

Notice of Meeting

Executive

Councillor Bettison OBE (Chairman),
Councillor Dr Barnard (Vice-Chairman),
Councillors D Birch, Brunel-Walker, Harrison, Mrs Hayes MBE,
Heydon and Turrell

Tuesday 25 August 2020, 5.00 - 6.00 pm
Microsoft Teams Meeting



Agenda

Item	Description	Page
1.	Apologies	
2.	Declarations of Interest	
	<p>Members are asked to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary or Affected Interests in respect of any matter to be considered at this meeting.</p> <p>Any Member with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in a matter should withdraw from the meeting when the matter is under consideration and should notify the Democratic Services Officer in attendance that they are withdrawing as they have such an interest. If the Disclosable Pecuniary Interest is not entered on the register of Members interests the Monitoring Officer must be notified of the interest within 28 days.</p> <p>Any Member with an Affected Interest in a matter must disclose the interest to the meeting. There is no requirement to withdraw from the meeting when the interest is only an affected interest, but the Monitoring Officer should be notified of the interest, if not previously notified of it, within 28 days of the meeting.</p>	
3.	Minutes	3 - 18
	To consider and approve the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 14 July 2020.	
4.	Urgent Items of Business	
	Any other items which, pursuant to Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chairman decides are urgent.	

Executive Key Decisions

The items listed below all relate to Key Executive decisions, unless stated otherwise below.

5.	Financial Update	19 - 46
	<p>To provide an update to the Executive on the current year's financial position and future year projections</p> <p>Reporting: Stuart McKellar</p>	

EMERGENCY EVACUATION INSTRUCTIONS

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6.	Temporary changes to the Statement of Community Involvement	47 - 52
	Temporary changes in respect of publicity of planning policy documents and planning applications during COVID-19 crisis Reporting: Andrew Hunter	

Sound recording, photographing, filming and use of social media is permitted. Please contact Hannah Stevenson, 01344 352308, hannah.stevenson@bracknell-forest.gov.uk, so that any special arrangements can be made.

Published: 18 August 2020

EMERGENCY EVACUATION INSTRUCTIONS

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EXECUTIVE
14 JULY 2020
5.00 - 6.00 PM

Present:

Councillors Bettison OBE (Chairman), Dr Barnard (Vice-Chairman), D Birch, Brunel-Walker, Harrison, Mrs Hayes MBE and Turrell

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillors Heydon

72. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

73. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Executive on 30 June 2020 together with the accompanying decision records be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

74. Urgent Items of Business

There were no urgent items of business.

Executive Decisions and Decision Records

The Executive considered the following items. The decisions are recorded in the decision sheets attached to these minutes and summarised below:

75. Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Local Plan

RESOLVED that

- i. the Proposed Submission Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (along with the supporting documents and Policies Map) is approved for publication for a statutory six week period of consultation commencing on Thursday 3rd September and closing on Thursday 15th October 2020.
- ii. that any minor changes to the Proposed Submission Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan and supporting documents (relevant to Bracknell Forest), following Council, are agreed by the Director of Place Planning and Regeneration in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning and Transport

RECOMMENDED that

- iii. Under the provisions of Section 22 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase

Act 2004 (as amended), that the Proposed Submission Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan, the Policies Map and all supporting documents be formally submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination.

- iv. Under the provisions of Section 23 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended), that the appointed Inspector be requested to recommend main modifications to the submitted Plan, in the event that the Inspector considers that such modifications are necessary to make the Plan sound.

76. Revenue Expenditure Outturn 2019/20

RESOLVED that

- i. the outturn expenditure for 2019/20, subject to audit, of £74.323m, which represents an under spend of -£0.646m compared with the approved budget is noted.
- ii. the budget carry forwards of £0.054m (see paragraph 5.7 and Annexe C) are approved.

RECOMMENDED that

- iii. Council note the Treasury Management performance in 2019/20 as set out in Annexe B of the Director: Resources report.
- iv. the earmarked reserves as set out in Annexe D of the Director:Resource's report are approved.
- v. the virements relating to the 2019/20 budget between £0.050m and £0.100m and recommend those that are over £0.100m are approved by Council.

77. Greening Waste Collection Update

RESOLVED that

- i. the introduction of food waste and the move to three weekly refuse collections for households is postponed until the 1st March 2021 as a result of the Coronavirus.
- ii. communications related to the changes will be paused and restarted in October 2020 with a refreshed and revised communications plan.
- iii. the introduction of food waste collections to flats and Houses of Multiple Occupation with communal bins is postponed until the Autumn of 2021 following work being completed by Overview & Scrutiny after roll out of the household service.

78. Strategic Procurement Plan

RESOLVED that the strategic procurement plan for Cloud-based Hosting and Support is approved.

79. Exclusion of Public and Press

RESOLVED that pursuant to Regulation 21 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) Regulations 2000, members of the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of items 10 and 11 on the agenda which involves the likely disclosure of exempt information under the following category of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972:

- (3) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority).

80. **Property Joint Venture - Award of Preferred Bidder**

RESOLVED that

- i. Bidder A be approved as the “Preferred Bidder” for the Council’s property joint venture partnership and authorise the Director: Resources and the Borough Solicitor to finalise the necessary contractual agreements on such terms as best protect the Council’s interest.
- ii. The contents of the delegation policy set out in Appendix E to be incorporated in the partnership Members’ Agreement, subject to any non-material changes agreed by the Director: Resources and the Borough Solicitor as part of finalisation of the contractual agreements;
- iii. The incorporation of the Bracknell Forest Limited Liability Partnership (“LLP Joint Venture”) with the Preferred Bidder following the execution of legal contracts;

RECOMMENDED that

- iv. funding be made available as required to support the Council’s 50% investment in the joint venture, with requirements for individual site development to be agreed as part of the Executive and Council’s consideration of the initial JV business plan later this year.

81. **Support for Everyone Active to enable recovery from the impact of COVID-19**

RESOLVED that

- i. Everyone Active is granted a management fee holiday for the full year 2020/21, inclusive of the relief for the first quarter’s management fee previously approved by the Executive on 28 April 2020;
- ii. the Council will underwrite the estimated reopening costs and losses for Everyone Active for the period July 2020 to March 2021, with the actual sum to be calculated on an “open book” basis in accordance with the approach set out in paragraph 5.15 and in Appendix 2 of the Director:Resources report.
- iii. the revised surplus share mechanism described in 5.20 that offers the potential, subject to actual trading performance, for the Council to recoup the costs incurred in respect of recommendation 2.2 be approved over the remaining life of the contract with Everyone Active up to 31st March 2033.

CHAIRMAN

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**Bracknell Forest Council
Record of Decision**

Work Programme Reference	1091792
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1. **TITLE:** Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Local Plan
2. **SERVICE AREA:** Place, Planning & Regeneration
3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

To seek the Executive's recommendation to Council to submit the Submission Joint Minerals and Waste Local Plan for Central and Eastern Berkshire to the Secretary of State for examination by an independent Inspector. Pursuant to this, the Executive's recommendation is sought to publish the Proposed Submission Joint Minerals and Waste Local Plan for Central and Eastern Berkshire and related changes to the Policies Map for consultation.

4. **IS KEY DECISION** Yes
5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

- i. the Proposed Submission Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (along with the supporting documents and Policies Map) is approved for publication for a statutory six week period of consultation commencing on Thursday 3rd September and closing on Thursday 15th October 2020.
- ii. that any minor changes to the Proposed Submission Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan and supporting documents (relevant to Bracknell Forest), following Council, are agreed by the Director of Place Planning and Regeneration in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning and Transport

RECOMMENDED that

- iii. Under the provisions of Section 22 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended), that the Proposed Submission Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan, the Policies Map and all supporting documents be formally submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination.
- iv. Under the provisions of Section 23 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended), that the appointed Inspector be requested to recommend main modifications to the submitted Plan, in the event that the Inspector considers that such modifications are necessary to make the Plan sound.

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

It is important that the Council has an up to date and robust planning framework to guide development which reflects current national policy and guidance. The preparation of a JMWP will help achieve this aim.

The joint plan must be prepared in consultation with the local community and other stakeholders. Several information gathering consultations and ‘calls for sites’ have been completed that form the preparation stage of plan-making (Regulation 181). Responses to these have informed the content of the plan.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The Council could have sought to provide plan coverage for minerals and waste in its Local Plan, rather than preparing a separate plan. However, due to the strategic nature of minerals and waste issues and the specialist knowledge required in this area, such an approach was ruled out at an early stage. Creating a joint plan creates economies of scale and enables the Council to deal with minerals and waste issues strategically.

9. **PRINCIPAL GROUPS CONSULTED:** General consultation bodies
 Specific consultation bodies
 Public
 Landowners
 Minerals and waste operators

10. **DOCUMENT CONSIDERED:** Exec Proposed Submission JMWP June 2020
 Draft Policies Map June 2020 v3 low res
 Appendix A JCEB Minerals and Waste Local Plan
 Proposed Submission for Approval July 2020
 Appendix B - Consultation Strategy Mandate Draft
 Submission Minerals Waste LP

11. **DECLARED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None

Date Decision Made	Date decision will be implemented
14 July 2020	21 July 2020

**Bracknell Forest Council
Record of Decision**

Work Programme Reference	I090630
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1. **TITLE:** Revenue Expenditure Outturn 2019/20

2. **SERVICE AREA:** Finance

3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

To note the outturn position for the year and approve earmarked reserves.

4 **IS KEY DECISION** Yes

5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

RESOLVED that

- i. the outturn expenditure for 2019/20, subject to audit, of £74.323m, which represents an under spend of -£0.646m compared with the approved budget is noted.
- ii. the budget carry forwards of £0.054m (see paragraph 5.7 and Annexe C) are approved.

RECOMMENDED that

- iii. Council note the Treasury Management performance in 2019/20 as set out in Annexe B of the Director: Resources report.
- iv. the earmarked reserves as set out in Annexe D of the Director:Resource's report are approved.
- v. the virements relating to the 2019/20 budget between £0.050m and £0.100m and recommend those that are over £0.100m are approved by Council.

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

The recommendations are intended to inform the Executive of financial performance against budget in the 2019/20 financial year.

8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

The report sets out the Council's actual financial performance in 2018/19 and the consideration of options is not therefore appropriate.

9. **PRINCIPAL GROUPS CONSULTED:** None.

