

Notice of Meeting

Cabinet

Date: Wednesday 30 March 2022

Time: 5.30 pm

Venue: The Annexe, Crosfield Hall, Broadwater Road, Romsey, Hampshire
SO51 8GL

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Legal and Democratic Service

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This is formal notice under The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 that part of this meeting may be held in private because the agenda and reports for the meeting may contain exempt information under Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.

Public Participation Scheme

If members of the public wish to address the meeting they should notify the Legal and Democratic Service at the Council's Beech Hurst office by noon on the working day before the meeting.

Membership of Cabinet

MEMBER

WARD

Councillor P North (Chairman)

Bourne Valley

Councillor N Adams-King (Vice-Chairman)

Blackwater

Councillor P Bundy

Chilworth, Nursling & Rownhams

Councillor D Drew

Harewood

Councillor M Flood

Anna

Councillor I Jeffrey

Mid Test

Councillor A Johnston

Mid Test

Councillor T Tasker

Andover Romans

Cabinet

Wednesday 30 March 2022

AGENDA

**The order of these items may change as a result of members
of the public wishing to speak**

- 1 Apologies**
- 2 Public Participation**
- 3 Declarations of Interest**
- 4 Urgent Items**
- 5 Minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2022**
- 6 Recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: None**
- 7 Period Poverty 5 - 11**

Diversity and Inclusion
To consider a motion referred to Cabinet from Council regarding period poverty.
- 8 Annual Review of the Corporate Action Plan - Year 4 12 - 25**

Leader
To consider the amended Corporate Action Plan 2019-2023 (Year 4).
- 9 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) - Allocation of CIL funds 26 - 30**

Planning
To consider approving funding three projects from the Community Infrastructure Levy.

- | | | |
|-----------|---|----------------|
| 10 | <u>Discretionary Business Rates Relief</u> | 31 - 37 |
| | Finance and Resources
To consider options for the introduction of a new discretionary business rates relief scheme. | |
| 11 | <u>Budget Carry Forwards</u> | 38 - 42 |
| | Finance and Resources
To consider the carry forward of unspent revenue items budgeted in 2021/22 into the 2022/23 revenue budget. | |
| 12 | <u>Write off of uncollectable debt</u> | 43 - 45 |
| | Finance and Resources
To seek approval for the write off of an uncollectable debt. | |
| 13 | <u>Exclusion of the Public</u> | 46 |
| | The following item is confidential. | |
| 14 | <u>Property Matters</u> | 47 - 64 |
| | Finance and Resources
To consider property matters. | |

ITEM 7

Period Poverty Motion

Report of the Diversity and Inclusion Portfolio Holder

Recommended:

1. That the Council makes provision for period products to be available free of charge for anyone who requires them in its customer toilets located in Beech Hurst, FMC and The Lights.
2. That a dedicated page on the Council's website regarding period poverty, which signposts to further support and provision available to members of the public, be developed.
3. That appropriate communications be sent to parish and town councils, businesses, charities, community and other organisations in the borough to raise awareness of period poverty.

SUMMARY:

- In accordance with the Council's Constitution, if the subject matter of any motion comes within the province of the Cabinet (or any other Committee), it shall stand referred to the Cabinet (or relevant Committee) for consideration.
- A motion regarding period poverty was submitted to Council on 27 January 2021 by Councillor Coole and seconded by Councillor Harber. At the Council meeting the motion was referred to Cabinet as the subject matter falls within its scope.
- Following referral to Cabinet on 10 March 2021, Cabinet instructed officers to undertake a more detailed piece of work looking at the provision available both nationally and locally, where there might be gaps in provision and what further support the Council could put in place to raise awareness of the issue and support those affected.

1 Introduction

1.1 At the Council meeting on 27 January 2021, Councillor Coole proposed, and Councillor Harber seconded, the following Motion;

1.2 *That to combat period poverty, this Council will:*

Provide free period products in Council owned/managed female and gender-neutral toilet rooms or cubicles.

Top up the Government's Period Product Scheme for Schools and Colleges in England provision from 35% to 100% by making available on application, a Period Poverty Payment of £17.30 per eligible student to Schools and Colleges in Test Valley, to help them provide free period products in their female and gender-neutral owned/managed toilet rooms or cubicles.

Invite and encourage all Test Valley Parish/Town Councils, businesses, charities, community and other organisations, to introduce free period products in their female and gender-neutral owned/managed toilet rooms or cubicles.

- 1.3 The Motion was referred to Cabinet for consideration as the subject matter falls within the remit of Cabinet. Cabinet instructed officers to undertake further work to better understand the provision available in the borough and what support could be developed by the Council for those who may be affected by period poverty.

2 Background

- 2.1 Period poverty is a lack of access to sanitary products and menstrual hygiene education often due to financial constraints.

National Charities and Organisations

- 2.2 There are a number of national organisations that raise awareness of period poverty and provide support to those in need. A few of these organisations are listed below along with links to their websites which provide further details of support and how people can access products.
- 2.3 The Gift Wellness Foundation [Period Poverty UK](#) aim to provide sanitary products to women and girls who can't afford them or access them.
- 2.4 The [Red Box Project](#) work to ensure no young person misses out on their education because they have their period.
- 2.5 The [Bloody Good Period](#) work with organisations across the country to provide education, deliver products and raise awareness of periods and menstruation.
- 2.6 The [Tricky Period](#) is a period poverty initiative that supply products to a number of women's shelters, refugees, mother and baby assessment units and other community facilities to support those who can't afford or access essential items.
- 2.7 In January 2019, NHS England committed to providing free sanitary products to women and girls in hospitals.

