VAT (if applicable)
High Hedge Applications			
High Hedge Applications			
Householder	£450.00	£473.00	No VAT currently charged
Other	£450.00	£473.00	No VAT currently charged
Concession (for those in receipt of housing or council tax benefits)	£200.00	£210.00	No VAT currently charged

NOTES:

Customers may be able to order and pay for some services online – please refer to <http://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk>



Service	Planning & Building Control	Service Manager	Planning Manager
Service Area	Strategic Growth	Cabinet Member	Economic Regeneration, Planning and Capital Investments

PROPOSAL OF SCALE OF FEES AND CHARGES

INCOME DESCRIPTION	Current Charge TO 31-03-2023 Charges inclusive of VAT (if applicable)	Proposed Charge FROM 01-04-2023 Charges before VAT	Proposed Charge FROM 01-04-2023 Charges inclusive of VAT (if applicable)
Planning Advice Building Control Decision Notices (Pre 01-01-2012) Sale of Copy Documents			
Reply to general individual queries, Planning or Building Control for up to 6 questions (after that the full Local Land Charge Search fee will be charged)	£30.00 per Question	£32.00 per Question	No VAT currently charged
If any query requires a site visit to be made (e.g. compliance with conditions)	£87.00	£91.00	No VAT currently charged
Charges for Copy Documents See Note 2 below			
Monthly Decision List - Emailed	Free	Free	Free
Weekly Planning Application List - Emailed	Free	Free	Free
Decision Notices	£25.00	£21.67	£26.00
Decision Notices Additional Copies	£1.70	£1.50	£1.80
A4 - For each copy	£1.70	£1.50	£1.80
A3 - For each copy	£1.70	£1.50	£1.80
A2 - For each copy	£4.40	£3.83	£4.60
A1 - For each copy	£6.00	£5.25	£6.30
A0 - For each copy	£7.40	£6.50	£7.80

NOTES:

Note 1 - Copies, where appropriate, are available free up to a cumulative single transaction value of £10 for individuals (the discretion of Head of Service to be applied in cases of multiple separate transactions) and charged at full cost to representatives of professional and/or commercial companies.
 Note 2 - Copies of all planning application plans and decision notices made from 2006 onwards are available online at zero cost at <http://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings.aspx>
 Customers may be able to order and pay for some services online – please refer to <http://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk>



Service	Planning	Service Manager	Planning Manager
Service Area	Strategic Growth	Cabinet Member	Economic Regeneration, Planning and Capital Investments

PROPOSAL OF SCALE OF FEES AND CHARGES

INCOME DESCRIPTION	Current Charge TO 31-03-2023 Charges inclusive of VAT (if applicable)	Proposed Charge FROM 01-04-2023 Charges before VAT	Proposed Charge FROM 01-04-2023 Charges inclusive of VAT (if applicable)
Permitted Developments and Pre-application Advice			
Permitted Development enquiries			
Proposed development type			
Householder	Free	£25.00	£30.00
Other	Free	£25.00	£30.00
Pre-Application advice			
Householder	Free	£35.00	£42.00
Residential Development including Conversions (see note 1)			
1 dwelling (Fee for the first three meetings)	£110.00	£96.67	£116.00
Cost of each additional meeting	£49.00	£42.50	£51.00
2-3 dwellings (Fee for the first three meetings)	£309.00	£270.00	£324.00
Cost of each additional meeting	£132.00	£115.83	£139.00
4-5 dwellings (Fee for the first three meetings)	£414.00	£362.50	£435.00
Cost of each additional meeting	£193.00	£169.17	£203.00
6-7 dwellings (Fee for the first three meetings)	£607.00	£530.83	£637.00
Cost of each additional meeting	£276.00	£241.67	£290.00
8-9 dwellings (Fee for the first three meetings)	£827.00	£723.33	£868.00
Cost of each additional meeting	£386.00	£337.50	£405.00
10-24 dwellings (Fee for the first three meetings)	£1,103.00	£965.00	£1,158.00
Cost of each additional meeting	£607.00	£530.83	£637.00
25-49 dwellings (Fee for the first three meetings)	£1,764.00	£1,543.33	£1,852.00
Cost of each additional meeting	£772.00	£675.83	£811.00
50 - 74 dwellings (Fee for the first three meetings)	£2,205.00	£1,929.17	£2,315.00
Cost of each additional meeting	£992.00	£868.33	£1,042.00
75 - 99 dwellings (Fee for the first three meetings)	£2,867.00	£2,508.33	£3,010.00
Cost of each additional meeting	£1,323.00	£1,157.50	£1,389.00
100 - 149 dwellings (Fee for the first three meetings)	£3,528.00	£3,086.67	£3,704.00
Cost of each additional meeting	£1,433.00	£1,254.17	£1,505.00
150 - 199 dwellings (Fee for the first three meetings)	£3,589.00	£3,140.00	£3,768.00
Cost of each additional meeting	£1,654.00	£1,447.50	£1,737.00
200 - 299 dwellings (Fee for the first three meetings)	£4,631.00	£4,052.50	£4,863.00
Cost of each additional meeting	£1,985.00	£1,736.67	£2,084.00
300 - 499 dwellings (Fee for the first three meetings)	£5,292.00	£4,630.83	£5,557.00
Cost of each additional meeting	£2,205.00	£1,929.17	£2,315.00
500+ dwellings (Fee for the first three meetings)	£5,733.00	£5,016.67	£6,020.00
Cost of each additional meeting	£2,756.00	£2,411.67	£2,894.00
Non Residential/Commercial Development (see note 1)			
Gross floor area up to 75m2	Free	Free	Free
Cost of each additional meeting	Free	Free	Free
Gross floor area 76m2 - 249m2	£166.00	£145.00	£174.00
Cost of each additional meeting	£83.00	£72.50	£87.00
Gross floor area up to 250m2 - 499m2	£331.00	£290.00	£348.00
Cost of each additional meeting	£166.00	£145.00	£174.00
Gross floor area 500m2 - 999m2	£717.00	£627.50	£753.00
Cost of each additional meeting	£358.00	£313.33	£376.00
Gross floor area 1,000m2 - 2,499m2	£1,764.00	£1,543.33	£1,852.00
Cost of each additional meeting	£794.00	£695.00	£834.00
Gross floor area 2,500m2 - 4,999m2	£2,756.00	£2,411.67	£2,894.00
Cost of each additional meeting	£938.00	£820.83	£985.00
Gross floor area 2,500m2 - 9,999m2	£3,749.00	£3,280.00	£3,936.00
Cost of each additional meeting	£1,213.00	£1,061.67	£1,274.00
Gross floor area +10,000m2	£5,292.00	£4,630.83	£5,557.00
Cost of each additional meeting	£1,654.00	£1,447.50	£1,737.00