10. **DOCUMENT CONSIDERED:** 2019-20 outturn report v2
Executive Outturn annexes

11. **DECLARED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None

Date Decision Made	Date decision will be implemented
14 July 2020	21 July 2020

**E tBracknell Forest Council
Record of Decision**

Work Programme Reference	I092404
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1. **TITLE:** Greening Waste Collection Update

2. **SERVICE AREA:** Delivery

3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

To update the Executive on greening waste collection arrangements

4 **IS KEY DECISION** Yes

5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

RESOLVED that

- i. the introduction of food waste and the move to three weekly refuse collections for households is postponed until the 1st March 2021 as a result of the Coronavirus.
- ii. communications related to the changes will be paused and restarted in October 2020 with a refreshed and revised communications plan.
- iii. the introduction of food waste collections to flats and Houses of Multiple Occupation with communal bins is postponed until the Autumn of 2021 following work being completed by Overview & Scrutiny after roll out of the household service.

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

Following approval by The Executive on 28 January 2020 work began on communicating with residents on the changes however as a result of the Coronavirus since early March online and social media communication has stalled. This means our residents are not as informed about the changes as planned at this time.

One of the crucial elements of the summer communication focussed on face to face advice and support. Coronavirus restrictions have meant face to face interactions with residents have not been possible.

The five vehicles to be used for collecting food waste have been ordered, but production has been paused so at the time of writing there is no confirmed delivery date.

A service change of this scale requires a significant amount of preparation, a critical element is the new collection rounds for the service and the subsequent adjustments for the refuse collections. This process is running behind schedule as a result of the additional service pressures within Suez due to efforts of keeping existing collection services going during the pandemic.

The recommended 1 March 2021 start date avoids being too close to Christmas and New Year. Caddy deliveries and final roll out communications will take place in January and February.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Continue with the original October 2020 date; this carries a significant risk as vehicles may not arrive in time, new vehicle rounds may not be completed, and residents would not be as informed about the changes as planned.

Delay until October 2021, a full year delay is an option, however this would see an even larger reduction in the estimated savings and BFC would be lagging behind re3 partners.

9. **PRINCIPAL GROUPS CONSULTED:** The cross party Food Waste Member steering group reviewed and commented on this paper at their last meeting.

10. **DOCUMENT CONSIDERED:** Green Waste Collection Update for Exec 14-07-20v2
Appendix 1 - Green Waste Collection update for
Exec 14-07-20

11. **DECLARED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None

Date Decision Made	Date decision will be implemented
14 July 2020	21 July 2020

**Bracknell Forest Council
Record of Decision**

Work Programme Reference	I091157
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1. **TITLE:** Strategic Procurement Plan

2. **SERVICE AREA:** Delivery

3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

Approval of procurement and procurement process for Cloud Hosting and related Support Services

4. **IS KEY DECISION** No

5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

RESOLVED that the strategic procurement plan for Cloud-based Hosting and Support is approved.

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

Most organisations are moving to a Cloud-based operational model to provide their ICT facilities instead of investing in on-premise, or on-site facilities with the additional overheads of energy consumption, physical security and local management of hardware and systems. The cloud-based model is scalable (to cope with increased or reduced demand) more secure and future-proof in terms of the technical development and provision of applications software going forward. The timing of the procurement recognises that key servers and other systems currently in operation are approaching end of life, with limited future support from vendors, on offer.

8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

The estimated costs of a hosted operational solution have been produced in some detail. The costs of replacing the ICT facilities with the current day equivalent of the hardware and software, for an on-premise operation has also been calculated. The Cloud hosting operation is estimated to be more expensive (£167,000 over four years or £42,000 per annum) but it offers greater security in a time where the cyber threat is growing rapidly, and the agility to support collaboration with external partners and location independent working.

One of the key benefits of the Cloud-based operational model is that it is charged for on a subscription basis, for data processing and storage resources consumed. This is not feasible in an on-premise operation, as a physical server may host the systems of several services, and remains in place, irrespective of how much it is used. The subscription would go up if the requirement does, but if the requirement is reduced (e.g. as servers or systems are retired or if a service department should contract) so is the cost reduced. Some cost reduction has been factored into the projected costs for the cloud-based solution, based on a conservative estimate.

9. **PRINCIPAL GROUPS CONSULTED:** N/A
10. **DOCUMENT CONSIDERED:** Decision report for Exec- Cloud Hosting v1.1
Procurement Plan - Cloud Support 30 06 20 V.3.4
Initial equalities screening record form - Cloud
Hosting and Support
Azure Procurement - Full DPIA Template 30 06 20
11. **DECLARED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None

Date Decision Made	Date decision will be implemented
14 July 2020	21 July 2020

**Bracknell Forest Council
Record of Decision**

Work Programme Reference	I087627
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1. **TITLE:** Property Joint Venture - Award of Preferred Bidder

2. **SERVICE AREA:** Finance

3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

Award of the preferred bidder following procurement.

4 **IS KEY DECISION** Yes

5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

RESOLVED that

- i. Bidder A be approved as the “Preferred Bidder” for the Council’s property joint venture partnership and authorise the Director: Resources and the Borough Solicitor to finalise the necessary contractual agreements on such terms as best protect the Council’s interest.
- ii. The contents of the delegation policy set out in Appendix E to be incorporated in the partnership Members’ Agreement, subject to any non-material changes agreed by the Director: Resources and the Borough Solicitor as part of finalisation of the contractual agreements;
- iii. The incorporation of the Bracknell Forest Limited Liability Partnership (“LLP Joint Venture”) with the Preferred Bidder following the execution of legal contracts;

RECOMMENDED that

- iv. funding be made available as required to support the Council’s 50% investment in the joint venture, with requirements for individual site development to be agreed as part of the Executive and Council’s consideration of the initial JV business plan later this year.

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

The recommendations are based on a detailed evaluation of all submitted bids by senior Bracknell Forest officers and Directors, supported by the Corporate Procurement team who have overseen the evaluation process to ensure robustness. Further verification has been provided by the Council’s appointed professional advisors Pinsent Masons LLP (Legal) and Avison Young (Commercial and Property).

The evaluation process followed a strict structure of evaluation criteria which followed an OJEU compliant procurement process and was agreed by Property Joint Venture project board, designed to ensure a focus on the Vision and Objectives agreed by the

Executive in February 2019.

he shortlisted bidders had to detail how they would satisfy key issues in the areas of Design and Planning (20%), project delivery (23%), partnership working and governance (5%), finance and commercial (40%) and legal (10%). Responses were evaluated using an evidence-based approach and the recommendation to the Executive reflects the agreed outcome from the process.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The Executive could decide not to appoint a Preferred Bidder; however, this would mean that the Council would need to develop an alternative approach to securing development of identified sites in and around Bracknell town centre. The Business Case that informed the Executive's decision in February 2019 indicated that alternative approaches would be less likely to deliver the agreed objectives.

9. **PRINCIPAL GROUPS CONSULTED:** None.

10. **DOCUMENT CONSIDERED:** JV Report 14 July 2020 CONFIDENTIAL FINAL Version

11. **DECLARED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None

Date Decision Made	Date decision will be implemented
14 July 2020	21 July 2020

**Bracknell Forest Council
Record of Decision**

Work Programme Reference	I092790
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1. **TITLE:** Support for Everyone Active to enable recovery from the impact of COVID-19

2. **SERVICE AREA:** Delivery

3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

To outline the support offered by Bracknell Forest Council to Everyone Active (EA) to enable recovery from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and to ask for Executive approval for that support.

4 **IS KEY DECISION** Yes

5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

RESOLVED that

- i. Everyone Active is granted a management fee holiday for the full year 2020/21, inclusive of the relief for the first quarter's management fee previously approved by the Executive on 28 April 2020;
- ii. the Council will underwrite the estimated reopening costs and losses for Everyone Active for the period July 2020 to March 2021, with the actual sum to be calculated on an "open book" basis in accordance with the approach set out in paragraph 5.15 and in Appendix 2 of the Director:Resources report.
- iii. the revised surplus share mechanism described in 5.20 that offers the potential, subject to actual trading performance, for the Council to recoup the costs incurred in respect of recommendation 2.2 be approved over the remaining life of the contract with Everyone Active up to 31st March 2033.

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

The government has set out its plan for returning life to as normal as possible following the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic in a stepped programme. This programme has released sectors of the economy in a phased manner, while still keeping an eye on protecting communities and the health services. It was expected that this would include the permitted re-opening of leisure services on the 4th July, however this was not the case. An announcement was made on the 9th July that Indoor gyms, swimming pools and sports facilities can reopen from 25 July. This is the date that the Council and EA are now working towards for reopening Bracknell Leisure Centre.

8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

The Executive could determine not to support EA's cashflow position as proposed.

The consequence of this would be that EA would need to take a commercial view on whether to re-open the facilities or not. If they remain closed due to trading uncertainties, the costs for hibernating buildings will continue and increase over time, with the council having to meet these costs, with no likely prospect of recovering them.

- 9. **PRINCIPAL GROUPS CONSULTED:** Director: Finance
Borough Solicitor
- 10. **DOCUMENT CONSIDERED:** EA Support July 2020 Finalv2
- 11. **DECLARED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None

Date Decision Made	Date decision will be implemented
14 July 2020	21 July 2020

TO: THE EXECUTIVE
DATE: 25 AUGUST 2020

**Financial Update
(Director: Resources)**

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 Recognising the unprecedented financial pressures the Council is facing as a result of the various impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, this report provides an update to the Executive on the Council's financial situation in the current year and a forward look to the potential financial position in future years.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive:

- 2.1 **Notes the identified best case and worst case scenarios for the Council's current year financial position summarised in Table 1 and detailed in Annex A and approves the virements relating to the 2020/21 budget also included in Annex A;**
- 2.2 **Endorses the medium-term financial planning framework in paragraph 5.22 to guide detailed preparations for the 2021/22 and future years' budgets;**
- 2.3 **Note the out-turn capital expenditure and financing for 2019/20 and approves carry-forwards of £31.596m into the 2020/21 capital programme;**
- 2.4 **Recommends to Council the proposed additions to the current year's capital programme in paragraph 5.37;**
- 2.5 **Agrees to make available a vacant domestic property owned by the Council for social care purposes, as set out in paragraph 5.38.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The recommendations are intended to ensure that the Executive is aware of the Council's current and predicted future financial position.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 The Executive could decide to take immediate, corrective action through approving in-year budget changes to further mitigate the identified financial risks, however such an approach is not felt to be justified at this time.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

- 5.1 The Council approved the current year's budget and council tax at its meeting on 26 February 2020. At the time it was recognised to be one of the most difficult budgets

Unrestricted

ever faced. Spending pressures totalled an unprecedented £8m, the vast majority being in Children's and Adult Social Care. This necessitated the identification of £5m of savings, a maximum permitted increase in council tax plus the use of £0.4m from reserves to achieve a balanced budget for the year.