Schools and Colleges

- 2.8 In January 2020, the Department of Education launched a scheme which provides free period products to all state-maintained schools and colleges in England.
- 2.9 Schools and Colleges are able to order a range of period products from the Personal Hygiene Services Limited Group who are delivering the scheme, making them readily available for all young people when they need them. Schools can sign up to this scheme via the PHS [period products portal](#).

- 2.10 All primary, secondary schools and colleges across Test Valley were contacted to understand their experiences with period poverty including what provision they have in place to educate and support students on the issue, and whether there were any gaps in provision.
- 2.11 Of those schools who responded, which broadly represent schools both in Andover, Romsey and in the rural parts of Test Valley, none indicated that there was a lack of provision or support available to them in providing their students with information or products.
- 2.12 Many of the schools used the Government portal to access product supplies. It was generally felt that there was low demand for this support within their education communities and they were not seeking any further support for provision at this time. The education facilities do not keep any statistics around their distribution to students.

Libraries

- 2.13 There is an existing scheme in place, run by volunteers across Hampshire Libraries, to make available period products in their public toilets to anyone who might need them.
- 2.14 At this time, Romsey Library were the only library facility in Test Valley who take part in the Hampshire Scheme. Romsey Library have been part of Tricky Period since 2018 and have a service to provide sanitary products to anyone who feels they need them, specifically people who are homeless, young and those from a low income family.
- 2.15 Products are donated by the public and are available in bags for people to collect. If there is a requirement, a member of the library staff will be able to assist people with their queries and offer support. The library does have a number of customers who access the service regularly and have plans to further promote their provision.

Other Local Provision

- 2.16 Andover Foodbank provide a range of period products for clients automatically as part of toiletries that are supplied. The Foodbank supply a number of clients with these products, although they do not maintain statistics around period products specifically. The foodbank does not have issues with supplies of period products which are received via donations. Prior to government funding the foodbank provided products to local schools and are also able to provide supplies to other local organisations should they require them.
- 2.17 Romsey Foodbank have a scheme to offer products directly to clients as well as clients with children who may need to access provision. The foodbank also offer support to local schools should they require it.
- 2.18 Salisbury Foodbank have a supply of products which they receive as part of regular donations from the public. The foodbank have contact with regular clients who use this service.

Test Valley Borough Council

- 2.19 Details of a free education programme in partnership with Southern Water, Rethink Periods, has been shared with schools and youth groups via the Test Valley Borough Council youth network newsletter.
- 2.20 The Council recognises that period poverty is an issue that affects people in a number of ways and that there is often stigma attached which can prevent people from seeking the support they may need. The Council is fully supportive of everyone in Test Valley being able to access the education and products they need to manage menstruation.
- 2.21 There are a range of initiatives both at a national level and locally to promote awareness of period poverty and to provide support and access free period products. Contact with organisations and groups in Test Valley has not identified any specific gaps in provision however the Council is keen to ensure that this continues to be the case.
- 2.22 It is proposed that in order to increase the current provision available, the Council offers free period products in the customer toilets in its reception areas at Beech Hurst and the FMC and in customer toilets at The Lights for anyone who may need them. Products will be made available and monitored to ensure there is a supply for anyone who may need it. Should the take up of this provision be higher than anticipated, further work will be undertaken to see whether the scheme requires review.
- 2.23 As well as supplying a range of products free for those who need them, the Council will develop a specific area of the public website which sets out further information about period poverty. This site will provide further details about period poverty and sign post people to organisations that will be able to assist with further education on the subject as well as access to the products.
- 2.24 In order to further raise awareness amongst communities in the borough, appropriate communications will be developed and shared with parish and town councils, local businesses, charities, community and other organisations through the Council's existing networks to increase understanding of the issue and encourage them to promote access to period products.

3 Corporate Objectives and Priorities

- 3.1 The Council, contributing to the free provision of period products supports the corporate objective of growing the potential of people to be able to live well and fulfil their aspirations.

4 Options

- 4.1 Option 1, this is the recommended option. To approve the recommendation set out at the beginning of this report which aims to raise awareness of period poverty, signpost to further information and provide period products free of charge to those who need them.

4.2 Option 2. Not to approve the recommendation, and not take forward any initiatives regarding period poverty.

4.3 Option 3. Not to approve the recommendation but to make alternative provision for awareness raising and for supplying free period products to those in need.

5 Option Appraisal

5.1 Option 1

5.2 There are a range of existing schemes and initiatives in place in order to provide free period products. These exist both at a national level, but also locally across Test Valley and the surrounding areas. No gaps in provision have been currently identified, however the Council supports the principles of the motion and recognises that no one should be without access to education and period products.

5.3 It is therefore proposed that the initiatives as set out in the report and recommendations, which aim to further increase awareness of the issue, signpost to further support and to provide products free of charge to those in need be agreed.

5.4 The provision of products at the Council Office's customer toilets and The Lights customer toilets will be regularly monitored to ensure any demand is being met and whether further review is required.

5.5 Option 2

5.6 The Council is supportive of period products being available to those who need them. Whilst the Council supports the principles of the motion, it is clear there is already existing provision in place.

5.7 Period products can be accessed across the borough, free of charge via schools and a number of charities and organisations who are working with support networks to provide products to those in need.

5.8 No gaps in provision have been identified and therefore the Council do not propose to take any further action at this time.

5.9 Option 3

5.10 Whilst there is a range of existing initiatives in place, as set out in the report the Council will make provision for free period products to be available in the customer toilets of its buildings at Beech Hurst, FMC and The Lights for anyone who should need them.

Period Products will be available free of charge in the customer toilets on a trial basis. The uptake of these products will be monitored by officers to ensure provision is available for those who are in need. Alternative arrangements may be implemented should the need arise.

6 Risk Management

- 6.1 An evaluation of the risks indicate that the existing controls in place mean that no significant risks have been identified at this time.

7 Resource Implications

- 7.1 The costs associated with providing period products will be met from existing budgets.