Service	Planning	Service Manager	Planning Manager
Service Area	Strategic Growth	Cabinet Member	Economic Regeneration, Planning and Capital Investments

PROPOSAL OF SCALE OF FEES AND CHARGES

INCOME DESCRIPTION	Current Charge	Proposed Charge	Proposed Charge
	TO 31-03-2023	FROM 01-04-2023	FROM 01-04-2023
Permitted Developments and Pre-application Advice	Charges inclusive of VAT (if applicable)	Charges before VAT	Charges inclusive of VAT (if applicable)
Other Categories			
Advertisements	£83.00	£72.50	£87.00
Cost of each additional meeting	£27.00	£23.33	£28.00
Change of Use	£166.00	£145.00	£174.00
Cost of each additional meeting	£83.00	£72.50	£87.00
Telecommunications	£248.00	£216.67	£260.00
Cost of each additional meeting	£127.00	£110.83	£133.00
Glasshouses/Poly Tunnels	£88.00	£76.67	£92.00
Cost of each additional meeting	£22.00	£19.17	£23.00
Others (see note 2)	£83.00	£72.50	£87.00
Cost of each additional meeting	£27.00	£23.33	£28.00
Historic Environmental and Tree related enquiries			
Separate Listed Building and Conservation Area Advice (Up to 3 Separate Matters - see note 3)	£66.00	£57.50	£69.00
Cost per additional matter to be considered	£17.00	£15.00	£18.00
Cost of each additional meeting	£27.00	£23.33	£28.00
Separate Tree related Advice - number of trees not exceeding 10	£66.00	£57.50	£69.00
Cost of each additional meeting	£27.00	£23.33	£28.00
Separate Tree related Advice - number of trees over 10 but not exceeding 30	£132.00	£115.83	£139.00
Cost of each additional meeting (see Note 4)	£27.00	£23.33	£28.00
Exemptions			
As set out in Guidance Note (e.g. Parish Councils, etc)			

NOTES:

Note 1 - If only principle to be discussed developer to provide indicative capacity
 Note 2 - Includes other development proposals such as variation or removal of conditions-proposed changes of use, car parks and certificates of lawfulness.
 Customers may be able to order and pay for some services online – please refer to <http://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk>



Service	Revenues	Service Manager	Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services Manager
Service Area	Resources	Cabinet Member	Finance and Capital Portfolio

PROPOSAL OF SCALE OF FEES AND CHARGES

INCOME DESCRIPTION	Current Charge TO 31-03-2023 Charges inclusive of VAT (if applicable)	Proposed Charge FROM 01-04-2023 Charges before VAT	Proposed Charge FROM 01-04-2023 Charges inclusive of VAT (if applicable)
Council Tax and NNDR			
Council Tax and NNDR			
Summons costs	£50.00	£50.00	No VAT currently charged
Liability Orders	£30.00	£30.00	No VAT currently charged

NOTES:

Customers may be able to order and pay for some services online – please refer to <http://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk>

Report of the Chief Financial Officer in respect of Sections 25-28 Local Government Act 2003

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To consider the report of the Head of Resources in respect of statutory duties placed on Local Authority Chief Financial Officers in relation to budget setting and monitoring. The report provides councillors with assurance that the budgets have been compiled appropriately and that the levels of reserves held is adequate.

2. RECOMMENDATION (see 2.2.3 of main report)

THAT COUNCIL NOTE:

- 2.1 The Chief Financial Officer's opinion on the budget proposals, recommended by the Cabinet on 7th February 2023, as detailed in this report.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Sections 25 to 28 of the Local Government Act 2003 (The Act) place statutory duties on Local Authorities on how they set and monitor budgets. The Act requires local authorities to ensure that the Budget estimates are robust, Reserves are adequate and the Budget is monitored on a regular basis.
- 3.2 Section 25 requires the Chief Financial Officer to report to the Council on the robustness of the estimates it makes when calculating its budget requirement under Section 32 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and on the adequacy of its proposed financial reserves.
- 3.3 Section 26 requires authorities to adhere to their approved policies in relation to Reserves when setting budgets to ensure that the minimum Reserve levels are maintained.
- 3.4 Section 27 requires the Chief Financial Officer, at the time of the budget setting, to report if it appears that a reserve in relation to the previous financial year is likely to be inadequate. The reasons for the inadequacy and a recommended course of action must be considered by Council.
- 3.5 Section 28 places a statutory duty on the Council to review its budget and all calculations related to it from time to time. If the review shows a deterioration in the financial position, the Council must take such action as it considers necessary (if any) to address the situation.
- 3.6 Whilst Sections 25-27 relate specifically to budget and council tax setting for the following financial year, these Sections are being more widely interpreted by External Auditors to include the period of the Council's Financial Strategy; as a consequence it is necessary to report not only on next year's Budget but on the period covered by the Three Year Budget Strategy (2023-26).

4. KEY ISSUES – CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER’S OPINION ON 2023-26 BUDGET & THREE YEAR BUDGET STRATEGY