5.2 In setting the budget for 2019/20, consideration was given to the outlook for the economy as a whole, the impact of demographic changes and the resulting pressures on services and other risks contained within the proposed budget. The Contingency was set at £2.250m in the final budget proposals, to make an allowance for the identified risks.

5.3 At that time it was also recognised that there was significant uncertainty for the period from 2021/22 due to the potential impact of a number of issues, in particular:

- Fair Funding Review
- Business Rates system re-set
- 2020 Spending Review which would determine the overall quantum of resources available to local government
- Final Brexit arrangements

5.4 The most likely consequence of all of these factors combining was estimated to be an additional recurring budget gap of around £4.5m in 2021/22. It was acknowledged that the impact of these factors would be a greater reliance on Council Tax income as an on-going source of funding to support essential front-line services as well as a need to identify further savings each year. It was noted that the Future Funding Reserve had deliberately been created in order to help manage the transition to the new funding arrangements and enable savings to be gradually identified and implemented over time.

Update on Current Year Position

5.5 The impact of the Covid-19 epidemic on Council budgets since March 2020 has been widely reported. In recognising the important role that local authorities have played in responding to the situation, Government has provided an additional £3.7bn of funding to English councils directly and undertaken to mitigate some lost income from sales, fees and charges. Details of arrangements in respect of the latter support are still awaited. Further costs incurred by upper tier authorities to support hospital discharges are being covered by funding being passed through Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs).

5.6 The areas of additional spending referred to by Government as being covered by the additional funding it has provided are as follows:

Adult social care	Children's services
Public health services	Fire and rescue services
Waste collection services	Shielding those clinically vulnerable
Homelessness and rough sleeping	Domestic abuse
Supporting the NHS	Managing excess deaths

Unrestricted

- 5.7 While welcoming the additional Government funding, individual authorities and the Local Government Association are highlighting that the scale of the impact on council budgets in the current year is expected to exceed the sums provided to date.
- 5.8 Councils have been asked by the Ministry of Housing, Local Government and Communities (MHCLG) to provide monthly updates on the scale of cost increases and income losses they are experiencing and expect to see over the remainder of the year. Responses to the June survey indicated that between March and June councils had incurred £4.8bn of extra cost pressures and income losses and expected these to rise by a further £4.4bn and £2.8bn respectively by the end of the year. In addition, collection fund losses from council tax and business rates income were forecast to be £3.7bn over the year. To date, £4bn of additional funding has been provided to councils by Government directly and through CCGs.
- 5.9 Being a unitary authority responsible for the full range of council services across the Borough, Bracknell Forest is one of the councils facing challenges both from additional expenditure and income losses across its service areas.
- 5.10 A detailed analysis of the Council's forecast financial position in the current year is set out in Annex A of this report, which shows the first formal budget monitoring report for 2020/21. Recognising the scale of uncertainty we are facing at this time, the report includes both estimated best and worst case scenarios which reflect actual expenditure to date plus a range of financial predictions from Assistant Directors covering the remainder of the year. A summary of the position being reported is shown in the table below.

Table 1: Current Year Financial Position

	Current Approved Budget £000	Predicted Variance – Best Case £000	Predicted Variance – Worst Case £000
Service Departments	84,801	7,335	14,647
Non-Departmental	-4,629	-575	-425
Sub-Total	80,172	6,760	14,222
Contingency	2,207	-2,207	-2,207
Covid Funding	0	-6,457	-6,457
Overall Position	82,379	-1,904	5,558

- 5.11 It can be seen that the Council is expecting to face additional pressures this year of between £6.8m and £14.2m, the vast majority of which are directly related to the Covid situation. With funding of almost £8.7m available from the additional Covid grant and the corporate contingency, the overall range of potential financial outcomes is from all pressures being covered by available resources in the best case scenario to an overspend of over £5.5m in the worst case scenario. Full details of the variances being reported and their underpinning rationale is included in Annex A. This shows that the service areas most significantly affected are Contract Services (car parking and leisure), Adult's and Children's Social Care and Place, Planning and Regeneration (The Look Out and Planning fees).
- 5.12 These figures will continue to be refined during the year as more data becomes available on expenditure to date and further clarity emerges on the detailed arrangements for Government support for lost income. At this stage, based on what we understand to be the position on this, it has been assumed in the best case scenario that the Government will reimburse 75% of the reduced car parking income

over the course of the year (after an initial 5% “deductible”) but no other loss of income.

- 5.13 Details of the income compensation scheme have yet to be published but it has recently become apparent that loss of management fee income from externally run leisure services is likely to be supported. Once the level of support has been confirmed this will be built into the forecast position which will have a positive impact on both scenarios. This, together with Bracknell Forest’s long track record of sound financial management, provides some confidence that the Council will be able to live within the resources available to us in the current year, without having to draw significantly from available reserves.
- 5.14 That said, the situation remains extremely unpredictable, with a further peak of Covid cases and a prolonged economic downturn still possible over the Autumn and Winter periods. Either of these could materially impact the scenarios currently being predicted. It is therefore important that we do not become complacent and continue to monitor the financial position very closely over the coming months. In the meantime, the message from the Corporate Management Team to the organisation is to be continuously mindful of the pressures we are facing and to minimise any non-essential expenditure to help ensure we remain within budget.

Medium-Term Prospects

- 5.15 Alongside the process of setting the Council’s budget for 2020/21, the Corporate Management Team and Executive members were considering and planning for the Council’s medium-term financial position earlier this year. There is currently no funding settlement for local government beyond 2020/21. However, in confirming the 2020/21 local government finance settlement the Government announced its intention to re-set the business rates baseline for all authorities in April 2021, at which point Bracknell Forest would lose around £4m of retained business rates growth which has been supporting the revenue budget for many years. This had been expected and the Council had established a Future Funding earmarked reserve to provide mitigation against this loss for several years.
- 5.16 Other key factors in projecting the medium-term financial position are:
- The level of new spending pressures and inflationary increases that are added to the base (commitment) budget each year;
 - Specific grants received, notably New Homes Bonus;
 - Annual council tax increases and the number of new properties.
- 5.17 In budget planning there is normally a gap between the predicted level of spending and available income. Since local authorities are legally obliged to set a balanced budget every year, this gap needs to be filled by a combination of budget savings and use of reserves.
- 5.18 The estimated position in February 2020 is detailed in Annex B. In summary, this showed that the Council would need to identify and deliver £10m of savings over the 3 years 2021/22 to 2023/24 to mitigate cost pressures of around £2.75m per year. It was recognised that this was significantly lower than the £8m of pressures faced in the 2020/21 budget, which was acknowledged to be unsustainable. During this period just over £10m would be used from the Future Funding reserve to support the budget. This meant that the savings required could be spread relatively evenly over the 3 years rather than having to be front loaded to coincide with the significant funding reduction in 2021/22.

- 5.19 In order to guide work to identify where savings would be achieved, 7 key principles were identified:
- We would:
 1. Aspire to excellence in what we do so we can live within our means;
 2. Consolidate the recent growth in social care spending into our financial plans but work towards a small reduction in real terms from 2020/21 levels;
 3. Concentrate on targeted early intervention and preventative activities to reduce future demand for more expensive services;
 4. Seek no funding for new service growth unless in exceptional circumstances, apart from a strategic priority around climate change and agreed manifesto commitments;
 5. Refocus transformation and other savings programmes and quantify savings “envelopes” for all projects;
 6. Expect all service areas to deliver spending reductions throughout the period to bridge the remaining gap, focusing on but not limiting efforts to restrict areas of limited or manageable public impact;
 7. Increase fees and charges as much as reasonably possible every year to maximise income.
- 5.20 Work was commencing to review and firm up savings targets for transformation programmes and individual service areas when the focus of the organisation turned, as it had to, to supporting our residents and businesses deal with the health and economic impacts of the pandemic. While the Council’s work in that respect is far from finished, we have reached the point where work needs to start to develop options for the 2021/22 budget and future years.
- 5.21 Given the scale of change that has happened to society and the economy since March, it is necessary to re-evaluate our planning assumptions from earlier in the year. The section below sets out key matters to consider.
- a) *Pressures*
- The 2020/21 budget included £8m of service pressures and, as shown in table 1 above, we are facing a further £6.75m - £14m in year;
 - Some of the in-year pressures are likely to continue into 2021/22
 - It is not realistic at this point to plan for pressures to be held at a maximum of £2.75m per year for the foreseeable future
- b) *Funding*
- It was expected that the Council would lose £4m funding in 2021/22 through a reset of the business rates system;
 - Government has recently announced that any significant changes to the business rates system will be delayed beyond 2021;
 - Business rates income will fall from the current level due to appeals against valuations (e.g. town centre) and potential business changes
 - Apart from the loss of retained business rates, it was expected that the Council would keep (broadly) the same level of Government funding in future years as in 2020/21;

Unrestricted

- Unprecedented levels of additional grant support have been provided by Government in the current year – can this realistically be sustained?
- A Spending Review has been announced for the Autumn which will cover the next three years for revenue and four years for capital– there will be no clarity before then about the overall level of public funding in the future
- This means that the local government finance settlement will most likely be announced in mid December (after the Council needs to publish its draft 2021/22 budget)

c) *Income*

- Fees and charges were planned to increase each year to help bridge the budget gap;
 - A fragile economy will make demand more sensitive to price increases
- It was expected that the number of properties paying council tax would increase significantly over the coming years;
 - To date, the council taxbase has remained broadly in line with predictions
 - A period of economic uncertainty / downturn normally has an adverse impact on the housing market
 - The impact and length of the temporary stamp duty reduction is currently unclear

5.22 An updated, estimated medium-term position is included as Annex C. A key assumption is that the level of Government support will remain broadly at the level it was at the start of 2020/21, i.e. before the additional Covid-19 support was provided. Assuming more resources will be available and then finding that this is not the case when the local government finance settlement is announced in December would leave the Council seriously exposed with little time to respond to the position outlined in Annex C. The headline is, therefore, that the Council needs to plan to deliver £15m rather than £10m of savings over the next three years to compensate for increased spending pressures and reduced income over that period. Although the gap and savings target has increased, the 7 principles previously identified under paragraph 5.19 above remain valid and will be used to guide work over the coming months to develop draft revenue budget proposals for consideration by the Executive in December.