8 Legal Implications

- 8.1 No legal implications have been identified.

9 Equality Issues

- 9.1 This issue clearly relates to those who menstruate but no adverse equality issues have been identified in the proposals contained in this report.

10 Other Issues

- 10.1 Community Safety – None.
- 10.2 Environmental Health Issues – None.
- 10.3 Sustainability and Addressing a Changing Climate – None.
- 10.4 Property Issues – None.
- 10.5 Wards/Communities Affected – All.

11 Conclusion and reasons for recommendation

- 11.1 The Council supports the principles of the motion regarding period poverty and notes that there is existing provision in place to provide free period products to those who may need them in Test Valley.
- 11.2 In order to further increase availability, the Council will make provision for free period products to be available in the customer toilets of the reception areas at its main offices and in the customer toilets at The Lights as well as signposting to further information and appropriate communications to local organisations.

<u>Background Papers (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)</u>			
Motion to Council – 27 January 2021			
Referral to Cabinet - 10 March 2021			
Minutes from Cabinet – 10 March 2021			
<u>Confidentiality</u>			
It is considered that this report does not contain exempt information within the meaning of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and can be made public.			
No of Annexes:	0	File Ref:	N/A
(Portfolio: Diversity and Inclusion) Councillor T Tasker			
Officer:	Emma Horbury	Ext:	8001
Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	30 March 2022

ITEM 8 Annual Review of the Corporate Action Plan – Year 4

Report of The Leader

Recommended:

That Cabinet approves the proposed updates to the Corporate Action Plan 2019-2023 (year four).

- A Corporate Plan for the period 2019-23 (*Growing Our Potential*) was approved by Council in April 2019.
- The Corporate Action Plan runs for the lifetime of the Corporate Plan and shows in detail the specific projects to be taken forward in pursuit of the Council's priorities.
- The Corporate Action Plan is reviewed and updated by Cabinet on an annual basis and plays an important role in enabling the allocation of resources to key projects from across the organisation.
- This report sets out proposals for updating the Corporate Action Plan 2019-23 for year four.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Corporate Action Plan (CAP) is the delivery document of the Council's Corporate Plan 2019-2023: Growing Our Potential. It shows in detail how the Council intends to make progress against its four strategic priorities of Town Centres, Communities, People and the Local Environment through the key projects to be taken forward over the four year period.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Council approved its current Corporate Plan 2019-2023, 'Growing Our Potential' in April 2019. It outlines the Council's vision and priorities for the four year period. It sets direction and provides a focus for activities and services. As a result it informs decision making and allocation of resources across the Council.
- 2.2 The Corporate Plan was developed using a robust evidence base which takes into account the views of local people, statistical information, and external influences such as government policy.
- 2.3 The Corporate Plan sets out four priority aims which focus on growing the potential of:
- **Town Centres** to adapt and be attractive, vibrant and prosperous places,
 - **Communities** to be empowered, connected and able to build upon their strengths,

- **People** to be able to live well and fulfil their aspirations,
- The **Local Environment** for current and future generations.

2.4 The Corporate Plan is underpinned by the Corporate Action Plan (CAP) which runs for the lifetime of the plan. Each year a review is undertaken to update the CAP to ensure it continues to highlight the significant projects that the Council is taking forward in pursuit of its four corporate aims.

3 Corporate Action Plan 2019-2023 (Year four)

- 3.1 A draft updated CAP has been prepared for year four (attached in the Annex to the report) and approval is sought from Cabinet for its adoption.
- 3.2 Fourteen projects form the amended CAP for year four. All fourteen are ongoing projects. One project has been recommended for removal from the CAP.
- 3.3 Given that the CAP is a four year programme and reflects the major projects that the Council is delivering, it is expected that most projects that feature on the CAP will do so for multiple years given their scale and scope.
- 3.4 The update for year four only recommends the removal of one existing project, Delivery of the Covid-19 Recovery Plan. The priorities highlighted under this project are largely complete due to being focused on the response and immediate recovery phase aligned to the national picture around Covid-19. Looking ahead, priorities such as the safety of our population, sustainable recovery and reviewing future working practices have become embedded within the organisation and are being delivered within services as part of their ongoing projects or business-as-usual practices.
- 3.5 Each of the projects proposed to remain on the CAP in year four have been updated to reflect their ongoing focus. This will demonstrate current and ongoing progress since their inclusion in year one.
- 3.6 Monitoring of the CAP will be undertaken through the Council's performance management system. The Leader of the Council will present an annual update to the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee and an Annual Report will be published on the Council's website to demonstrate progress against the project areas.
- 3.7 The next update of the CAP is due in August 2022.

4 Corporate Objectives and Priorities

- 4.1 The CAP is the delivery document of the Council's Corporate Plan and sets out in detail how the Council will make progress across each of the four corporate priorities.

5 Consultations/Communications

- 5.1 As part of the development of the Corporate Plan, the Council undertook a wide ranging public consultation which resulted in the views of more than 2000 local people being gathered. This went on to form part of a robust evidence base for shaping the Council's new strategic priorities.
- 5.2 Many of the CAP projects are outward facing in their nature and as a result the Council engages with the community on a regular basis through these projects where it is appropriate to do so. For example recent developments under the Andover masterplan and Romsey Future vision refresh.

6 Options

- 6.1 The options facing the Cabinet are to approve the update of the CAP, make amendments or to decide not to approve.

7 Risk Management

- 7.1 An evaluation of the risks associated with the matters in this report indicate that a further risk assessment is not needed because the issues covered have previously been considered by Councillors at the Cabinet Meeting 13 March 2019 under Item 297 – Corporate Plan for 2019-23.
- 7.2 Consideration of risks associated with individual projects will form part of the project management arrangements for each project.

