



Report to: Place and Economic Development Committee, 24th January 2022

Report of: Corporate Director – Finance and Resources

Subject: SETTING OF THE BUDGET FOR 2022/23 AND MTFP TO 2026/27

1. Recommendation

- 1.1 That the Committee note the proposed Budgets for the various services identified for 2022/23.**
- 1.2 That the Committee consider the priorities within each service and recommends any changes for the services' Budgets including the Income and Efficiency plans.**
- 1.3 That the Committee consider the services' Capital programme and future projects and recommends any changes or additions.**
- 1.4 That the Committee reviews any new revenue Budget proposals from members and makes recommendations to Policy and Resources Committee as appropriate.**
- 1.5 That the committee redesignates the funding set aside for the Skills Officer to a wider remit of Economic Development Officer(s).**

2. Background

- 2.1 The proposed summary budgets for 2022/23 are contained in **Appendix 1**. These provide detailed budgets for each of the Council's services covering both income and expenditure.
- 2.2 The Council also produces a Medium Term Financial Plan for the next 5 years setting out the high level pressures and opportunities that are likely to need to be addressed.

3. Review of Service Budgets

- 3.1 Members are asked to review the budget for each service.
- 3.2 In light of any changes experienced by the services in the last 12 months, Members are asked to consider whether amendments are needed to the services' budgets in order to continue to achieve service objectives and to deliver the relevant aims of the City Plan.
- 3.3 Given that the Council faces a reduction in its future funding, this exercise is likely to result in a reduction or reallocation of resources rather than an increase in the net budget available.

4. Projects and Capital Expenditure

- 4.1 In a separate report to this committee meeting, Members have received a progress report on the various projects aligned to this committee. In addition, the Council's draft Capital Programme to 2026/27 is shown in **Appendix 2**.
- 4.2 Members are asked to consider whether the current projects are still appropriate for each service and whether there are any further needs that require addressing.
- 4.3 Members will recall that at its previous meeting on 1 November 2021 the Committee proposed funding of £30,000 to celebrate the Commonwealth Games and £10,000 for the Queen's Jubilee in 2022. The same meeting also proposed continuing two posts currently funded from reserves (Skills Officer £50,000 and Tourism and Events Officer £50,000) for a further year. These were all subsequently approved by the Policy and Resources Committee meeting on 16 November 2021.
- 4.4 In respect of the Skills Officer post, the post holder has submitted notice. This presents an opportunity to reorganise staffing in that area and it is recommended, therefore, that the allocation be broadened to 'Economic Regeneration Officer(s)' to allow flexibility over the use of the funding.
- 4.5 The approach to budget setting adopted should be to focus on addressing the key themes identified in the City Plan. This should include greater detail on the proposed spend against each allocation and phasing the projects across the full 5-year term of the MTFP based on the need and importance of each one.
- 4.6 In addition to previously discussed proposals, the Chair of the Committee has received new items for consideration. The project proposals received so far are summarised in the table shown below.

Proposal	Amount £	Notes
Approved 1 November		
Commonwealth Games	30,000	To promote the games and fund celebrations in the city.
Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations	10,000	To fund celebrations in the city.
Skills Officer	50,000	To support to local businesses and employees
Tourism and Events Officer	50,000	To promote tourism and major events in the city
New revenue proposals		
Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations	20,000	Additional funding for activities to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee in June
Drink spiking	10,000	Support for the initiative led by the BID to reduce the incidence of drink spiking.
Cultural Strategy	50,000	Implementation fund
Total	220,000	

- 4.7 The proposal for increasing the funding for the Queen’s Jubilee celebrations is the subject of a separate report on the agenda.
- 4.8 The proposal in respect of the campaign to reduce the incidence of drink spiking is detailed at **Annex A** to this report.
- 4.9 The proposal in respect of the Cultural Strategy is in advance of an anticipated report which is due to come to this Committee at a future meeting. The intention is to create a reserve which can provide some seedcorn funding to support initiatives which may arise as a result of the strategy and/or create capacity to deliver against a future action plan. The value of the reserve will be revised once the report is received.
- 4.10 In addition to the above, the Chair of the Committee has received proposals which are potentially of a capital nature and therefore will not have a material revenue impact in the coming financial year but will need to be built into future capital programmes. The Committee will need to receive a further report setting out the full design, business case and financial implications during the year. Where these are in relation to play provision, they should also form part of the wider Strategic Play Area Assessment that is underway. These are as follows:

Scheme	Initial estimated capital cost (£)	Proposal
BMX/Pump track	60,000	Provision of a new BMX and skate park in the St. Peters area.
Land off Cotswold Way	100,000	To bring an unused strip of land into use for the local community with play facilities and environmental enhancements.
Power Park play equipment	12,000	Proposal received from St Peter’s Parish Council for additional play equipment.