Capital Programme

5.23 The Council approved a capital programme for 2019/20 to 2021/22 at its meeting on 28 February 2019. The final capital out-turn position is summarised in Table 2 below (subject to the final external audit).

Unrestricted

Table 2: capital budget out-turn expenditure 2019/20

	Approved Budget	Actual Expenditure Incurred	Proposed Carry Forwards	Underspend
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Delivery	8,867	5,917	1,951	-1,000
Central Directorates	24,120	8,739	12,283	-3,099
People	28,027	6,869	17,362	-3,799
TOTAL	61,014	21,525	31,596	-7,898

- 5.24 The total capital budget for 2019/20 of £61m was comprised of £33.4m approved specifically for that year with virements and carry-forwards agreed in the year of £27.6m. The Council relies on government grants, capital receipts and other contributions of fund its on-going capital programme. As a result of the reduction in overall public expenditure over the last 3 years, the level of government grants (particular in relation to schools) has reduced substantially. However, the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) has provided the Council with the means to invest in its highest infrastructure priorities. New Council funding in 2019/20 amounted to £19.05m and included significant funding for Waste Collection, the redevelopment of Heathlands and the Town Centre redevelopment.
- 5.25 In accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations, directorates are required to manage their budgets to ensure that the overall department capital programme is not exceeded. Table 2 shows that the overall capital programme is underspent against budget, with the most significant variations from approved budgets being on the following schemes:
- Easthampstead House Demolition (£1.0m) – The original Time for Change Accommodation budget included a provision for the demolition of Easthampstead House. With tenants now in place this budget is no longer required.
 - Country Park (£2.6m) – An update has previously been provided to the Executive on the progress of this scheme. Funding for a reduced scheme remains in place.
 - Basic Needs Grant (£3.7m) – The financing of Binfield Learning Village (Kings Academy) was front-end funded through Council borrowing on the assumption that the final financing would consist of future grants and developer contributions. As such the outstanding unallocated amount of Basic Needs Grant will be used to reflect this historic position, with a consequent underspend being reported in 2019.20.
- 5.26 The total carry forwards requested by service departments amount to £31.596m. Details at scheme level can be found in Annexe D. Given the scale of this relative to the overall programme, these have been closely scrutinised by the Corporate Management Team. It is clear that the vast majority of the projects are either close to being completed or are contractually committed and underway.
- 5.27 The most significant carry-forwards that have been funded from Council resources (as opposed to grant funding which is normally automatically carried forward) are as follows:

Unrestricted

- Town Centre Redevelopment (£7.2m) – The funding set aside for the redevelopment of the Town Centre through various schemes will be drawn down as the programme continues to roll out.
- Replacement LED Street Lights (£0.8m) – This is a continuing project and is expected to be completed in 2020/21
- Heathlands Re-development (£10.7m) – This project is expected to complete in 2021/22 and is a long term commitment of the Council

5.28 In previous years funding carried forward has simply been rolled into the following year (in this instance 2020/21), however for some of the largest projects the actual cash flow profile will stretch over more than one year. This was a significant factor in the relatively low proportion of the capital budget that was actually spent in 2019/20.

5.29 While the Executive is asked to recommend to Council that carry-forwards totalling £31.596m are approved, it is intended that further work be undertaken over the coming months to profile capital spending across future years in time for the setting of the 2021/22 capital programme later in the year. This will enable a more accurate estimate of capital funding required and the potential revenue impact of any required additional borrowing to support the capital programme in each of the years ahead.

Capital Financing

5.30 Capital expenditure can be financed from four main sources; Developers' Contributions (S106 monies and Community Infrastructure Levy), Grants, Capital Receipts and Borrowing.

5.31 A total of £16.274m of government grants and other external contributions have been used to finance capital projects in 2019/20. Table 3 below summarises financing arrangements for capital expenditure incurred in 2019/20.

Table 3: Financing of 2019/20 Capital Expenditure

	£'000
Total capital expenditure	21,525
To be financed by:	
-Capital receipts	5,251
-Government Grants & Other Contributions	16,274
-Capital Financing Requirement	0

5.32 The table below highlights the most significant asset sales (capital receipts) that were realised in the year.

Table 4: Capital Receipts

Asset	£000
Unit A Waterside	1,060
Bigwood Lodge	548
Peacock Cottages	380
Mendeleev Building	364

5.33 As a result of the capital expenditure in 2019/20 the Council now has an overall capital financing requirement of £211.6m as at the 31 March 2020. This represents the Council's underlying need to borrow to fund previously approved capital expenditure that cannot be financed from other income sources. As required by regulations, the Council will provide for the repayment of this through the minimum revenue provision which will be re-calculated for these out-turn figures using the policy agreed by Council and reflected in the Council's Budget.

- 5.34 The Council's actual need to borrow at any particular time is determined by its overall cashflow requirements. The actual level of borrowing at the end of March 2019 was £95m with investments of £16.8m, totalling net debt of £78.2m. This reflects that the Council holds cash from its reserves, capital receipts and developer contributions that can temporarily be used to finance expenditure, commonly known as "internal borrowing".
- 5.35 Capital receipts have significantly reduced over the last 5 years as the Council has disposed of surplus assets through reviews of its asset estate. As such greater reliance has been placed in recent years on developer contributions and government grants. There is considerable uncertainty surrounding the level of these contributions over the next 2 years as a result of economic conditions and changes that have been introduced by Government in order to reduce the burden on developers, which is likely to reduce the level of available funding for capital schemes.
- 5.36 Over the last 3 years the Council has developed proposals for an annual capital programme limited to £5m of new Council funding, recognising the negative impact on the revenue budget of any additional borrowing requirement. Given the significant level of capital funding already approved but not yet spent, the general economic conditions and the financial pressures faced by the Council at his time, it is proposed that this should continue to be the maximum amount of new council funding each year. In order to remain within this financial envelope, future proposals and bids should only be brought forward where there is an acute need for investment or where investment will contribute towards the Council's transformation programme and save costs in the medium to long-term.
- 5.37 The following schemes have been identified that need to be added to the current Capital Programme for 2020/21 due to an urgent need.

Berkshire Archives (£17,000)

There is an urgent need to replace vital equipment at the Berkshire Records Office – a share of which must be met by each Council party to the joint arrangement. The total costs of the work are estimated at £127,000 with an apportionment to Bracknell Forest of £17,000. The works will include a replacement of the Chiller system and building control management system. These works are urgent to maintain the integrity of the documents held.

Market Street (£175,000)

Members have previously agreed that the Coopers Hill site be re-developed and site closure is now anticipated to be by end of 2020 for all users. A phased closure is anticipated but exact details have yet to be agreed. Alternative accommodation needs to be found to house some services provided by the Head of Children's Support Services which are currently situated in Coopers Hill. Co-location of services has the potential to increase the effectiveness of service provision by providing a calm and purposeful learning environment for vulnerable young people within an accessible building within the centre of Bracknell. It is proposed that the site identified at 20-21 Market Street be remodelled to provide the additional accommodation required.

It is intended to remodel the building to make the site suitable for the services by subdividing some spaces to provide the required level of meeting accommodation. The refurbishment includes work associated with this remodelling, plus any legislative work to comply with Building Regulations within the initial estimate of £175,000.

The Market Street site which is owned and managed by Bracknell Forest Council has been empty since the end of the tenancy in December 2019. Market Street is currently advertised for rent in the external market for an income to the Council of

£20,000-£25,000. Current market conditions are unfavourable for securing an external tenant. The Virtual School and College Hall PRU currently pay approximately £33,000 for up to 5 rooms per day for 5 hours a day at Coopers Hill. It is proposed that the same charge will be made for use of a more suitable facility at 20/21 Market Street.

Invest-to-Save – Memorial Area (£54,000)

The Crematorium has an area of memorial tablets which were laid in the very early days of opening. These are underground vaults. All memorial leases are now on annual leases following a change to arrangements over 5 years ago. The take up of renewing leases for memorials improved significantly. A new vault is charged at £695 (this incorporates the inscribed tablet and the first year's lease). Thereafter the lease charge would be £66 p.a.

The area is on constant view to mourners after every service. They have deteriorated over the years to the extent that we are now unable to offer any vaults that have been vacated to new customers and we are also unable to offer renewals of expired leases to existing customers. The current facilities are deteriorating and not worth repairing, the cost to remove the deteriorating granite would be prohibitive for the labour alone and would not include any replacement system. The proposal is to remove the existing concrete/granite combination and replace with granite only making the tablets stronger and looking brand new once again. This ensures the strength of the memorials and the longevity of the area – the granite would last for 20 years. The families of the bereaved are constantly seeking to explore options and there is a robust business case for progressing this scheme. Estimates show projected income growing from £17,000 in year 1 to £25,000 by year 5 as new memorials are leased. Ongoing income will then drop to £9,000 per annum reflecting the assumed annual renewal. At a borrowing rate of 2% the scheme meets the criteria of the Council's Invest-to-Save, with the additional income repaying the cost of capital within 3 years. With a lifetime of at least 20 years this refurbished memorial area will generate additional income for many years to come.

- 5.38 The Executive has previously approved the disposal of a vacant bungalow owned by the Council adjacent to the Cemetery and Crematorium, with an estimated sale value in excess of £300k. An alternative opportunity has been identified to use the bungalow for specific social care and housing needs, which require a property in a relatively isolated setting. This offers a financial advantage to the Council overall compared with the alternative of using residential care home placements setting, in addition to offering a more suitable and preferred model of care, even after taking into account the opportunity cost of the capital receipt that would be foregone. It is therefore recommended that the Executive agrees to make available the bungalow near to the Cemetery and Crematoria for social care purposes, rather than dispose of it to generate a capital receipt.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 Members are reminded in the context of this report of their fiduciary duty to the Council Taxpayer, effectively to act as trustee of the Council's resources and to ensure proper custodianship of the Council's resources.

The Council must set and maintain a balanced budget and must take steps to deal with any projected overspends and identify savings or other measures to bring budget pressures under control.

In relation to pressures and savings the Council has a variety of statutory duties which it must fulfil by law. It cannot lawfully decide not to carry out those duties. Even where the Council is under a statutory duty to provide a service there is often a discretion available to the Council about the level of service provision. For other activities, the Council provides services in pursuance of a statutory power rather than a duty, and though not bound to carry out those activities, decisions about them must be taken in accordance with the decision making requirements of administrative law.