8 Resource Implications

- 8.1 The Corporate Plan guides the allocation of resources over the lifetime of the Council. The CAP itself has no direct resourcing implications, as the individual projects that form the CAP are each scoped and delivered using the Council's project management framework.

9 Legal Implications

- 9.1 None.

10 Equality Issues

- 10.1 A separate EQIA for the Corporate Action Plan is not needed because the issues covered have previously been considered by Councillors at the Cabinet Meeting 13 March 2019 under Item 297 –Corporate Plan for 2019-23.
- 10.2 As part of the council's project management framework all projects that form the CAP will be required to consider equalities issues on an individual basis and undertake the appropriate screening.

11 Other Issues

- 11.1 Sustainability and addressing a Changing Climate.

11.1.1 Delivery of the year 4 CAP will directly support many aspects of the Councils Climate Emergency Action Plan. Sustainability and mitigating the impacts on climate change are issues which each project on the CAP will seek to take into account, and address as relevant.

11.2 Wards/Communities Affected – All.

12 Conclusion and reasons for recommendation

12.1 The Corporate Action Plan shows in detail how the Council intends to make progress by focusing on the projects it will take forward against each of the priorities of the Corporate Plan. As a result it informs decision making and allocation of resources across the Council.

<u>Background Papers (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)</u>			
None.			
<u>Confidentiality</u>			
It is considered that this report does not contain exempt information within the meaning of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and can be made public.			
No of Annexes:	1	File Ref:	N/A
(Portfolio: Leader) Councillor P North			
Officer:	Hollie French	Ext:	8123
Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	30 March 2022

Corporate Action Plan 2019-2023: Year 4 Update

Project	Description	Priorities
<p>Progressing actions in the Climate Emergency Action Plan</p>	<p>As part of the implementation and ongoing review of the Climate Emergency Action Plan, progress key areas of work including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing the Council's emissions as we work towards becoming a carbon neutral organisation – this includes considering our buildings, wider estate, fleet vehicles, travel, employment and procurement. • Through service delivery and partnership work to supporting and influencing carbon reduction across the Borough. <p>An update to the Climate Emergency Action Plan will be brought forward this year.</p>	<p>Local Environment Communities</p>
<p>Working in partnership to increase recycling</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and respond to changes as a result of Environment Act and secondary legislation to support it. In particular, those focused on introducing a consistent approach to recycling. • Continuing to work with both the Hampshire Waste Partnership and Project Integra partners in accordance with the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS) to influence emerging national strategy where possible. Seeking to provide an integrated approach to the collection, treatment and disposal 	<p>Local Environment Communities</p>

Project	Description	Priorities
	<p>of municipal waste in Hampshire.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of Project Integra, continue working with Hampshire County Council on their behaviour change pilot scheme to tackle recycling contamination. • Working with Solent University to bring forward ways to support behaviour change initiatives within the wider recycling framework and potential future changes. • Progress waste and recycling actions highlighted in the Climate Emergency Action Plan. 	
<p>Review and develop the Council's housing and homelessness strategies</p>	<p>By the end of 2023 we will need to have a new Preventing Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy in place and by the end of 2025 a new Housing Strategy. These will build on the outcomes of the corporate plan consultation and look ahead at the period of the plan in the context of the Preventing Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy, and beyond the life of the new corporate plan in the context of the Housing Strategy.</p>	<p>People Communities</p>
<p>Continue to develop the Council's innovative approach to preventing and relieving homelessness.</p>	<p>This programme of work will be shaped closer to the finalisation of a new corporate plan because we are at a transitional point where things are happening, but the future is uncertain. As an indication, this is likely to include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing liaison with DLUHC advisors to engage in relevant funding opportunities including actively working with them on any associated 'co-production' requirements. • If successful in securing Year 5 Rough Sleeper Initiative Funding from DLUHC, this will be a 3 year programme and delivering on this will form part of the future work programme of 	<p>People Communities</p>

Project	Description	Priorities
	<p>the housing service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The £913K Rough Sleeper Accommodation Funding secured will provide accommodation and support on a 'housing first' style model for 2022/23 and 2023/24 and will form part of a strategic approach to preventing and relieving single homelessness for people with complex needs locally. • Working with HCC on the future of social inclusion services locally and actively engaging in the future commissioning of services (the current contract extension ends at the end of 2022/23 with a new commissioned service expected from April 2024). • Ensuring the targeted use of ring-fenced funding for preventing and relieving homelessness • Continue to work with partners to deliver holistic and person-centred responses to prevent and relieve homelessness and meet the support needs of people facing multiple disadvantages. This may include securing and maintaining access to health service support including with regard to clinical mental health expertise subject to our ability to secure the right person for a temporary role in TVBC. • Support any local Integrated Care System pilots and work with health and statutory services at local and county level to develop integrated working practices including around housing, health needs and safeguarding. 	

Project	Description	Priorities
<p>Work with partners to take forward projects agreed as part of the Romsey Future Delivery Plan.</p>	<p>This CAP programme reflects the direct role the Council will play in key Romsey Future projects such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following public consultation, work with partners to launch and deliver to new priorities outlined within the vision refresh document, through a new project group structure. • Develop and deliver a refreshed public engagement plan to encourage increased community involvement and local project nominations. • Continue to develop activities and attractions focussed on increasing the tourism offer. • Supporting the development of work to relating to the natural environment including taking forward the Rewilding Romsey project. • Support the South of Town Centre project. 	<p>Communities Town Centres Local Environment People</p>
<p>Work with partners to take forward delivery of the Andover Vision Action Plan</p>	<p>This programme reflects the direct role the Council will play in key AV projects such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Day of Action 2022; • Four Fun Fridays 2022; • Working with colleagues from the NHS and across the voluntary sector to further develop the healthier communities project through the Vision aligned to the development of the Integrated Care System. • Working to form a ‘Vision Champions’ group, that brings together key stakeholders that work to steer, direct, and coordinate delivery of the Vision’s action plan and activities that 	<p>Communities Town Centres Local Environment People</p>