- 4.11 Given that the Council faces a reduction in its future funding, recommendations should be prioritised to ensure the limited resources are allocated most effectively.

5 Implications

5.1 Financial and Budgetary Implications

Should members have any proposals for new City Plan themes or projects that require funding for inclusion in the 2022-2027 MTFP, these should be discussed and, if appropriate, approved by this committee. They will then be forwarded to the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee on 8 February 2022 for consideration along with those proposals submitted by the Council’s other policy committees.

5.2 Legal and Governance Implications

Responsibility for setting the budget rests with Full Council which receives recommendations from the Policy and Resources Committee.

Any proposals agreed by this Committee must therefore be forwarded to the Policy and Resources Committee for consideration at its meeting of 8 February 2022 before being recommended, if approved, to the Full Council meeting of 22 February 2022.

5.3 Risk Implications

The pandemic has had a significant effect on the Council's income from Fees and Charges, particularly from car parking. Whilst there has been some recovery from the low levels experienced during the periods of lockdown, income has yet to return to the pre-pandemic levels. The Budget for 2022/23 assumes that all income streams will have recovered and will be back to the levels experienced in previous years.

5.4 Corporate/Policy Implications

None directly arising from this report.

5.5 Equality Implications

None directly arising from this report.

5.6 Human Resources Implications

None directly arising from this report.

5.7 Health and Safety Implications

None directly arising from this report.

5.8 Social, Economic and Environmental Implications

None directly arising from this report.

Ward(s):

All

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Background Papers:

None

NIGHT-TIME ECONOMY ANTI-SPIKING CAMPAIGN

1. Recommendation

1.1. The Committee is asked to note ongoing partnership work to support our night-time economy in preventing drink and drug spiking of clients, and

1.2. To consider recommending to the Policy & Resources Committee whether to contribute £10,000 to the partnership initiative.

2. Background

2.1. Drink spiking is an issue that South Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership and night-time economy licensees have been aware of for a long time. Needle spiking – where an offender injects the victim with a substance using a needle – is relatively new, and reports of potential incidents are on the increase. Around three quarters of spiking victims are women, but men can be targeted too.

2.2. Spiking is a serious crime. Administering (giving) a substance – such as drugs or alcohol – to a person without their knowledge or consent is against the law, even if they are unharmed. Giving someone a substance via injection without their consent would also be a physical assault.

2.3. West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner John Campion allocated £9,000 to provide drink spiking training and prevention devices to the counties across West Mercia. Exploitation and Vulnerability Trainers have been upskilling the night-time economy staff including door and bar staff. Training includes how to spot signs of drink spiking, and what the symptoms could be if someone has been spiked and how to deal with the situation. This training, alongside the purchase and distribution of 90,000 bottle anti-spiking devices and 50,000 drink covers, will help to reduce opportunities for perpetrators and provide reassurance to the community.

2.4. Community safety partners West Mercia Police, Worcester Business Improvement District, West Mercia Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Centre, Worcestershire Regulatory Services and City Council officers are delivering on a £21,000 project for the Worcester Night-Time Economy.

2.5. The project which covers 2021-2023 and started in November 2021 will:

- Provide preventative measures for use in licenced venues such as bottle caps, drink covers and drink testing kits for the public the group
- Deliver an extensive training program to develop night-time economy staff teams and support with recruitment and retention
- Provide catastrophic bleed kits to venues as well as purchase defibs to go in to selected night-time economy venues.

- Best Bar None accreditation – supporting excellence and safety. To train West Mercia Police and City Council staff to become assessors.
- Multi-media awareness campaign reassuring the public of the safety of our venues and city.

2.6. This project will complement and continue the work of the Home Office-funded Safer Streets project to reduce violence against women and girls being delivered by the South Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership which will be completed by March 2022.