Director: Finance

- 6.2 The financial implications of this report are included in the supporting information.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 The Council's budget proposals impact on a wide range of services. A detailed consultation was undertaken on the draft budget proposals published in December 2019 to provide individuals and groups the opportunity to provide comments.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 The Council's strategic risk register contains a specific risk highlighting "significant pressures on the Council's ability to balance its finances whilst maintaining satisfactory service standards". While this is a long-standing issue, the situation in the current year and future year prospects mean that the risk is particularly difficult to manage at the current time. This paper has been brought to the Executive at this time to ensure there is a shared understanding of the situation and to agree an outline approach to achieving financial sustainability over the medium-term, to help focus more detailed work on specific options over the coming months.

7 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 A detailed consultation will be undertaken on the Councils draft budget proposals for 2021/22 after they are published in December 2020.

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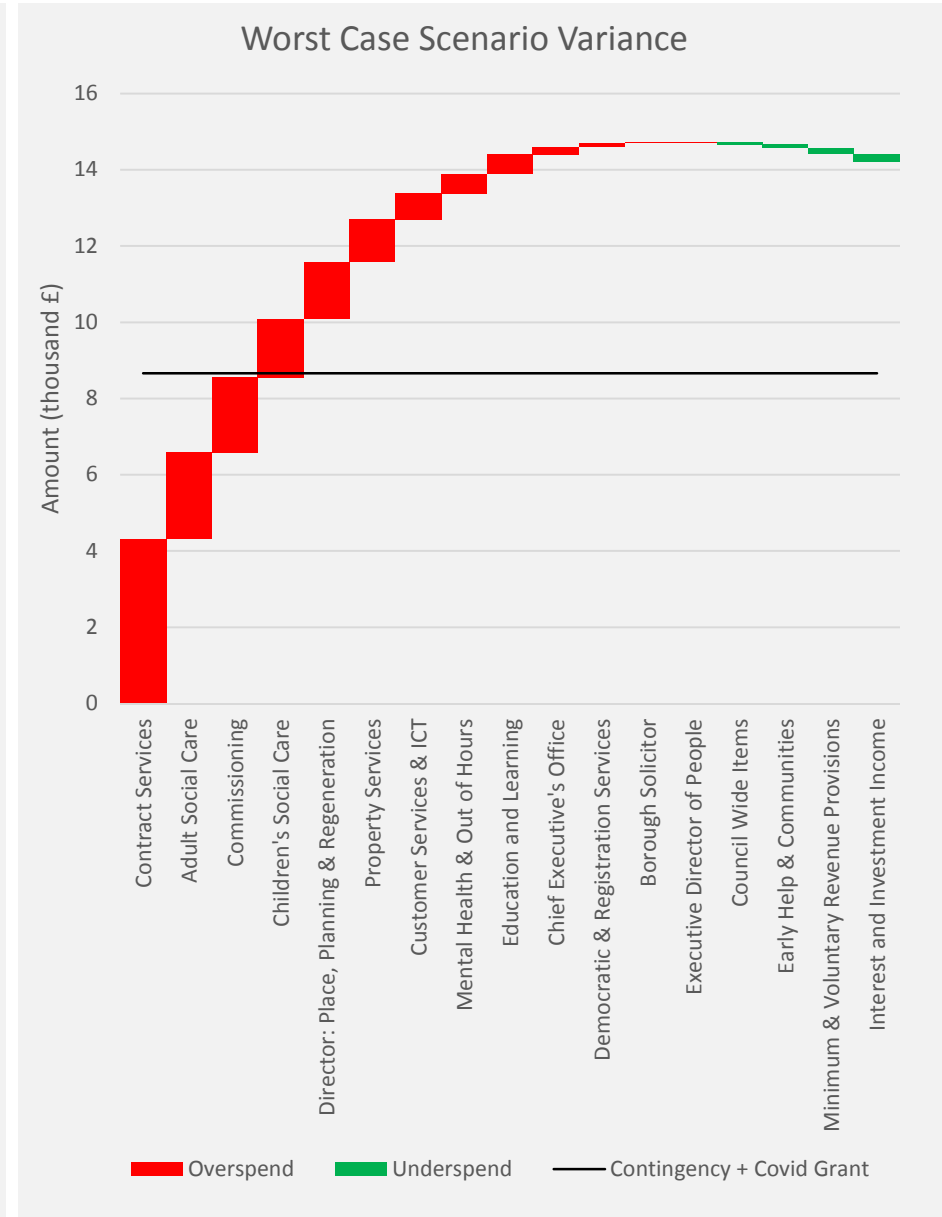
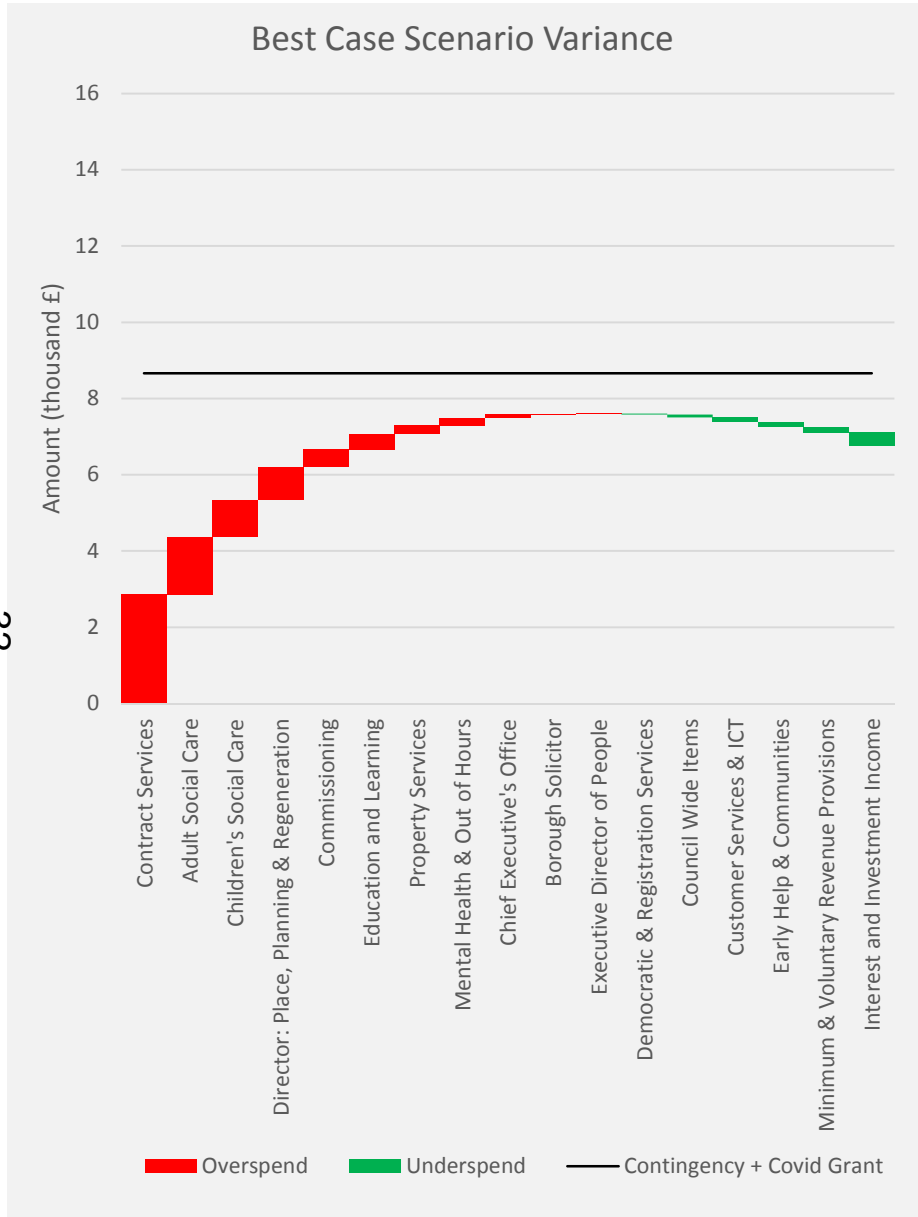
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Budget Monitoring End of Year Projections

Cash Budget Summary – Projected Variances

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Overall Summary

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	Original Cash Budget (£'000)	Virements & Budget C/Fwds (£'000)	Current Approved Cash Budget (£'000)	Variance - Best Case Scenario (£'000)	Variance - Worst Case Scenario (£'000)
Central	13,738	1,136	14,874	944	1,686
Delivery	15,550	-501	15,049	2,958	6,253
People	53,989	889	54,878	3,433	6,708
Non-Departmental	-4,051	-578	-4,629	-575	-425
TOTAL	79,226	946	80,172	6,760	14,222
Contingency	2,250	-43	2,207	-2,207	-2,207
Covid Grant Funding				-6,457	-6,457
TOTAL	81,476	903	82,379	-1,904	5,558
Transfer to/from Earmarked Reserves	8,348	-903	7,445	0	0
TOTAL CASH BUDGETS	89,824	0	89,824	-1,904	5,558
Central	4,878	-78	4,800	0	0
Delivery	-1,688	78	-1,610	0	0
People	22,930	0	22,930	0	0
Non-Departmental	-26,666	0	-26,666	0	0
TOTAL NON-CASH BUDGETS	-546	0	-546	0	0
TOTAL	89,278	-26	89,278	-1,904	5,558
SCHOOLS BUDGET	1,929	0	1,929	703	703
OVERALL TOTAL	91,207	-26	91,207		

Virements (Proposed Budget Movements Between Directorates and Reserves)

Directorate	Staff Reorganisation (£'000)	Council-Wide Allocations (£'000)	Section 106 Allocations (£'000)	Earmarked Reserves Allocations (£'000)	Total (£'000)
Central	-28	140	640	209	961
Delivery	-217	-206	0	0	-423
People	245	644	0	0	889
Non-Departmental / Council-Wide	0	-578	0	0	-578
Earmarked Reserves	0	0	-640	-209	-849
TOTAL	0	0	0	0	0

Cash Budget Summary

Key variances: CENTRAL

- Net income lost due to the closure of The Look Out and the need for social distancing upon reopening is forecast to be between £0.690m (Best Case) and £0.909m (Worst Case).
- There has been a downturn in Planning and Development Control income in the first two months of the financial year. It is too early to project the full impact of Covid-19 but early projections indicate a pressure of between £0.153m (Best Case) and £0.461m (Worst Case).