Project	Description	Priorities
	<p>complements the existing stakeholder group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with the Vision and its stakeholders to embed the new place brand being developed for Andover and support events to encourage footfall and dwell time in the High street Following the recent public consultation about the accessibility and use of Vigo Recreation Ground, preparation of a management plan will commence 	
<p>Romsey South of Town Centre</p>	<p>The re-provision of community facilities including the Crosfield Hall and the requirements for sports and leisure within Romsey is a key piece of work for both the masterplan, local plan and sport and recreation strategy. Consultants have commenced work on evaluating the future options to best meet the needs of the town.</p> <p>A brief for a feasibility study relating to the development of the Bus Station is being prepared. This will seek to understand the costs and constraints associated with this site. It will be used to market the development opportunity to a commercial development partner.</p> <p>As part of the delivery phase of the South of Romsey Town Centre Masterplan initial designs have been produced by the Council's Landscape Team for Fishlake/Holbrook Stream, Stirling Walk and Dukes Mill. These are being further refined, costed and delivered taking account of the outcome of the feasibility study.</p>	<p>Town Centres Communities</p>
<p>Andover Town Centre Masterplan</p>	<p>The council is underway with the feasibility phase of the regeneration proposals. This involves capacity studies and detailed costings in order to determine what funding will be required. Officers are working</p>	<p>Town Centres Communities</p>

Project	Description	Priorities
	<p>with partners, such as Hampshire County Council, Southern Water, the Environment Agency and the Local Enterprise Partnership, to ensure that Andover can reach its full potential as an attractive and thriving town centre. This includes progressing the design of public realm and environmental enhancements which will be supported by a public realm strategy produced jointly with Andover Vision.</p> <p>A series of design guides and briefs are in the process of being completed. These will guide any future development and public realm improvement.</p> <p>A car parking study has been completed to help inform future requirements and distribution of duration/types of parking in the town centre.</p> <p>The Council are working with Hampshire County Council on technical highway modelling which is needed to demonstrate what works are required and how best to implement the schemes included within the Masterplan.</p>	
<p>The Local Plan</p>	<p>Continuing to progress on the development of a new Local Plan. Revised timetable agreed at Cabinet (29/09) for Local Plan. Next stage is public consultation on the Regulation 18 (Stage 1) which we will be consulting on in Q1 2022 (going to full Council on January 26th and public consultation in February).</p> <p>This stage will set out the draft proposal for our strategic matters. This will reflect outcomes of evidence studies, comments from previous</p>	<p>Town Centres People Communities Local Environment</p>

Project	Description	Priorities
	consultations, consider implications of any national policy changes and engagement with service areas across the Council.	
Delivery of New Communities	<p>Following the completion of the evaluation of new communities' lessons learned, to complete the evaluation of new communities, apply the lessons learned and work with statutory consultees and other organisations to implement the recommendations made in the delivery of our new communities.</p> <p>Continue to deliver the affordable homes targets in Housing Strategy through the local plan and affordable housing SPD.</p>	People Communities Local Environment
Empowering Communities	<p>This programme will continue to strengthen the Council's approach to enable communities to be able to do more for themselves. In particular during 2022/23 the programme will focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing development for Councillors in their role as Community Councillors, supporting their communities in growing their potential. Linking to a range of informal and formal member training and development opportunities through the ongoing Member development programmes. • Supporting the continuing work of the cross-party Member and Community Development Group including; community focussed decision making, Member development, Promoting local democracy and communicating the impact on our communities. • Strengthening the approach to Community Planning by working with parishes in rural communities and through Romsey Future and 	Communities

Project	Description	Priorities
	<p>Andover Vision in our urban communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working collaboratively with the Test Valley Association of Town and Parish Councils. Supporting events and peer learning activities to strengthen partnership working. • Taking learning from the Citizen’s Assembly and other deliberative engagement activities to shape future engagement with communities, supporting the promotion of local democracy and providing opportunities for communities to engage in more deliberative democracy. 	
<p>Working in partnership to attract investment, develop skills and strengthening productivity in Test Valley.</p>	<p>To support the local economy through the delivery of the actions contained within the economic development interim strategy. Specific projects include supporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing apprenticeship programme. • A joint development by Kier and TVBC is underway on Plot 35 with practical completion of the two units scheduled for May 2022. Kier are in discussions with potential tenants for the two units. • Working with Eastleigh, Winchester and the New Forest to develop a Youth hub to support young people claiming Universal Credit. • Support the catalyst programme at the University of Southampton Science Park. • Support the delivery of infrastructure to enable our businesses 	<p>People Town Centres Communities Local Environment</p>

Project	Description	Priorities
	<p>to work online e.g. broadband and wifi.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review opportunities available in the Levelling Up white paper which support inward investment such as the new UK Single Prosperity Fund. Actively looking for opportunities to support the green economy in Test Valley. 	
<p>Enhancing access to green spaces and countryside</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the Green Space strategy. Work with landowners to bring forward green spaces across Test Valley to support delivery of key development projects. Continue to explore the delivery of other open spaces to provide both ecological mitigation and health & wellbeing benefits. Develop the action plan for the Access to the countryside project. Subject to the outcome of a change of use application at Bury Hill, the site could be opened to pedestrians later this year with work to construct a small car park to follow. 	<p>Local Environment Communities</p>
<p>Promoting wellbeing and active lifestyles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open new sports facilities at Ganger Farm. As part of the ongoing £19m investment to refurbish leisure facilities, focus is now on delivering facilities at Charlton Lakes. Work with Hampshire County Council and other key partners to deliver Cycling & Walking strategies focusing on both infrastructure and developing community-led projects. 	<p>Communities Local Environment People</p>

Project	Description	Priorities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support post Covid recovery of facilities across Test Valley such as leisure centres and recreational spaces. • Implement and monitor action plans (including those within the Sports Facility Strategy, Playing Pitch Strategy, Green Space Strategy) and regular updates with partners. 	