- 4.1 In respect of the Budget Proposals recommended by the Cabinet, in my opinion the estimates made for the purposes of Section 32 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 calculations are robust.
- 4.2 The Reserves outlined in the Three Year Budget and Policy Framework Report to the Cabinet on this agenda are adequate in relation to the 2023-26 Budget.
- 4.3 The ongoing transformation work stream, the Future High Street and Levelling Up Fund programmes that will regenerate Kidderminster and surrounding areas and promote economic growth, and work done by the Strategic Review Panel this year are moving the Council towards a sustainable balanced budget in the future, that is less reliant on the use of reserves. However the poor economic outlook and the impact of high inflation is a further drain on local resources. The Transformation Programme with the localism and Wyre Forest Forward work streams continues to be a key lever to deliver the savings required. The overall funding gap in year 3 of the strategy has increased from circa £1.7m to circa £1.8m in 2025-26 due to the impact of high inflation and wage growth and continues to represent a key risk to ongoing financial sustainability. This will need to be directly addressed at pace by the newly elected Council in May 2023 and continue to be carefully managed and mitigated by the member and officer Leadership team.
- 4.4 The programme of change outlined in the 2021-24 MTFS continues to be progressed. Services currently provided solely for the district by WFDC staff are, or have been reviewed and options for service collaborations with another council or councils in Worcestershire or other organisations are being explored and progressed where financially advantageous. This includes exploring the possibility of joint venture vehicles with the private sector and the option of a joint waste collection and disposal authority. This process could involve the transfer of relevant assets to other organisations or their placing in joint venture vehicles. If all other options have been explored and exhausted and it remains necessary to secure further cost savings then outsourcing to the private sector as an option for some services will be considered. The table in paragraph 6.13 of the December Cabinet MTFS report provided details of further work planned, with the indicative timetable of reviews to examine potential alternative delivery options.
- 4.5 Work is planned to continue to reduce costs through internal efficiency, growth in income by increasing our customer base and regenerating our towns to increase income from the Council’s assets and taxbase. The significant localism work stream will continue to be progressed to build on the progress so far.
- 4.6 The Council have adopted the general principles of the CIPFA Guidance on Local Authority Reserves and Balances, which outline a minimum Reserve (Working Balance) for this Council which has been adhered to in the Financial Strategy 2023-26.
- 4.7 This year’s MTFS maintains the increased working balance of £1.5m following the increase at final accounts 2021-22. Overall levels of reserves held, excluding covid related Earmarked Reserve balances, have increased in recent years to reflect ongoing risk as reflected in our Statement of Accounts 2021-22 and acknowledged by our external auditors. The working balance will continue to be kept under review

and consideration will be given to increasing by a further 10% in-line with CPI up to £1.65m to provide additional risk from Final Accounts 2022-23 savings should they arise.

- 4.8 The Council currently holds earmarked reserves of £14.9m (as at mid-January 2023). It should be noted that the Council has commitments against such earmarked reserves and the forecast balance after commitments is £9.8m. A General Risk Reserve is also held of circa £1.8m as at mid-January 2023. The level of this reserve and the innovation fund will be reconsidered as part of the Final Accounts process. A Planned Property Maintenance reserve is held, taking 20% of the net proceeds from Capital Portfolio purchases to help mitigate future unknown risk.
- 4.9 The assessment of affordability of financial plans requires a judgement about risk and is covered in the Prudential Framework and associated codes and guidance. A revision to the Prudential Code and the Treasury Management Code was issued in December 2021. These codes include a requirement for a detailed capital strategy that sets out the long term context in which capital expenditure and investment decisions are made, giving due regard to both risk and reward and the achievement of priority outcomes. The code updates reporting requirements for long term financial and risk implications in relation to non-treasury investments and requires that investments are not primarily made to generate a financial return. The revised Treasury Management Code enhances and strengthens the skills and training requirements for staff and members involved with the Treasury function. The Capital Strategy proposed for this budget cycle provides high-level projections over a 10 year timeframe to provide extra information for transparency and decision making, particularly in relation to movements in the Balance Sheet, Capital Financing Requirements and Minimum Revenue Provision which all impact on the revenue budget and reserves requirement.
- 4.10 The Capital strategy retains the Capital Portfolio Fund and is expected that it will continue to make a contribution to the Council's financial sustainability although it is likely that proposals that grow our tax base will be favoured in future. Business cases will need to evidence how acquisitions outside the district but within the functional economic geography deliver against corporate objectives to evidence that capital expenditure is classified as service investment. Service investments are taken or held primarily for the purposes of delivering public services including housing, regeneration and local infrastructure. Financial return will be a secondary consideration except where it supports the financial viability of a proposal by covering financing costs. This will ensure that the council continues to have access to funding from the PWLB.
- 4.11 Financial Resilience Index information was published on 2nd February with an updated web tool that can be used to review local authority financial data sets. The index shows the council's position on a range of measures associated with financial risk. The tool is backwards looking but is a useful tool to monitor trends. As reported last year there were no areas of significant concerns.
- 4.12 Prudential Indicators are the monitoring tool to assess performance and risk for treasury management and non-treasury capital expenditure and are reported to members in accordance with the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Capital Strategy prepared under the CIPFA Treasury Management and Prudential Codes.

- 4.13 It is important that the level of reserves is carefully monitored and reviewed as economic conditions and rising inflation adds additional financial risk. Future funding levels continue to be uncertain as Local Government Finance Reforms and Business rates reset have again been delayed making any financial planning beyond the short term difficult. Consequently, reserves continues to be important to mitigating future risk. Further uncertainty arises from the timing of reforms to waste collection under the Environment Act and the introduction of Enhanced Producer Responsibility scheme in 2024-25: the amount of new burdens funding for implementing change is still unconfirmed. Levels will be reviewed again when funding reforms are implemented and their impacts are known.
- 4.14 The Cabinet formally monitors budgets and performance on a quarterly basis in accordance with Section 28 of the 2003 Act, including 'Budget Risk Management' and takes appropriate action to ensure financial accountability. These quarterly reports are also considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In addition, Cabinet/CLT receive monthly monitoring updates. Reporting is regularly reviewed and refined including in relation to external income generation to provide relevant management information to improve the pace of decision making around demand-led income. Government departments have used local Councils extensively to passport funding to businesses, individuals and the community to buffer the financial impact firstly of the Covid-19 pandemic and more recently high energy prices. This has meant more work, diversion of resources and delays in savings plans which have all increased financial risk.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 These are contained within the main MTFS report.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 These are contained in Paragraph 3 of this report.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 This is a financial report and there is no requirement to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment screening.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 Contained within the Financial Strategy 2022-25 and subsequent Cabinet reports are the significant risks and mitigating actions which have been identified, allied to the budget process.
- 8.2 There are four significant financial risks affecting the Council over the next three years:
- Funding uncertainty as a result of the again delayed Local Government Finance Reforms changing key funding streams and allocation methodologies.

- Rising prices has resulted in a real term fall in wages. Pay inflation in the public sector has fallen behind other sectors of the economy. There is a significant likelihood that the pay settlement for 2023-24 will exceed the growth expectations included in the MTFS.
- The continued reliance on local income sources including the Capital Portfolio Fund and other demand led income streams and risk this may not be realised in line with projected expectations, particularly in light of the residual impact of the pandemic and high inflation/cost of energy on demand and;
- Further savings required from the Transformation Programme, including Localism, are significant and will prove challenging to deliver in the timeframe required.