Key variances: DELIVERY

- Within Leisure a management fee payment holiday has now been agreed for the whole year (a quarter of which will be repayable over the life of the contract) along with support for staff costs operating costs. Dependant on the profits achieved, it is hoped that the remaining 9 months of the management fee and the other costs will also be recouped over the contract by adjusting the existing profit share ratio in the Council's favour (£2.389m Best Case and £2.490m Worst Case).
- A lack of income from daily charges, PCNs and staff parking from Apr-Jun has resulted in a pressure of £0.760m. Whilst charges were reintroduced on 1 July current figures suggest that the numbers of cars returning are down 45% on budgeted figures but are expected to increase over time. The overall pressure is estimated to be between £0.426m (Best Case) and £1.676m (Worst Case) with the main difference being the speed/size of recovery and the assumption that the government will provide income support in the Best Case scenario.
- A budget pressure has been identified for Commercial Property of between £0.217m (Best Case) and £1.119m (Worst Case). The best case scenario assumes no further lockdowns or financial difficulty of the tenants but that the larger units currently vacant remain vacant until the end of the financial year. The worst case scenario assumes further lockdowns, some of our tenants requiring rent free periods and increased write-offs and voids.

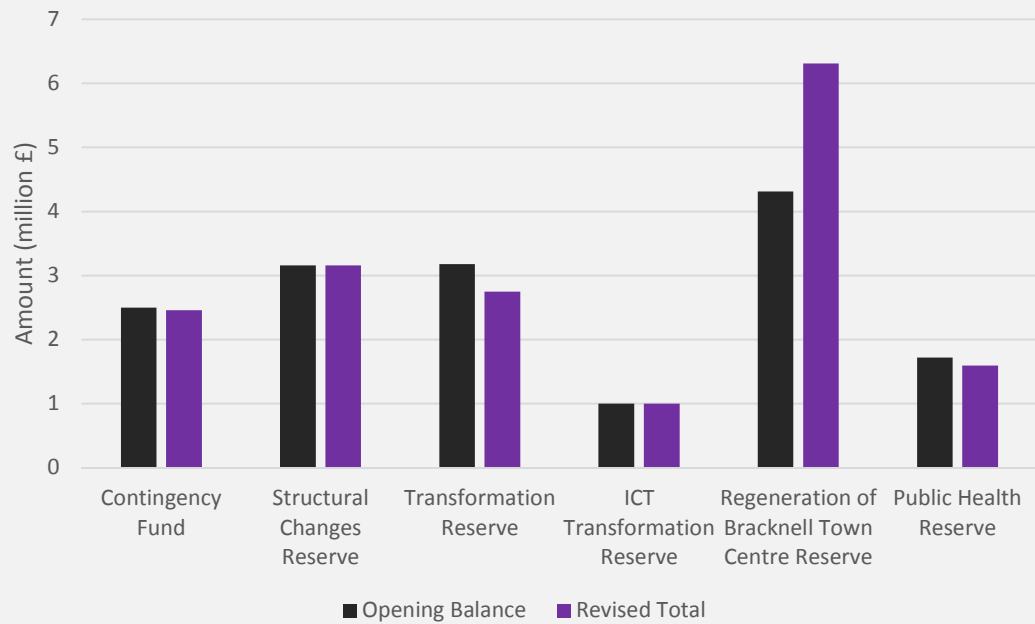
Key variances: PEOPLE

- Within Children's Social Care an overspend is projected on Children Looked After which will also have a knock on effect to other demand led services, such as Special Guardianship Orders and Childcare Solicitors, and the Devolved Staffing Budget (DSB). The forecast pressure is between £0.970m (Best Case) and £1.531m (Worst Case) depending on the forecast increase in numbers (20% up to 35%).
- Within Adult Social Care, pressures continue to be experienced on both Learning Disability and Adult Community Team placement costs. These make up the bulk of the projected variance of between £1.510m (Best Case) and £2.258m (Worst Case), with the Worst Case scenario assuming a more significant increase in both client numbers and package costs.
- Within commissioning a process of one-off payments to Adult Social Care providers has been implemented to help sustain the marketplace during the pandemic. There is much uncertainty over how long these payments will be required for resulting in an overall pressure of between £0.471m (Best Case) and £0.971m (Worst Case).
- Further pressures are being experienced within Education and Learning, due to DSB and income pressures and within Mental Health from placement costs. The combined impact is between £0.606m (Best Case) and £1.030m (Worst Case).

Earmarked Reserves

Description	Contingency Fund (£'000)	Structural Changes Reserve (£'000)	Transformation Reserve (£'000)	ICT Transformation Reserve (£'000)	Regeneration of Bracknell Town Centre Reserve (£'000)	Public Health Reserve
OPENING BALANCE 1/4/2020	2,500	3,158	3,179	1,000	4,313	1,719
One-off funding of an increase in establishment in HR	-43		-58			
Budgeted increase			500		2,000	
Transformation Team			-870			
In-year overspend						-127
REVISED BALANCE 31/3/2021	2,457	3,158	2,751	1,000	6,313	1,592

Movement of Major Reserves



Central Directorate Variances

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Department	Description	BCS (£'000)	WCS (£'000)
PPR: Land Charges and Building Control	<p>It is assumed any shortfall in Local Land Charges (Chargeable) will be met from reserve, the non-chargeable and Building Control income (which is in deficit and therefore no reserve held) are currently reporting a pressure of £0.023m.</p> <p>There has been a downturn in income seen in the first two months of the financial year - it is too early to project, but it appears in April we were down about 2/3 on income. If May continues its current course it looks as if we will only be down about 1/3. It would appear the construction market is on the up again so the projection may be revised downwards in future months if the housing and construction sectors continue to re-open. However there are concerns that a resurgence of COVID 19 in the winter months may again impact on future income.</p>	46	141
PPR: Parks and Countryside Timber Sale	One off income from the sale of timber from Bigwood	-51	-51
PPR: Parks and Countryside Contractors	<p>Cost of contractors required to backfill volunteers who provide assistance to Rangers = £18k variance.</p> <p>The use of volunteers amounts to approximately 3.5 FTE completing a mixture of routine maintenance and essential safety related works within public open spaces. All these works will be deferred to future years or completed in-house wherever possible. Contractors will only be used to deliver essential safety works if these are shown to fall outside the capacity of the team.</p>	18	36
PPR: TLO	Net income lost due to closure of The Look Out to date is £322k. When The Look Out re-opens there will be a need for social distancing which will impact on the income for the Visitor Centre and Catering. It is hoped that income for car parking will pick up after the re-opening in June.	690	909
PPR: Planning and Development Control	There has been a downturn in income seen in the first two months of the financial year (£19k), it is too early to project the full impact of COVID 19 but early projections are a pressure on income of between 10-30% of budget of £1.075m, so estimates are currently at the upper end of this range.	153	461
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE: In Phase	Number of In-phase user licences has increased to 80 from the budgeted 42, the current licence budget therefore does not support the increase in costs.	5	5
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE: Voluntary Sector	CMT has agreed to provide Involve with £0.03m to fund a bid writer. A request for funding is to be made against the Covid-19 grant. The Council may choose to support additional charities and whilst the aim is that funding would be sought from the Government COVID 19 grant, it is not guaranteed. It has been agreed that the Council will support Healthwatch at a cost of £48k.	83	185
		944	1,686

Delivery Directorate Variances

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Department	Description	BCS (£'000)	WCS (£'000)
CONTRACT SERVICES: Leisure	<p>Financial package agreed with EA to support the pay of skeleton staff across the 3 sites and provide a payment holiday for the first quarter's management fee (this will be repayable over the remaining contract term, however it will be a pressure within this current financial year) from Apr-July.</p> <p>EA have approached us for a second package of financial support and this includes 2 different scenarios: 1) BLC and more of DGC reopen 25.07 and CR reopens 01.10, 2) BLC and more of DGC reopen 25.07 and CR remains closed until the end of the financial year. Dependant on the profits achieved, it is hoped that the total value of underwriting and management fee payment holiday will be recouped by adjusting the existing profit share ratio and BFC will get this money back over the course of the rest of the contract. This request includes payment holiday for the remainder of the financial year along with support for staff costs and operating costs due to reduced income.</p>	2,389	2,490
CONTRACT SERVICES: Car Parking	<p>A lack of income from daily charges, PCNs and staff parking from Apr-Jun resulted in a pressure of £0.76m.</p> <p>Car Parking charges were reintroduced from 1st July at 100% of what they were prior to lockdown. Current figures suggest that the numbers of cars returning are at approx. 55% of what they were for the same period last year and so this has been used as the starting point for both the best and worst case scenarios.</p>	426	1,676
CONTRACT SERVICES: Cem and Crem	<p>The set up and first 2 months of the TPOR has cost a total of £0.032m for BFC. Each additional month of use will cost £0.008m, however there will be termination costs or hibernation costs depending on what is decided for the future requirements of the site. Monthly hibernation costs will be £0.005m, however the termination cost will be £0.002m.</p> <p>BSC = set up and first two months, WCS = use through to the end of year (9 additional months)</p>	32	104
CONTRACT SERVICES: Waste	<p>Additional costs relating to the reopening of the tip sites are approx. £0.008m per week (split by 3 LA's). In addition to this there were some one off costs relating to signage and cameras £0.003m. Initially it is expected that Ringway will be required on site for 3 weeks. The total cost of this for the first 3 weeks is £0.008m for BFC. Each additional week will cost a further £0.001m for BFC.</p>	14	51
CUSTOMER SERVICES AND ICT: ICT	<p>The prior year required significant agency spend and this is likely to continue in 2020/21. The worst case scenario is that the current 3x agency members are required for the full financial year.</p>	154	307
CUSTOMER SERVICES AND ICT: Home to School Transport	<p>Due to Covid-19, there are underspends to report for April and May relating to contractor invoicing and fuel, plus corresponding reductions in recharges which reduces the underspend. The number of pupils travelling to school has reduced significantly during the pandemic however the cost per pupil is significantly higher. There is however an overall underspend against the profiled budget of £0.074m.</p> <p>Analysing the costs of the new providers, taking into account the underspend seen and reported thus far, BCS produces an overall underspend. However, the WCS, which assumes a Covid multiplier is applied to the normal number of routes/journeys to take account of social distancing and bubbles within schools produces an overspend.</p>	-274	276
CUSTOMER SERVICES AND ICT: South Hill Park	<p>SHP currently owe approx. £74k in relation to prior years' utilities costs. There is a danger this cannot be met and may therefore become a pressure in the current year if it is to be written off. We have not yet invoiced for the first quarter of this financial year and the current year costs may also not be met. It is assumed that the worst case scenario is a pressure of £0.100m, with the best case being that all costs will be met by SHP and invoices paid correctly.</p>	0	100