ITEM 9 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – Allocation of CIL funds

Report of the Planning Portfolio Holder

Recommended:

That the following projects totalling £283,524 are approved for CIL funding:

- **Extension of St Mary’s GP Surgery – £240,478**
- **Viney Avenue to Cupernham School Pedestrian Works – £13,535**
- **Valley Park Orchard Trail – £29,511**

Recommendation to Council

SUMMARY:

- The report sets out a summary of the bids received during April – June 2021, an evaluation of each project, and funding recommendations made for each project.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The report outlines 3 projects that were submitted during the 2021 round of the CIL bidding process and the resultant funding recommendations.
- 1.2 The report includes a brief description of each project, a percentage score against the Spending Protocol scoring criteria and a funding recommendation.
- 1.3 There is currently £700,000 in the Community Projects Reserve. This is after taking into account the Regeneration Reserve, Neighbourhood Portion passed to Parish and Town Councils as well as administrative expenses.

2 Background

- 2.1 The CIL Spending Protocol and scoring methodology was adopted by Council on the 8 November 2017.
- 2.2 This round of CIL bidding ran between 1 April and 30 June 2021.
- 2.3 Section 3 of this report identifies each project and provides a recommendation for funding based on the approved scoring methodology.
- 2.4 The approved Bid Assessment document which can be accessed [here](#). This is made up of 10 questions with a maximum score of 120 points. Questions 1 and 2 are weighted heavily as they are linked to CIL’s main purpose which is to enable or mitigate the impacts of development. An average percentage score is presented below alongside a funding recommendation.

- 2.5 All bids are assessed against the same criteria meaning that a scheme with a total cost of £15,000 will be scored in the same way as a scheme with a total cost of £15,000,000.
- 2.6 Smaller schemes are likely to score lower as the level of detail required for the project is not as significant as a large scheme. This means that the threshold for recommendation reduces along with total project cost.

3 Funding Recommendations

3.1 Project 1 – Extension of St Mary’s GP Surgery

Lead Organisation – Hampshire, Southampton and Isle of Wight Clinical Commissioning Group.

Description – The extension of St Mary’s GP surgery to allow for additional consulting rooms and staffing.

Evaluation of project – A detailed submission that had a large amount of supporting evidence. A robust risk assessment has been carried out and planning permission has been granted for the extension. The bid scored well against the mitigation and enabling of development criteria due to adding capacity to the local primary care network.

Average Score – 79%

Recommendation – That Cabinet endorse the release of £240,478 towards an extension to St Mary’s GP Surgery.

3.2 Project 2 – Viney Avenue to Cupernham School Pedestrian Works

Lead Organisation – Romsey Future Walking and Cycling Work Group.

Description – Dropped kerbs and way-finding signage between Viney Avenue and Cupernham School. This is the first phase of wider pedestrian and cycling improvement project in Romsey.

Evaluation of project – A large amount of photographic evidence was provided along with assessments for each individual location proposed for enhancement. The scheme scored highly against the criteria that focused on impacts for the intended users, particularly those with mobility issues. Hampshire County Council have been consulted and have supported the proposals.

Average Score – 53%

Recommendation – That Cabinet endorse the release of £13,535 towards pedestrian works between Viney Avenue and Cupernham School.

3.3 Project 3 – Valley Park Orchard Trail

Lead Organisation – Valley Park Parish Council.

Description – Planting of 6 orchards with wildflower ground cover in Valley Park.

Evaluation of project – A scheme that will be delivered in partnership with our Community and Leisure service. Scored strongly against consultation criteria due to a large show of support from local residents, businesses and schools. The proposal provides a number of direct and indirect benefits to the local community. An interesting environmental scheme that also includes aspects of sustainability in the form of locally produced fruit.

Average Score – 50%

Recommendation – That Cabinet endorse the release of £29,511 towards Valley Park Orchard Trail.

4 Objectives and Priorities

- 4.1 This report covers the following Corporate Priorities set out in the Corporate Plan 2019 – 2023 as shown below.
- 4.2 Communities – The Viney Avenue to Cupernham School Pedestrian Works bid has been submitted by the Romsey Future Walking and Cycling Group. This is a group comprised mainly of Romsey residents who volunteer their time to help plan improvements to pedestrian access in the town. This bid is an example of how the Council is empowering local communities.
- 4.3 People – The extension of St Mary’s GP Surgery is an example of the Council investing in infrastructure to ensure that people are able to live well with the borough.
- 4.4 The Local Environment – The Valley Park Orchard trail bid was developed in conjunction with the Council’s Community and Leisure Service. The scheme will provide high quality green infrastructure for the community to enjoy for generations to come.

5 Consultations/Communications

- 5.1 There has been no external consultation because the report reflects the outcomes of an approved methodology. Projects listed have gone through various forms of consultation prior to bids being submitted as is required by the assessment criteria.

6 Options

- 6.1 **Option 1** – Support the recommendations and approve the release of £283,524
- 6.2 **Option 2** – To refuse/approve projects against the recommendations.

7 Option Appraisal

Option 1

- 7.1 The recommendations are transparent and fair using the criteria approved by Cabinet on the 18 October 2017.

Option 2

- 7.2 Projects may be approved or refused against the recommendations. Feedback will be given to applicants where a project is refused funding.

8 Risk Management

- 8.1 An evaluation of the risks associated with the matters in this report indicate that further risk assessment is not needed because the changes/issues covered do not represent significant risks or have previously been considered by Councillors.