8.3 The Council proposes to keep the current £1,500,000 level of the working balance reserve under review. This fund is available to provide cover for urgent unforeseen expenditure e.g. in respect of a civil emergency. The Innovation Fund is held to fund one-off costs of implementation of Transformation to fund one-off severance costs following service reviews if they arise. The General Risk Reserve also mitigates more generic risks. Consideration of levels will be given as part of the Final Accounts process, in accordance with the delegations in the main budget report on this agenda. In addition to these generic reserves, earmarked reserves are held to cover specific commitments and therefore limit financial risk. The Planned Property Maintenance reserve takes 20% of the net proceeds from Capital Portfolio purchases to mitigate future unknown risk; this is a fundamental element of the methodology used for the assessment of risk using the latest CIPFA guidance.

9. CONCLUSION/FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 The Council continues to be reliant on contributions from reserves to balance its budget over the term of the Financial Strategy. Nevertheless, the significant Transformation Programme continues to deliver ongoing savings to address this. The Provisional Finance Settlement, whilst providing some welcome additional funding, does not provide the financial certainty needed to support staffing and investment decisions that would contribute to future financial sustainability.
- 9.2 To reduce the financial risks now faced, it is essential that net expenditure and funding be better aligned by the progression of efficiency plans for reductions in spending and increased income generation. This realignment work has continued despite being hampered by the loss of capacity resulting from the senior management restructure and turnover of senior members of staff. It is important that focus is maintained in 2023-24.
- 9.3 The continued delays to Local Government Finance Reforms creates further uncertainty and resultant risk and it is recognised that planning is particularly difficult given these delays. The level of reserves will need to be kept under consideration as more information emerges.
- 9.4 The recommendation in relation to the review of the level of the Working Balance from the Link Asset Services independent report on reserves held by this council, has now been achieved and will be further reviewed as part of the 2022-23 Final Accounts Closedown process.

- 9.5 The assessment of affordability of financial plans requires a judgement about risk. This has been updated in the latest Capital Strategy and continues to be kept under review taking into account the changes to CIPFA Codes and access to PWLB Funding. This places relevant focus on reporting and planning for long term financial liabilities and risk implications in relation to non-treasury investments. The 10 year Capital Programme helps achieve this. The current approval for the Capital Portfolio Fund is considered to be proportionate to the size of this Council and the composition of the Balance Sheet as reported in the statutory accounts. The December 2021 revisions to the Prudential Code make it clear that CIPFA is taking a more risk averse outlook in respect of investment matters. Local authorities must not borrow to invest for the primary purpose of financial return. Business cases for any future acquisitions will need to provide evidence that investment outside the District boundary contributes to the achievement of corporate priorities. Current guidance on Prudential Property Investment is met by existing policies and procedures. The new reporting requirements of the Treasury Management Code were introduced during the year ahead of the April 2023 deadline.
- 9.6 Development of commercialism and income generation is now acknowledged as being a smaller part of the solution to close the funding gap, the generic Capital budget allocation to the Innovation Fund will be slipped to support new financially viable initiatives. All business cases will continue to include an appropriate assessment of risks gauged against potential rewards; review of risk and performance will be conducted at least annually for each area of commercial activity. This regular review includes the option to cease more commercial activity if appropriate.
- 9.7 Financial Resilience remains a key risk for this and most other Councils. It is essential that the Council progresses the Transformation Plan to expedite its trajectory to becoming a smaller organisation that enables expenditure to be better aligned with income to alleviate the reliance on reserves.

10. CONSULTEES

- 10.1 Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Capital Portfolio
10.2 CLT

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 Local Government Act 2003 Sections 25-28
11.2 Local Government Finance Act 1992 Section 32
11.3 CIPFA revised Prudential Code and Treasury Management Code December 2021
11.4 Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023-26 Cabinet December 2022
11.5 CIPFA Financial Resilience Index December 2022
11.6 CIPFA Financial Management Code – October 2019
11.7 CIPFA Code Guidance on prudential property investment

CABINET PROPOSALS AS PER FEB CABINET MTFs REPORT

	Revised 2022-23 £	2023-24 £	2024-25 £	2025-26 £
Net Expenditure on Services (per Appendix 2)	12,401,530	13,418,350	13,483,970	13,959,940
Less Cabinet Proposals		269,140	323,740	353,000
Net Expenditure	12,401,530	13,687,490	13,807,710	14,312,940
Contribution (from)/to Reserves	(372,750)	(159,010)	(394,850)	(939,040)
	12,028,780	13,528,480	13,412,860	13,373,900
Net Budget Requirement				
<u>Less</u>				
Revenue Support Grant	0	150,380	150,380	150,000
Business Rates	3,356,940	4,392,250	4,590,130	3,697,830
Business Rates - National levy redistributed	23,850			
New Homes Bonus	463,760	240,030	0	0
Lower Tier Services Grant	130,070	0	0	0
3% Funding Guarantee	0	429,920	0	0
Collection Fund Deficit	10,150	0	0	0
Council Tax Income	7,848,010	8,205,460	8,572,350	8,954,870
One off Services Grant	196,000	110,440	100,000	0
Transitional Funding (assumption)	0	0	0	571,200
COUNCIL TAX LEVY increase by 3% pa from 2023-24 onwards	229.34	236.21	243.27	250.57
COUNCIL TAX BASE	34,220	34,738	35,238	35,738
Reserves Statement	Revised 2022-23 £	2022/23 £	2023/24 £	2024/25 £
Reserves as at 1st April	3,841	3,468	3,309	2,914
Increase to Working Balance				
Contribution (from)/to Reserves	(373)	(159)	(395)	(939)
Reserves as at 31st March	3,468	3,309	2,914	1,975
CONSERVATIVE PROPOSALS	Revised 2022-23 £	2023-24 £	2024-25 £	2025-26 £
Net Expenditure on Services (per Appendix 2)	12,401,530	13,418,350	13,483,970	13,959,940
COVID Support Grants	0	0	0	0
Total Net Expenditure on Services (per Appendix 2)	12,401,530	13,418,350	13,483,970	13,959,940
Less Conservative Proposals	0	332,940	250,990	168,010
Net Expenditure	12,401,530	13,751,290	13,734,960	14,127,950
Contribution (from)/to Reserves	(396,600)	(222,810)	(322,100)	(754,050)
	12,004,930	13,528,480	13,412,860	13,373,900
Net Budget Requirement				
<u>Less</u>				
Revenue Support Grant	0	150,380	150,380	150,000
Business Rates	3,356,940	4,392,250	4,590,130	3,697,830
New Homes Bonus	463,760	240,030	0	0
Lower Tier Services Grant	130,070	0	0	0
3% Funding Guarantee	0	429,920	0	0
Collection Fund Deficit	10,150	0	0	0
Council Tax Income	7,848,010	8,205,460	8,572,350	8,954,870
One off Services Grant	196,000	110,440	100,000	0
Transitional Funding (assumption)	0	0	0	571,200
COUNCIL TAX LEVY increase by £5 pa from 2022-23 onwards	229.34	236.21	243.27	250.57
COUNCIL TAX BASE	34,220	34,738	35,238	35,738
Reserves Statement - CONSERVATIVE PROPOSALS	Revised 2022-23 £	2023-24 £	2024-25 £	2025-26 £
Reserves as at 1st April	3,841	3,444	3,221	2,899
Increase to Working Balance				
Contribution (from)/to Reserves	(397)	(223)	(322)	(754)
Reserves as at 31st March	3,444	3,221	2,899	2,145
Difference in reserves between proposals	24	88	15	(170)