Delivery Directorate Variances

39

Department	Description	BCS (£'000)	WCS (£'000)
DEMOCRATIC AND REGISTRATION SERVICES	<p>Birth registrations and notices of marriage can now be taken face to face. Ceremonies can take place from 4 July if the venue is large enough to allow social distancing with no more than 30 participants. Notices of marriage for Register Officer weddings will resume in July and ceremonies can take place as soon as 28 days' notice of the marriage has been given.</p> <p>The best case scenario assumes a high uptake on additional appointments that have been made available for each activity – namely significant increases for RO and small ceremony weddings, which could become more popular over the next months until things are more settled. The worst case scenario assumes that the majority of ceremonies do not take place or the majority of couples postpone until 21/22 and as such we only achieve approx. 20% of our income target.</p>	-26	104
LEGAL SERVICES	Due to Covid-19 the Asst. Borough Solicitor has been asked to stay an additional 3 months beyond the date he was due to leave. The cost of this is £0.026m for the period April - June.	26	26
PROPERTY SERVICES	<p>We have been notified that Age Concern are in financial difficulty and after a rent free period of 3 months they will be surrendering the lease of the property in Forest Park. In this current climate it is highly unlikely that this unit will be re-let during this financial year.</p> <p>The current best case scenario assumes no further lockdowns or financial difficulty of the tenants (beyond what has been provided for by the government already), but that the larger vacant units remain vacant until the end of the financial year. The worst case scenario assumes further lockdowns and some of our tenants requiring rent free periods.</p>	217	1,119
		2,958	6,253

People Directorate Variances

40

Department	Description	BCS (£'000)	WCS (£'000)
ASC: LD Packages	<p>Forecast overspend on LD care packages of £871k, with an additional £350k pressure under the BCS and £783k pressure under the WCS.</p> <p>Since the budget was set there continues to be pressure on costs due to the size of packages rather than client numbers. Whilst changes in CHC funding are an issue the main factor appears to be increases in existing packages. <u>Best Case</u> additional overspend assumes residential clients increase slightly linked to transition, others increase slowly increase over remainder of year, prices increase gradually. <u>Worst Case</u> additional overspend assumes residential clients increase slightly, others increase quickly and exceed previous levels due to transitions, residential prices increase gradually others more significantly.</p>		
ASC: ACT Packages	<p>Forecast overspend on ACT care packages of £77k which is made up of an underspend on residential services (-£346k) and an overspend on community services (423k), with an additional £344k pressure under the BCS and £651k pressure under the WCS.</p> <p>This latter includes expenditure supporting the Clement House supported living facility (£112k) for which there is no budget. <u>Best Case</u> additional overspend assumes clients remain at reduced levels until August, slowly increase over remainder of year, peaking with winter pressures, residential prices stay flat recognising greater competition, other prices slowly increase. <u>Worst Case</u> additional overspend assumes clients increase rapidly from July then stabilise and increase again with winter pressures, relatively high price increases representing higher cost of providing services during Covid and provider instability.</p>	1,510	2,258
ASC: Waymead Income	Waymead respite centre is currently closed and as a result costs are being incurred whilst no income is generated. The timing of reopening remains unclear. The pressure under the best and worst case scenario is £23k and £46k respectively.		
ASC: AD Budgets	Forecast surplus of £80k made up of a number of miscellaneous budgets including advocacy, grants and Bridgewell.		

People Directorate Variances

Department	Description	BCS (£'000)	WCS (£'000)	
41 CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE: Placements	<p>The CLA care and accommodation budget is forecasting an over spending of £0.614m with an additional 5.9 FTE placements since the budget was set. There have been a further 2.3 FTE placements in residential care (£0.502m), 6.8 FTE with Independent Fostering (£0.382m) and 1.6 FTE in semi-independent settings (£0.063m). These have been partially offset by a 4.8 FTE reduction in lower cost placements (£0.213m). A provision for the further in-year increases that would generally be expected of £0.380m has also been added for which there is an unallocated budget of £0.500m.</p> <p>It is not yet clear whether £0.5000m will be enough to meet demand due to Covid – there is no robust data to confidently predict future changes. Limited Social Worker contact with children at risk. 80% not been to school or seen a Social Worker since end March. Assessments by CSC and referrals from Police are down 25%. A number of other LAs are using BI to predict the likely “surge” when lockdown eases although neighbouring LAs have not undertaken any significant modelling. The forecasts available from other LAs indicate a 180-200% increase above the norm for contacts and assessments which will impact on costs but unclear on what numbers would ultimately come into care. (Work from Portsmouth and Kent).</p>	970	1,531	
	CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE: Other Demand Led Services			<p>There are a number of mainly demand-led services that at this stage of the year are reporting under spending's, totalling -£0.484m. This includes Special Guardianship Orders (-£0.039m), payments to care leavers (£0.191m), support for disabled children (£0.097m), Childcare Solicitors (£0.170m) with a £0.066m provision for cost increases that are expected from normal in-year growth. Additionally, the anticipated loss of grant funding to the Youth Offending Service (£-0.053m) will not occur. However, areas such as Special Guardianship Orders, payments to care leavers, support for disabled children and Childcare Solicitors are forecast to be subject to the same changes as CLA care and accommodation costs above.</p>
	CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE: DSB			<p>The DSB is forecast to over spend by £0.223m, with agency staff costs over by £0.128m and a 25% underachievement against the vacancy factor (£0.060m) together with other general variances (£0.035m).</p> <p>There will be £0.220m of anticipated costs on the Family Safeguarding Model - Clinical Psychologist and Mental Health Workers - that it has now been confirmed will be funded by Health.</p>

People Directorate Variances

42

Department	Description	BCS (£'000)	WCS (£'000)
COMMISSIONING	<p>A process of one-off payments to Adult Social Care providers has been implemented to help sustain the marketplace during the Covid pandemic. There is much uncertainty over how long these payments will be required for.</p> <p>Quality Assurance: The underspend (-£41k) is primarily due to vacancy staff posts.</p> <p>Connections Hub: Overspend (£24k) includes £10k in respect of the loading of pre-paid cards in preparation for the Covid pandemic. The balance is additional staffing costs.</p>	471	1971
EARLY HELP AND COMMUNITIES	<p>Housing & Welfare Operational: Forecast underspend (-£231k) due to there being a high number of vacant posts – 10 fte are currently vacant. Though it should be noted that it is slightly offset by an overspend on staff costs in Housing management & property.</p> <p>Welfare & Benefits: Forecast underspend (-£84k) but this is a highly volatile budget (which a gross value of £24m) and so will change through the year. The variances is made up of a surplus on the HB payments (-£172k) offset by an overspend on the administration team (£88k).</p> <p>Housing management & Property: Forecast overspend (£64k) mainly due to staff costs though this is more than offset by the underspend in Housing & Welfare operational.</p> <p>Impact on rental and lettings income in the Youth Service and Early Help – BCS = £0.06m, WCS - £0.102m</p>	-126	-84
EDUCATION AND LEARNING	<p>The DSB is forecast to overspend through agency staff in the SEN Team and a 25% shortfall on achieving the vacancy factor (£0.162m). There is also loss of income at the OLC (£0.091m) and trading with schools by Standards and Effectiveness (£0.028m), which are expected to increase.</p> <p>Uncertainty over the future demand for social care placement costs</p>	397	506
MENTAL HEALTH AND OUT OF HOURS	<p>Forestcare: Forecast overspend (£120k) reflecting the losses that are incurred on the existing portfolio of contracts. Work is ongoing to review contracts and move Forestcare to a breakeven position.</p> <p>Care management: Forecast overspend (£104k) primarily due to agency staff employed to cover vacant staff posts.</p>	209	524
		3,433	6,708

Non-Departmental Variances

Department	Description	BCS (£'000)	WCS (£'000)
INTEREST AND INVESTMENT INCOME	The improved cash balances position achieved at the end of last year has continued. The worst case scenario assumes that this position won't be maintained for the whole year.	-350	-200
MINIMUM & VOLUNTARY REVENUE PROVISION	Higher than forecast capital receipts in 2019/20 and significant capital carry forwards into 2020/21 have created an under spend against the Minimum Revenue Provision.	-148	-148
COUNCIL WIDE ITEMS	The full allocation was not required to meet the non-schools share of the Council's lump sum deficit.	-77	-77
		-575	-425

Schools Budget

SCHOOLS BUDGET	Budget	Variance
Schools Block	75,933	-10
High Needs Block	18,685	717
Early Years Block	7,561	-4
Contribution from BFC	253	0
Dedicated Schools Grant	-100,503	0
Draw down from New School Reserve	0	0
TOTAL	1,929	703

44

Summary significant issues to date:

1. High Needs Block (+£0.717m): increase in additional placements in BF mainstream schools (+£0.278m); additional placements in other LA schools (+£0.204m); provision for further cost increase +£0.250m
2. Core placement number data on a range of significant budgets that total circa £9m (50% of the budget) are not yet available from the SEN Team which presents a significant risk to the accuracy of forecasts.
3. Effect of Covid has slowed down progress and achieving the £1.24m savings required for 2020-21 that are included in the budget are at significant risk.

Future years:

1. A £4.8m deficit is forecast on the HNB for the medium term. Further cost reductions are required to be identified in partnership with the Schools Forum to balance the budget.
2. DfE have introduced a phased funding reduction to Combined Services. There is a 20% cut in 2020-21 (£0.082m) with the expectation that the full £0.406m will be withdrawn at 20% per annum reduction.