9 Resource Implications

- 9.1 The funding for these projects will come from the Council's CIL receipts. No other resources will be used.

10 Legal Implications

- 10.1 No legal implications for Option 1.

11 Equality Issues

- 11.1 An EQIA screening has been completed in accordance with the Council's EQIA methodology and no potential for unlawful discrimination and/or low level or minor negative impact have been identified, therefore a full EQIA has not been carried out.

12 Other Issues

- 12.1 Wards/Communities Affected – The projects listed affect the following communities: Romsey, Andover and Valley Park.

13 Conclusion

- 13.1 Approval is sought to release CIL funds to the following projects:

- Extension of St Mary's GP Surgery - £240,478.
- Viney Avenue to Cupernham School Pedestrian Works - £13,535.
- Valley Park Orchard Trail - £29,511.

<p><u>Background Papers (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)</u> Cabinet report from the 18 October 2017 CIL Bid Assessment</p>			
<p><u>Confidentiality</u></p> <p>It is considered that this report does not contain exempt information within the meaning of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and can be made public.</p>			
No of Annexes:	0	File Ref:	N/A
<p>(Portfolio: Planning) Councillor P Bundy</p>			
Officer:	Oliver McCarthy	Ext:	8176
Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	30 March 2022

ITEM 10 Discretionary Business Rates Relief

Report of the Finance & Resources Portfolio Holder

Recommended:

That the COVID Additional Relief Fund discretionary business rates relief scheme, as shown in the Annex to the report, be added to the Council's Discretionary Rate Relief Policy.

SUMMARY:

- This report considers the options available to the Council for the introduction of a new discretionary business rates relief, targeted at business who have not previously received rates reliefs throughout the pandemic.
- The recommended option will see relief awarded to eligible businesses on a pro rata basis, based on their rateable value.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The government has recently released guidance to local authorities for a new discretionary business rates relief – the COVID Additional Relief Fund (CARF).
- 1.2 This report considers the options available to the Council for distributing the relief and recommends that a local policy for CARF is added to the Council's Discretionary Rate Relief Policy.

2 Background

- 2.1 In December 2021, government released guidance for a new discretionary business rates relief. It is targeted at businesses that have been adversely affected by the pandemic and have not been eligible for the retail, hospitality & leisure discount or nursery discount.
- 2.2 Despite the guidance being released in December, the relief applies only to the 2021/22 financial year. The timing of the guidance, along with the time threshold for dealing with Omicron Hospitality & Leisure / Additional Restrictions Grants means that, like most Councils across the country, our scheme will be applied retrospectively. All decisions to award relief and the application of the relief itself must be made by 30 September 2022.
- 2.3 The Council's allocation for this relief is £3.612M. Unlike reliefs that have previously been introduced, this is a cash limited sum. Any relief that is awarded over this amount will not be funded by government. In that respect, it is similar to the Additional Restrictions Grant, though this is specifically to provide business rates relief and not provide cash funding to businesses.

3 Corporate Objectives and Priorities

- 3.1 The delivery of the CARF business rates relief scheme will help the Council to achieve its objectives of growing the potential of town centres and growing the potential of people by supporting local employers who have been adversely affected by the pandemic.

4 Options

- 4.1 Without any evidence to understand exactly how potentially eligible local businesses have been affected by the pandemic and the extent to which they have been able to adapt, determining eligibility criteria and possible thresholds for the amount of relief is incredibly difficult. The options that follow take this into account.
- 4.2 There are two separate elements that need to be considered in establishing a local CARF scheme. These are a) the characteristics that make a business eligible for support, and b) the amount of support to be provided.
- 4.3 These are both discrete considerations and are shown separately in the following options and options appraisal.
- 4.4 There is an option of not introducing a local CARF scheme. However, as the funding is provided by government and its distribution will help support local businesses that have been affected by the pandemic, it is not recommended.

5 Options – Eligibility for Relief

- 5.1 Option 1 – Open the scheme to any business affected by the pandemic.
- 5.2 Option 2 – Provide relief for premises on which employment activities take place (Recommended).
- 5.3 Option 3 – Target specific types of business.

6 Option Appraisal – Eligibility for Relief

Option 1 - Open the scheme to any business affected by the pandemic

- 6.1 There are very few mandatory exclusions from the CARF scheme. They are:
- Businesses eligible for the retail, hospitality and leisure discount or nursery discount schemes may not apply.
 - Unoccupied premises are ineligible (other than temporary closure due to government advice on COVID-19).
 - Precepting authorities, including town and parish Councils may not apply.
- 6.2 This option would allow any business that can evidence that it has been negatively affected by the pandemic to claim relief.
- 6.3 This has the greatest reach but could also result in reliefs being given to, for example, communications masts or advertising boards where there is no direct local employment.

6.4 This option is not recommended.

Option 2 - Provide relief for premises on which employment activities take place (Recommended)

6.5 This would enable all businesses that employ staff from the application site to receive support.

6.6 This provides more focus on people-based industry but does not attempt to eliminate any particular sectors from support.

6.7 This is the recommended option.

Option 3 – Target specific types of business

6.8 Many types of business, such as medical or professional services are routinely excluded from business rates reliefs.

6.9 It is impossible to know the extent of disruption caused by the pandemic across all sectors and therefore relief may not reach local businesses that are in need of support. This option is not recommended.

7 Options – Amount of Relief to be Awarded

7.1 Option 1 – A fixed relief, equivalent to the amount available under the retail, hospitality and leisure scheme.

7.2 Option 2 – A fixed amount based on published economic impacts by type of business.

7.3 Option 3 – A proportional amount based on applications received and rateable value of property (Recommended).

8 Options Appraisal – Amount of Relief to be Awarded

Option 1 – A fixed relief, equivalent to the amount available under the retail, hospitality and leisure scheme

8.1 This would amount to 100% relief for April to Jun, followed by 66% relief for Jul to March, or more simply an average of 75% across the year.