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CONSERVATIVE GROUP PROPOSALS 2023-24 ONWARDS

ACTIVITY AND DESCRIPTION OF CONSERVATIVE PROPOSALS	KEY	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	After 2025-26
		£	£	£	£
Localism grants To continue to fund Parish Councils for bin emptying and litter picking localism services as per previous arrangements to support our corporate priority and ensure our statutory obligations are fulfilled.	C R S	11,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
Web casting of meetings To web-cast all meetings of Cabinet and also Overview and Scrutiny Committee to allow maximum access for the public and in order to be fully open and transparent.	C R S	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500
Seasonal Litter Picking Resource To provide a flexible resource of 2 additional operatives to bolster and enhance litter picking in our two tourist towns of Bewdley and Stourport for the 5 months from Easter to the end of August in particular at weekends, bank holidays and for the full 6 week school summer holidays to support our tourist economy and in line with our corporate priority and to work with Bewdley and Stourport Town Council to seek to secure contributions to further enhance this scheme. To undertake this scheme for 1 years and review.	C R S	18,160			
Community Leadership Fund To increase this funding stream to £1,000 per Member for 2023-24.	C R S	33,000			
Electric Vehicle Charging Points Engage a consultant to review and refresh original business case taking account of latest cost and demand information. Review to include a cost benefit analysis of leasing as well as outright purchase.	C R S	10,000			
Environment Protection Post To enhance this team by 2 FTE posts to 4 to create additional capacity. To support our corporate priority and to be part funded from additional enforcement income.	C R S	69,560 2.0	72,340 2.0	- -	- -
Civil Enforcement Post To enhance this team by 2 FTE posts to 7.5 to create additional capacity. To support our corporate priority and to be part funded from additional enforcement income.	C R S	60,720 2.0	63,150 2.0	- -	- -
Bewdley Museum Reduce localism target to reflect retention of Bewdley museum by WFDC Explore ¹ the potential of joining the Joint Museum Service with Worcestershire County Council and Worcester City Council to safeguard the long term future of Bewdley Museum. ¹ Costs to be met from previous allocation from the innovation Fund.	C R S	40,000 - 4 CR	65,000 65,000 CR 4 CR	85,000 85,000 CR 4 CR	100,000 100,000 CR 4 CR
Culture/Arts To reinstate council led culture and arts activities in the community to include Bands in the Park, Under 5 Play Day, Country and Western festival. Cost of activities and events to be met from this budget and sponsorship, advertising or other commercial income.	C R S	20,000 0.4	20,000 0.4		
Disabled play equipment Provision of disabled play equipment in Brinton Park and Stourport riverside.	C R S	50,000 12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
Additional Staffing resource NWEDR Enhance the capacity in NWED to support delivery of major regeneration projects .	C R S	75,000 1.0	75,000 1.0	75,000 1.0	75,000 1.0
Additional Staffing resource Green Agenda To provide additional staffing capacity to support continuation of the Green Agenda.	C R S	20,000 0.5	20,000 0.5	20,000 0.5	20,000 0.5
ICT Strategy Revenue implications of the ICT Strategy 2023-28 which will provide a resilient, secure and reliable service.	C R S	6,000	250,000 49,000	912,000 123,000	257,000 150,000
Community Fund A Community fund to enable communities to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III (parish Councils not eligible).	C R S	5,000			
Commercial Income growth To increase commercial income across all of the work of the Council with a strategic and commercial approach to growing areas such as trade waste, brown bins, MOT's, grounds maintenance and tree work services, additional rental income from fixed tenants and room hire, fleet sponsorship, traffic islands, parks and open space sponsorship of flowerbeds and other key gateways together from further income from events and any such other commercial opportunities that arise.	C R S	50,000 CR	75,000 CR	76,490 CR	100,000 CR
TOTALS	C R S	50,000 332,940 2.6	250,000 250,990 1.9	912,000 168,010 2.5 CR	257,000 171,500 2.5 CR
Also: 3% pa Council Tax increase					

KEY - Changes in Resources

C - Capital

R - Revenue

S - Staffing - Stated in FTEs

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL 22ND FEBRUARY 2023

COUNCIL TAX 2023-24

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Mary Rayner
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Head of Resources and S151 Officer
CONTACT OFFICERS:	Helen Ogram – Ext. 2907 Helen.ogram@wyreforestdc.gov.uk Kathryn Pearsall – Ext. 2165 Kathryn.pearsall@wyreforestdc.gov.uk Lisa Hutchinson - Ext. 2120 lisa.hutchinson@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
APPENDICES:	Appendix 1 - Council Tax Resolution 2023-24 Appendix 2 - Council Tax Schedule 2023-24 Appendix 3 - Parish and Town Council Precepts 2023-24 Appendix 4 – District Council Tax, including Parish/Town Council Precepts, 2023-24 Appendix 5 – Total Council Tax, including Major Precepting Authorities and Parish/Town Council Precepts, 2023-24

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to enable the Council to calculate and set the Council Tax for 2023-24.

2. RECOMMENDATION

Council is asked to approve:

- 2.1 **The formal Council Tax Resolution 2023-24 at Appendix 1, taking into account information contained in Appendices 2 to 5.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by The Localism Act 2011, requires the billing authority to calculate a Council Tax requirement for the year.

The Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, includes specific guidance in relation to Council Tax referendums. The House of Commons approved the regime of referenda for “excessive” Council Tax increases for 2023-24 on 8th February 2023. This confirmed the Government’s proposal for district councils of 3% or £5, whichever is the greater. The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS 2023-26), considered earlier at item 8 on

this Council agenda recommends a council tax (Band D equivalent) of £236.21 is set, an increase of 2.996%; this is below the maximum level permitted and a referendum in respect of this Council's element of council tax is not required.

