

TITLE	Medium Term Financial Plan 2022-2025 Including Revenue Budget Submission 2022/23
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Thursday, 17 February 2022
WARD	None Specific;
LEAD OFFICER	Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers
LEAD MEMBER	Executive Member for Finance and Housing - John Kaiser

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

To provide the Executive with the key revenue budget extract for 2022/23 of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2022-2025 for submission to Council.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive:

- 1) recommend to Council that the Summary of Budget Movements (SOBM) be approved. (Appendix A);
- 2) note the report of the Community and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee relating to Scrutiny of the Budget Setting Process 2022-23 and the Medium Term Financial Plan 2022-2025 (as set out in Appendix B to the report);
- 3) approve the schedule of fees and charges, as set out in Appendix C to the report, to be effective from the dates listed on the schedule;
- 4) note that the MTFP, Housing Revenue Account, Capital Strategy and Treasury Strategy budget papers do not include any budget changes in relation to the Gorse Ride Redevelopment project. Any changes to this project agreed by Executive will be enacted by the Deputy Chief Executive across the MTFP, Housing Revenue Account, Capital Strategy and Treasury Strategy where appropriate;
- 5) delegate the authority to the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Lead Member for Finance and the Lead Member for Leisure, to approve reductions, discounts and/or promotions for fees and charges within sports and leisure, up to £100 per fee or charge.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Members are presented with the Medium Term Financial Plan for 2022-2025 including the proposed revenue budget submission for 2022/23 for recommendation to Council. *(Due to the size of this document a copy has been circulated separately to all Members. A copy can also be obtained from the Council's website or on request from Democratic Services).*

Executive are requested to recommend the following key revenue budget extract of the MTFP to Council;

- Summary of Budget Movements 2022/23 (Appendix A)

Fees and Charges

Members are presented with the schedule of proposed fees and charges. In previous years, this has been presented to Executive in November. For consistency with the overall budget approval for 2022/23, the fees and charges approval has now been included in this paper.

Members are required to agree the fees and charges contained in this report at Appendix C, effectively from the dates shown on the schedule, of which most are enacted from the beginning of April 2022.

The Council is currently projecting significant financial pressures both in the current and future financial years. Implementation of the new fees and charges during the financial year will help the Council to offset this challenge and is considered to be responsible.

Appendix D is an extract from Appendix C and outlines significant changes or new charges, along with reasons for the change/introduction of the charge.

The report contains proposed charges for services as set out in Appendix C. Annual inflationary increases have in general been increased by an average 3.8% (and rounded where appropriate) in line with the Retail Price Index (RPI) as at July 2021. Some fees and charges, largely in Adults Social Services, vary according to the cost of providing the service. Car parking charges have been frozen at current prices.

At its meeting on 26 January 2022, the Licensing and Appeals Committee recommended that the licence fees for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Licences should be reduced to the 2020/21 level, in recognition of the downturn in business experienced in the taxi trade and increases in costs of fuel and maintaining vehicles. Any impact on income against budget will be monitored closely and reported if required.

BACKGROUND

The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2022-2025 will be presented to Council for approval on 17 February 2022. Executive are asked to recommend the following key revenue budget extract of the MTFP to Council.

- Summary of Budget Movements 2022/23 (Appendix A)

In considering the Council's revenue budget submission, members should be aware of the chief finance officer (CFO) report. The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Chief Finance Officer (Deputy Chief Executive) to report to Members as part of the budget setting process. The report highlights the key financial and service risks contained in the 2022/23 budget proposals. This was reported to January Executive and forms the first section of the MTFP.

The net revenue budget for 2022/23 is approximately £145m excluding capital and internal recharges. The Council needs to set a balanced budget in the context of this.

The budget requirements for 2023/24 and 2024/25 will be shown in the MTFP as indicative figures only.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	See MTFP	Yes	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	See MTFP	Yes	Revenue
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	See MTFP	Yes	Revenue

Other Financial Information

None

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation

The revenue budget submission represents the budget needed to deliver the strategic objectives and priorities of the Council.

Public Sector Equality Duty

The specific projects and programmes of work will be assessed individually prior to implementation.

Climate Emergency – This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030

The MTFP includes budget allocation to deliver improvements in climate change.

List of Background Papers

- Appendix A – Summary of Budget Movements 2022/23
- Appendix B – Report by the Community and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee’s - Scrutiny of the Budget Setting Process 2021-22 and the Medium Term Financial Plan 2022-25
- Appendix C – Fees and Charges - Detail
- Appendix D – Fees and Charges - Extract of New / Significant Changes
- Medium Term Financial Plan 2022-2025

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