2020/21 - 2022/23 Budget Model - Target Scenario

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Base Revenue Budget	81.0	85.4	92.0	94.6
Inflation and Commitments	2.2	3.0	3.0	2.7
Reduced income from business rates growth	0.0	4.0	0.0	0.0
Pressures (£1.4m one-off in 2020-21)	7.9	1.4	2.7	2.7
Transformation and Efficiency Savings	-5.3	-3.3	-3.3	-3.3
New Homes Bonus / HBA Grant	-0.4	1.5	0.2	0.2
Expenditure	85.4	92.0	94.6	96.9
Grant and Business Rates Baseline	-21.0	-21.4	-21.8	-22.2
Council Tax (+ 1.99% + 1.99% + 1.99%)	-61.8	-64.8	-67.7	-70.6
Council Taxbase Growth	-1.7	-1.6	-1.5	-1.3
Collection Fund adjustment (Ctax)	-0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
Use of General Balances / Future Funding Res.	-0.4	-4.2	-3.6	-2.8
Resources	-85.4	-92.0	-94.6	-96.9
Annual Gap	0.0	-0.0	0.0	0.0
Cumulative Gap	0.0	-0.0	-0.0	-0.0
Cumulative Use of Future Funding Reserve		-4.2	-7.8	-10.6
Remaining Future Funding Reserve	18.0	13.8	10.2	7.4

£10m savings over 3 years from 2021/22 supported by phased use of reserves covers pressures of £2.75m p.a. and makes progress towards sustainability

2020/21 - 2022/23 Budget Model - Target Scenario

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Base Revenue Budget	81.0	85.4	91.1	94.4
Inflation and Commitments	2.2	3.0	3.0	2.7
Reduced income from business rates growth	0.0	2.0	2.0	0.0
Pressures (£1.4m one-off in 2020-21)	7.9	4.1	4.4	2.7
Transformation and Efficiency Savings	-5.3	-4.9	-6.3	-3.8
New Homes Bonus / HBA Grant	-0.4	1.5	0.2	0.2
Expenditure	85.4	91.1	94.4	96.2
Grant and Business Rates Baseline	-21.0	-21.4	-21.8	-22.2
Council Tax (+ 1.99% + 1.99% + 1.99%)	-61.8	-64.8	-67.3	-69.9
Council Taxbase Growth	-1.7	-1.2	-1.2	-1.3
Collection Fund adjustment (Ctax)	-0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
Use of General Balances / Future Funding Res.	-0.4	-3.7	-4.1	-2.8
Resources	-85.4	-91.1	-94.4	-96.2
Annual Gap	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Cumulative Gap	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Cumulative Use of Future Funding Reserve		-3.7	-7.8	-10.6
Remaining Future Funding Reserve	18.0	14.3	10.2	7.4

£15m savings over 3 years from 2021/22 covers increased pressures and reduced income from Covid-19 and expected economic downturn

Note, this is after removing the one-off staffing pressures funded in 2020/21 only

**TO: EXECUTIVE
25 AUGUST 2020**

TEMPORARY CHANGES TO THE BRACKNELL FOREST STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Director of Place Planning and Regeneration

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the Executive’s approval to a Temporary Changes Addendum (the “Addendum”) to be published alongside the adopted Bracknell Forest Statement of Community Involvement 2014 (SCI). The SCI sets out who and how Bracknell Forest Council will engage with on the preparation of planning policies and planning applications. It encourages community and stakeholder involvement.
- 1.2 Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council is unable to fulfil some of the commitments set out in the adopted SCI in respect of how the Council consults on policy documents. Some amendments to consultation procedures relating to planning applications are also required. The temporary changes have been made to protect the health of local communities and follow national advice and guidelines.

2 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 **That the Temporary Changes Addendum (at Appendix A) be approved and published alongside the Bracknell Forest Statement of Community Involvement (2014).**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 3.1 National Planning Practice Guidance¹ requires local planning authorities to assess their SCIs to identify whether elements are inconsistent with public health guidelines and restrictions in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Any temporary amendments that are necessary should then be made. The Bracknell Forest SCI has been reviewed and areas have been identified where it is considered necessary to make temporary amendments to enable plan making and other activities to continue.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 The main alternative is not to publish the “Addendum” to the SCI but to rely on the adopted SCI. However as set out in paragraph 3.1 above, the Council is unable to meet its full consultation and engagement commitments during the COVID-19 pandemic. This could potentially result in failure of the Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Local Plan and the Bracknell Forest Local Plan to meet the legal compliance test on Examination and expose the Council to the risk of legal challenges. It is considered that approval and publication of the “Addendum” is the most appropriate option.

¹ Planning Practice Guidance paragraph: 077 Reference ID: 61-077-201200513

5 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 5.1 The SCI sets out the Council's standards to be achieved in involving the local community and other stakeholders in the preparation, alteration and continuing review of all planning policy documents and the determination of planning applications.
- 5.2 Whilst the Council is able to continue to make planning policy consultation documents available on the website, the current COVID-19 crisis means that it is unable to fulfil some of the commitments set out in the SCI due to current public health guidelines on social distancing. This includes making hard copies of response forms and key consultation documents available for inspection at Time Square, in all libraries and Parish/Town Council offices during normal opening hours.
- 5.3 The Government has recently temporarily disapplied the legal requirement² to make documents available for public inspection at an Authority's principal office and at such other places as the Authority considers appropriate together with the need to provide hard copies of documents made available under Regulation 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 until 31 December 2020. The "Addendum" is aligned with these amendments and states that once buildings are reopened to the public, physical copies of documents will be made available for inspection, in accordance with the adopted SCI. However, in addition the Council will fulfil bespoke, proportionate requests for extracts or summaries of documents at no charge to those who do not have access to the internet. Requests for full versions of documents may be subject to a reasonable charge.
- 5.4 The SCI states that responses to consultations via letter will be accepted, but current working practices mean that any paper copies may not be received or acknowledged until this emergency period is over and normal office working is re-established. The "Addendum" sets out how to respond to planning policy consultations during this time.
- 5.5 Although the SCI states that exhibitions, meetings, workshops and similar events would be held 'where appropriate', the "Addendum" clarifies that due to the current situation the Council is unable to hold any public consultation events including face-to-face meetings, workshops, or exhibitions.
- 5.6 The SCI sets out the consultation process for Neighbourhood Development Plans, including community referendums. The Government has postponed all Neighbourhood Planning Referendums until 6th May 2021³. The "Addendum" clarifies this position.
- 5.7 The publicity for planning applications is still broadly as set out in the SCI. The main change is that where appropriate the Council is posting updates on the website regarding certain applications in lieu of sending letters and providing instructions on how to join virtual planning committees via the website. Additionally, temporary

² The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020

³ Local Government and Police and Crime Commissioner (Coronavirus) (Postponement of Elections and Referendums) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020

regulations⁴ have extended the minimum time limits for making representations in relation to planning applications from 14 to 21 days.

- 5.8 In view of the date that the SCI was adopted, it is proposed to carry out a review of the document once some form of normality has been restored and options for permanent arrangements are clearer.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 It is a legislative requirement that the Council complies with the SCI. Inspectors reports and case law have established that a failure to consult as set out in an SCI can lead to failure to meet the legal compliance test on Examination of a local plan and risks of legal challenge to decisions which could potentially render them quashed.

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 There are no significant financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 An EqIA Screening Form was completed in respect of the 2014 SCI in July 2013 and did not identify any negative impacts. The temporary changes (currently until 31 December 2020) do not affect the EqIA screening that was previously undertaken. For those without access to the internet, inspecting documents will be more challenging in the current situation. The “Addendum” sets out that hard copies of planning policy documents will be made available for inspection in libraries that are open to the public. The Council will also fulfil bespoke, proportionate requests for extracts or summaries of documents at no charge. Some libraries that are open are also enabling residents to book computer slots; it is therefore possible for documents to be viewed digitally in these locations. These measures are considered to help mitigate the impact that the pandemic is having on those without access to the internet.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 There are no specific risks identified in the Strategic Risk Register (2020) which affect the “Addendum”.

7 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The adopted SCI was subject to a six-week public consultation in September/October 2013.
- 7.2 The “Addendum” contains temporary measures that are being urgently brought forward in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Whilst has not been subject to consultation, it is consistent with recently amended legislation, planning practice guidance and public health guidelines.

⁴ Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure, Listed Buildings and Environmental Impact Assessment) (England) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020

Background Papers

Appendix A – Statement of Community Involvement Temporary Changes Addendum

Other documents:

Adopted SCI: <https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/statement-of-community-involvement-2014.pdf>

Contact for further information

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Statement of Community Involvement Temporary Changes Addendum

Temporary changes in respect of publicity of planning policy documents and planning applications during COVID-19 crisis

During these unprecedented times, we will be unable to fulfil some of the commitments set out in our adopted Statement of Community Involvement (2014) relating to how we consult on planning policy documents and a variety of application types. The temporary changes outlined have been made to protect the health of our communities and follow national advice and guidelines. The changes are set out below.

Planning policy

How we will engage the community in planning policy

Owing to the closure of most libraries, Parish/Town Council Offices and our Council offices to the public, the Council cannot publicise consultations in these locations nor can physical copies of documents be viewed. When these buildings are reopened to the public, physical copies of documents will be made available for inspection.

We will fulfil bespoke, proportionate requests for extracts or summaries of documents at no charge to those who do not have access to the internet. Please contact us on 01344 352000 to discuss your requirements. Please note, in accordance with government regulations the Council reserves the right to make a reasonable charge for requests for hard copies of documents that are beyond the scope of an extract or summary.

Information on consultations will continue to be published on our website and consultation portal. We will continue to notify interested parties by email and letter. Should you wish to be added to our consultation database please send your contact details to development.plan@bracknell-forest.gov.uk including your name, postal address and email address. Please note, this will only be for future consultation events, rather than website updates.

We value your views as we develop our planning policies, however, due to the current COVID-19 situation we are unable to hold any public consultation events including face-to-face meetings, workshops, or exhibitions. This is to ensure the health of our communities and residents.

The Government has postponed Neighbourhood Planning Referendums until 6th May 2021.

Officers can be contacted via email (development.plan@bracknell-forest.gov.uk) or phone (01344 352000) during this period, but will not be available to meet in the Council Offices.

The above applies to consultations on Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning Documents, Neighbourhood Development Plans and the Community Infrastructure Levy as well as any other planning policy documents.

How to respond to planning policy consultations

Anyone can respond to our consultations online, using the form supplied, by email or by using our consultation portal. Paper response forms will not be available in libraries, Parish/Town Council offices or our Council offices, and we would encourage you to respond online as the Council is operating a reduced postal service.

Publicity for planning applications

Planning applications will be publicised as normal. The Council will continue to display site notices, carry out neighbour notifications, place press notices, circulate a weekly list of planning applications and display details of applications on its website as set out in the Statement of Community Involvement. In addition, where appropriate we will post updates on the website regarding certain applications in lieu of sending letters and provide instructions on how to join the virtual planning committee via the website.

Responses to consultations on planning documents can be done electronically using the online response system.

Temporary regulations have extended the minimum time limits for making representations in relation to planning applications from 14 to 21 days.

Future review of Statement of Community Involvement

The Council will review the Statement of Community Involvement once some form of normality has been restored and options for permanent arrangements are clearer.

August 2020