3.2 Different criteria are specified for the County Council, Police and Crime Commissioner and the Fire Authority. However, the Council has not been notified by a major precepting authority that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2023-24 is excessive and therefore the billing authority is not required to hold a referendum.

4. WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL'S COUNCIL TAX REQUIREMENT

4.1 Cabinet, on 7th February 2023, approved and recommended to Council the 2023-24 revenue budget requirement.

4.2 Cabinet recommended that Wyre Forest District Council's element of the Council Tax 2023-24 be agreed at £236.21 for Band D properties. This represents an increase of 2.996% on the current rate for 2022-23.

4.3 In approving the District Council's element of the Council Tax, account has to be taken of:

- Government Support Grants
- Other non ring-fenced Government Grants
- Business Rates
- Any surplus or deficit arising from the Collection Fund

The District Council's Council Tax requirement also has to reflect Parish and Town Council spending. The following table sets out the position:

Council Tax Requirement 2023-24	£'000	£'000
Wyre Forest District Council Budget Requirement 2023-24	13,687	
Less: Contribution from Balances	(159)	
	13,528	
Parish & Town Councils' Requirement (Appendix 3)	1,759	
		15,287
Less:		
Revenue Support Grant	(150)	
Business Rates	(4,392)	
New Homes Bonus	(240)	
3% Funding Guarantee Grant	(425)	
Services Grants	(115)	
		(5,322)
Council Tax Requirement 2023-24		9,965

- 4.4 Wyre Forest District Council’s Council Tax at Band D for 2023-24 is £236.21, determined as follows:

Council Tax Requirement (as detailed in paragraph 4.3 above)	£9,964,694
Divided by Council Tax Base	34,738
Council Tax at Band D (including Parishes/Town Councils)	£286.85
Deduct Parish/Town Council Element	(£50.64)
Council Tax at Band D for Wyre Forest District Council	£236.21

5. PRECEPT LEVELS

- 5.1 The Precept levels of other precepting bodies have been received, and are detailed below:

5.1.1 Parish and Town Councils

The Parish and Town Council Precepts for 2023-24 are detailed in Appendix 3 and total £1,759,233.90. This results in an average Band D Council Tax figure of £50.64 for 2023-24. This represents an average increase of 9.23% in the parish and town council element of council tax, ranging from -1.9% to +33.2%.

5.1.2 Worcestershire County Council

Worcestershire County Council has stated its precept for 2023-24 to be £50,918,266, with a Collection Fund deficit adjustment for this year of £1,167. The increase in the Band D Council Tax is 4.94% of which 2% relates to the Precept ring-fenced support for Adult Social Care, resulting in a total Band D Council Tax of £1,465.78. Further details can be found in Appendix 1.

5.1.3 The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia has stated its precept for 2023-24 to be £9,188,201, with a Collection Fund surplus adjustment for this year of £3,158. The increase in the Band D Council Tax is 5.94%, resulting in a Band D Council Tax of £264.50. Further details can be found in Appendix 1.

5.1.4 Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority

Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority has stated its precept for 2023-24 to be £3,279,394.37, with a Collection Fund deficit adjustment for this year of £839. The increase in the Band D Council Tax is 5.59%, resulting in a Band D Council Tax of £94.40. Further details can be found in Appendix 1.

5.1.5 The resulting average Council Tax at Band D is summarised as follows:

	£
Worcestershire County Council	1,268.38
Worcestershire County Council - Adult Social Care	197.40
The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia	264.50
Wyre Forest District Council	236.21
Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority	94.40
Average Town/Parish Council	<u>50.64</u>
Total Average Band D Council Tax 2023-24	<u>2,111.53</u>

6. SPECIAL EXPENSES

6.1 Special Expenses are defined as those expenses incurred by the Council in performing, in part of the District, a function performed elsewhere by a Parish or Town Council. The Local Government Act 1992 allows the Council to treat any special expenses as general expenses, i.e. as part of its own budget requirement for Council Tax purposes, provided the Council resolved accordingly.

6.2 It is reasonable for the Council to continue to treat special expenses as general expenses, and for clarity it is considered sensible to reaffirm this position on an annual basis. For clarification this Council does not currently have any Special Expenses.

7. COUNCIL TAX LEVELS

7.1 The formal resolution for setting the Council Tax is set out in Appendix 1.

7.2 The Council Tax Schedule 2023-24 is set out in Appendix 2.

7.3 The Parish & Town Council precepts 2023-24 are set out in Appendix 3.

7.4 The District Council Tax, including Parish/Town Council precepts, 2023-24 is set out in Appendix 4.

7.5 The Total Council Tax, including Major Precepting Authorities and Parish/Town Council precepts, 2023-24 is set out in Appendix 5.

8. KEY ISSUES

8.1 That the formal Council Tax resolution presented in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by the Localism Act, be approved.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The Financial Implications of this Council Tax report are included in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and Three Year Budget and Policy Framework, as updated by the Proposed Decision, also on this Council agenda.

10. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The Council must set its Council Tax for 2023-24 in accordance with all statutory requirements.
- 10.2 The Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by The Localism Act 2011, requires the billing authority to calculate a Council Tax requirement for the year.

11. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 11.1 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, require Local Authorities to fully consider and manage Risk as part of the Budget process. This was fully set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy report to December 2022 Cabinet.

12. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 12.1 This is a financial report and there is no requirement to consider an Equality Impact Assessment.

13. CONCLUSION

See Recommendations.

14. CONSULTEES

Cabinet
CLT

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 15.1 Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by Localism Act 2011 and Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.
- 15.2 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.
- 15.3 The Referendums Relating to Council Tax Increases (Principles) (England) Report 2023-24

COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION 2023-24

The Council is recommended to resolve as follows:

1. It be noted that the Council has calculated the Council Tax Base 2023-24:-
 - (a) for the whole Council area as **34,738** [Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (“the Act”)]; and
 - (b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish/Town Council precept relates as in column 5 of the attached Appendix 3.
2. To calculate that the Council Tax requirement for the Council’s own purposes for 2023-24 (excluding Parish/Town Council precepts) is **£8,205,460**.
3. That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2023-24 in accordance with Sections 30 to 36 of the Act:
 - (a) **£49,760,923.90** being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish/Town Councils.
 - (b) **£39,796,230.00** being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
 - (c) **£9,964,693.90** being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year. [Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act]
 - (d) **£286.85** being the amount at 3(c) above (Item R), divided by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish/Town Council precepts).
 - (e) **£1,759,233.90** being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish/Town Council precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (as per the attached Appendix 3).
 - (f) **£236.21** being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish/Town Council precept relates.

4. To note that for the year 2023-24 Worcestershire County Council, The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia and Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority have issued precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as shown below.

WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL							
Valuation Bands							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£977.19	£1,140.05	£1,302.92	£1,465.78	£1,791.51	£2,117.24	£2,442.97	£2,931.56

THE OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR WEST MERCIA							
Valuation Bands							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£176.33	£205.72	£235.11	£264.50	£323.28	£382.06	£440.83	£529.00

HEREFORD AND WORCESTER FIRE AUTHORITY							
Valuation Bands							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£62.93	£73.42	£83.91	£94.40	£115.38	£136.36	£157.33	£188.80

5. That the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate amounts shown in Appendix 5 as the amounts of Council Tax for 2023-24 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.
6. To determine that the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2023-24 is not excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992.
7. To note that, as the billing authority, the Council has not been notified by a major precepting authority that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2023-24 is excessive and that the billing authority is not required to hold a referendum in accordance with Section 52ZK of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

COUNCIL TAX SCHEDULE 2023-24

<u>District Council and Major Precepting Authorities</u>	Band A £	Band B £	Band C £	Band D £	Band E £	Band F £	Band G £	Band H £
Wyre Forest District Council	157.47	183.72	209.96	236.21	288.70	341.19	393.68	472.42
Worcestershire County Council	845.59	986.52	1,127.45	1,268.38	1,550.24	1,832.10	2,113.97	2,536.76
Worcestershire County Council - Adult Social Care Precept	131.60	153.53	175.47	197.40	241.27	285.14	329.00	394.80
The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia	176.33	205.72	235.11	264.50	323.28	382.06	440.83	529.00
Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority	62.93	73.42	83.91	94.40	115.38	136.36	157.33	188.80

<u>Parish & Town Councils</u>	Band A £	Band B £	Band C £	Band D £	Band E £	Band F £	Band G £	Band H £
Kidderminster Town Council	33.17	38.69	44.22	49.75	60.81	71.86	82.92	99.50
Upper Arley Parish Council	30.00	35.00	40.00	45.00	55.00	65.00	75.00	90.00
Bewdley Town Council	50.31	58.69	67.08	75.46	92.23	109.00	125.77	150.92
Broome Parish Council	20.29	23.67	27.05	30.43	37.19	43.95	50.72	60.86
Chaddesley Corbett Parish Council	30.23	35.27	40.31	45.35	55.43	65.51	75.58	90.70
Churchill & Blakedown Parish Council	28.17	32.87	37.56	42.26	51.65	61.04	70.43	84.52
Kidderminster Foreign Parish Council	7.32	8.54	9.76	10.98	13.42	15.86	18.30	21.96
Ribbesford Parish	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Rock Parish Council	29.65	34.60	39.54	44.48	54.36	64.25	74.13	88.96
Rushock Parish Council	30.07	35.08	40.09	45.10	55.12	65.14	75.17	90.20
Stone Parish Council	38.41	44.82	51.22	57.62	70.42	83.23	96.03	115.24
Stourport on Severn Town Council	31.73	37.02	42.31	47.60	58.18	68.76	79.33	95.20
Wolverley & Cookley Parish Council	31.13	36.32	41.51	46.70	57.08	67.46	77.83	93.40

PARISH AND TOWN COUNCIL PRECEPTS 2023-24

<u>Parish & Town Councils</u>	2022-23			2023-24			Council Tax Increase/ (Decrease) (£)	Council Tax Increase/ (Decrease) (%)
	Tax Base	Precept £	Council Tax Band D (£)	Tax Base	Precept £	Council Tax Band D (£)		
Kidderminster Town Council	17,498	831,160.00	47.50	17,679	879,566.00	49.75	2.25	4.7
Upper Arley Parish Council	358	16,110.00	45.00	359	16,155.00	45.00	0.00	0.0
Bewdley Town Council	3,627	205,542.00	56.67	3,666	276,622.00	75.46	18.79	33.2
Broome Parish Council	210	6,000.00	28.57	207	6,300.00	30.43	1.86	6.5
Chaddesley Corbett Parish Council	766	34,738.10	45.35	765	34,693.00	45.35	0.00	0.0
Churchill & Blakedown Parish Council	804	28,922.04	35.97	805	34,019.30	42.26	6.29	17.5
Kidderminster Foreign Parish Council	424	4,745.00	11.19	432	4,745.00	10.98	(0.21)	(1.9)
Ribbesford Parish	111	0.00	0.00	107	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.0
Rock Parish Council	1,265	55,100.00	43.56	1,296	57,650.00	44.48	0.92	2.1
Rushock Parish Council	77	3,372.00	43.79	80	3,608.00	45.10	1.31	3.0
Stone Parish Council	291	15,220.00	52.30	298	17,170.00	57.62	5.32	10.2
Stourport on Severn Town Council	6,985	305,245.00	43.70	7,056	335,866.00	47.60	3.90	8.9
Wolverley & Cookley Parish Council	1,804	80,246.33	44.48	1,988	92,839.60	46.70	2.22	5.0
TOTAL/AVERAGE	34,220	1,586,400.47	46.36	34,738	1,759,233.90	50.64		

DISTRICT COUNCIL TAX (INCLUDING PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL PRECEPTS) 2023-24

Part of the Council's Area	VALUATION BANDS 2023-24							
	A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
The Parish/Town Council of:								
Kidderminster	190.64	222.41	254.18	285.96	349.51	413.05	476.60	571.92
Upper Arley	187.47	218.72	249.96	281.21	343.70	406.19	468.68	562.42
Bewdley	207.78	242.41	277.04	311.67	380.93	450.19	519.45	623.34
Broome	177.76	207.39	237.01	266.64	325.89	385.14	444.40	533.28
Chaddesley Corbett	187.70	218.99	250.27	281.56	344.13	406.70	469.26	563.12
Churchill & Blakedown	185.64	216.59	247.52	278.47	340.35	402.23	464.11	556.94
Kidderminster Foreign	164.79	192.26	219.72	247.19	302.12	357.05	411.98	494.38
Ribbesford	157.47	183.72	209.96	236.21	288.70	341.19	393.68	472.42
Rock	187.12	218.32	249.50	280.69	343.06	405.44	467.81	561.38
Rushock	187.54	218.80	250.05	281.31	343.82	406.33	468.85	562.62
Stone	195.88	228.54	261.18	293.83	359.12	424.42	489.71	587.66
Stourport on Severn	189.20	220.74	252.27	283.81	346.88	409.95	473.01	567.62
Wolverley & Cookley	188.60	220.04	251.47	282.91	345.78	408.65	471.51	565.82

TOTAL COUNCIL TAX 2023-24

Parts of the Council's Area	VALUATION BANDS 2023-24								% CHANGE
	A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £	
The Parish/Town Council of:									
Kidderminster	1,407.09	1,641.60	1,876.12	2,110.64	2,579.68	3,048.71	3,517.73	4,221.28	4.87%
Upper Arley	1,403.92	1,637.91	1,871.90	2,105.89	2,573.87	3,041.85	3,509.81	4,211.78	4.76%
Bewdley	1,424.23	1,661.60	1,898.98	2,136.35	2,611.10	3,085.85	3,560.58	4,272.70	5.66%
Broome	1,394.21	1,626.58	1,858.95	2,091.32	2,556.06	3,020.80	3,485.53	4,182.64	4.89%
Chaddesley Corbett	1,404.15	1,638.18	1,872.21	2,106.24	2,574.30	3,042.36	3,510.39	4,212.48	4.76%
Churchill & Blakedown	1,402.09	1,635.78	1,869.46	2,103.15	2,570.52	3,037.89	3,505.24	4,206.30	5.10%
Kidderminster Foreign	1,381.24	1,611.45	1,841.66	2,071.87	2,532.29	2,992.71	3,453.11	4,143.74	4.83%
Ribbesford	1,373.92	1,602.91	1,831.90	2,060.89	2,518.87	2,976.85	3,434.81	4,121.78	4.87%
Rock	1,403.57	1,637.51	1,871.44	2,105.37	2,573.23	3,041.10	3,508.94	4,210.74	4.81%
Rushock	1,403.99	1,637.99	1,871.99	2,105.99	2,573.99	3,041.99	3,509.98	4,211.98	4.83%
Stone	1,412.33	1,647.73	1,883.12	2,118.51	2,589.29	3,060.08	3,530.84	4,237.02	5.01%
Stourport on Severn	1,405.65	1,639.93	1,874.21	2,108.49	2,577.05	3,045.61	3,514.14	4,216.98	4.96%
Wolverley & Cookley	1,405.05	1,639.23	1,873.41	2,107.59	2,575.95	3,044.31	3,512.64	4,215.18	4.87%

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL
22 FEBRUARY 2023

POLICY AND BUDGET FRAMEWORK
MATTERS WHICH REQUIRE A DECISION BY COUNCIL

RECOMMENDATIONS
TREASURY MANAGEMENT REVIEW PANEL
30 JANUARY 2023

Purpose of Report

To consider recommendations from the Treasury Management Review Panel on matters outside the policy framework or approved budget of the Council.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Would Councillors please note that the related reports and documents have not been included in the Council book, as they have already been sent to Members via the review panel agenda pack. The Treasury Management Review Panel is not open to the press or public.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL	CHAIRMAN OF REVIEW PANEL
<p>Treasury Management Strategy 2023-24</p> <p>The Treasury Management Review Panel recommends Council to:</p> <p>1.1 Approve the restated Prudential Indicators and Limits for the financial years 2023-24 to 2032-33, along with the new Liability Benchmark, included in Appendix 3 of the report. These will be revised for the February 2023 Council meeting, as per paragraph 7.2 of the report, following any changes to the Capital Programme brought about as part of the budget process. <i>(There have been no revisions to the Prudential Indicators considered by the Panel)</i></p> <p>1.2 Approve the updated Treasury Management and Investment Policy and Strategy Statements for the period 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024 (the associated Prudential Indicators are included in Appendix 3 and the detailed criteria is included in Section 10 and Appendix 5).</p> <p>1.3 Approve the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement that sets out the Council’s policy on MRP included in Appendix 1.</p> <p>1.4 Approve the Authorised Limit Prudential Indicator included in Appendix 3.</p>	<p>Councillor S Miah</p>

1.5 Notes that the separate Capital Strategy 2023-33, to be approved separately by Council, sets out the policy statement covering non-treasury investments including the related suite of prudential indicators.	
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WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

**COUNCIL
22 FEBRUARY 2023**

QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL

1. Question from Councillor N Desmond to the Leader of the Council

Last June, the cabinet took the decision to end their agreement with Cordwell leisure to provide a cinema and leisure facilities on the former Glades Site, Kidderminster. Could the Leader explain what has happened over the last 8 months to redevelop this important site?

2. Question from Councillor M Hart to the Cabinet Member for Operational Services

With The Environment Act 2021 becoming law introducing the need for a separate food waste collection, could the Cabinet member reassure me that there are no plans whatsoever to introduce 3 weekly collections?

3. Question from Councillor B Brookes to the Cabinet Member for Housing, Health, Wellbeing and Democratic Services

Could the Cabinet Member please tell this Council how many members of staff have left this Council since 1st January 2022, by whatever means, how many job vacancies we currently have unfilled and what are the posts?

4. Question from Councillor T Onslow to the Cabinet Member Culture, Leisure and Community Safety

Immediately after the Cabinet Member replied to my question at the last meeting, a local resident contacted me to say that what I had just been told was completely incorrect – exactly what happened when the Leader replied to my question on this in February. In light of this, would the Cabinet Member agree with me, in respect of the HLF Bid for Brinton Park, that the Administration has lost control of the whole process and negotiations with the Scout Group - who were told on 23rd December, the last working day before Christmas, by email that they were being cut out of the HLF project - have been appallingly handled?

5. Question from Councillor I Hardiman to the Cabinet Member for Operational Services

Whilst welcoming the news in the 1st February edition of Wyred Weekly regarding access to Wyre Forest House would the Cabinet Member advise this Council whose decision it was to reverse this policy, why it was ever introduced in the first place and by whom?

6. Question from Councillor N Desmond to the Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Community Safety

Following the Cabinet's strong leader report setting out the procurement process for providing WFDC electric vehicle charging points, could the relevant cabinet member confirm if the contract has been awarded and when can we expect the first EVC to be operational by?

7. Question from Councillor M Hart to the Leader of the Council

Would the Leader of the Council who has responsibility for Parish Councils please set out to this Council exactly how many Parish Council meetings (not including Kidderminster Town Council which she sits on in) she has attended since she took over responsibility in May 2021?

8. Question from Councillor M Hart to the Leader of the Council

Could the Leader of the Council tell this Council what she thinks the Progressive Allowance's biggest achievement has been over the last 4 years?