8.2 This is administratively simple to apply but does not take any account of potential demand for relief. The Council could find that the funding is fully utilised before support is given to all otherwise eligible businesses or be left with unallocated funding.

8.3 For this reason, this option is not recommended.

Option 2 – A fixed amount based on published economic impacts by type of business

8.4 Annex A to the guidance notes sets out the methodology used to determine LA funding for this scheme by reviewing the 'Gross Value Added' as a proxy for economic impacts of the pandemic.

- 8.5 This would appear to be a more scientific measure of the amount of support that may be needed, but again does not address the potential demand issue.
- 8.6 For this reason, this option is not recommended.

Option 3 – A proportional amount based on applications received and rateable value of property (Recommended)

- 8.7 This option would not have a published award amount, but instead would allow for an application window during which all potentially eligible businesses could apply.
- 8.8 The amount of relief awarded would be on a pro rata basis, based on rateable value of successful applications.
- 8.9 This provides the best option for allocating all of the available funding without the risk of over-allocation.
- 8.10 To prevent a small number of business with large properties receiving a disproportionate amount of relief, it is recommended that the deemed maximum RV for any property is £100,000. This means that businesses with larger properties could still apply, but their relief will be capped at that of a property with an RV of £100,000.
- 8.11 Businesses with multiple properties would be able to apply for each site.
- 8.12 This is the recommended option.

9 Options - Risk Management

- 9.1 An evaluation of the risks indicate that the existing controls in place mean that no significant risks have been identified at this time.

10 Resource Implications

- 10.1 The recommended option distributes the available funding to eligible businesses that keeps the allocation within the overall funding level provided by the government (£3.612M). There are therefore no direct financial implications arising from this report.
- 10.2 It is possible that the Council will benefit indirectly from increased overall recovery of business rates, where the relief is applied to businesses that were in business rates arrears for the 2021/22 financial year.

11 Legal Implications

- 11.1 CARF relief will be granted using the discretionary relief powers contained within Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

12 Equality Issues

- 12.1 No equality matters have been identified in the preparation of this report.

13 Conclusion and reasons for recommendation

13.1 The government has allocated £3.612M to the Council to help to reduce the business rates liability of businesses impacted by the pandemic that have not had previous support from their business rates liability.

13.2 There is limited information available to fully understand the level of demand that there may be for this relief and the amount of funding business need.

13.3 The recommended scheme is summarised as:

- Available to any business affected by the pandemic that employs full time staff from the premises from its site
- An application window followed by pro rata award of full allocation, based on RV of property.
- A deemed maximum rateable value of £100,000 per property for the purposes of determining relief
- Relief to be applied as a credit on accounts with refunds only issued by exception.

Background Papers (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)

Guidance notes to local authorities for the COVID Additional Relief Fund - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-additional-relief-fund-carf-local-authority-guidance>

Confidentiality

It is considered that this report does not contain exempt information within the meaning of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and can be made public.

No of Annexes:	1	File Ref:	N/A
(Portfolio: Finance & Revenues) Councillor M Flood			
Officer:	Carl Whatley	Ext:	8540
Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	30 March 2022



Test Valley Borough Council
Finance & Revenues Service
Discretionary Rate Relief Policy
Coronavirus Additional Relief Fund

Appendix – COVID Additional Relief Fund

The Government has introduced measures to support businesses adversely affected by the pandemic that have not received any other form of business rates relief.

The relief applies to the 2021/22 financial year only.

Businesses Eligible for Relief

To be eligible for relief, the following criteria apply:

- The business must be able to demonstrate that the pandemic has had an adverse effect on their business. This should be demonstrated through the provision of actual trading figures and a narrative description of the impact.
- The business must not have been eligible for the Expanded Retail Discount or Nursery Discount business rate relief schemes.
- The business premises must be occupied (other than for temporary closure due to government advice on COVID-19).
- Precepting authorities, including town and parish Councils may not apply.

Amount of Relief

The total amount of relief to be distributed is equivalent to the Council's allocation of £3,612,231.

Business may apply during the application window, the dates of which will be published on the Council's website. Relief will be awarded on a pro rata basis of the rateable value of successful applicants' hereditaments at the end of the application period.

Businesses with more than one property may apply for relief on all eligible premises.

The maximum amount of relief to be awarded will be based on a rateable value of £100,000. Businesses with larger hereditaments may still apply, but relief will be calculated as though the property has a rateable value of £100,000.

If relief is awarded to a hereditament which subsequently has a reduction in rateable value that results in a credit balance on the business rates account, the additional relief will be recovered from the ratepayer to leave a nil bill. This relief cannot be used to create a negative bill.

No additional relief will be available if a hereditament is later subject to an increase in rateable value.

This relief is subject to Subsidy Control limits.

Application for Relief

Businesses will be required to apply for relief during the application window

Other

This relief will be applied after all other reliefs to which the ratepayer is entitled.

ITEM 11

Budget Carry Forwards

Report of the Finance & Resources Portfolio Holder

Recommended:

That the items shown in the Annex to the report, totalling £101,500, be approved for carry forward into the 2022/23 revenue budget.

SUMMARY:

- Each year there are items included within the original estimates and forecasts that Services are unable to spend before the end of the financial year.
- This report seeks approval to carry forward the more significant of these items into the 2022/23 revenue budget.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The forecasts for 2021/22 were reported to Council on 25 February 2022.
- 1.2 Due to timing differences and factors beyond the control of Services, some items for which budgetary provision was made in the forecasts were not spent in the 2021/22 financial year.
- 1.3 This report seeks approval to carry forward the more significant of these items in to the 2022/23 revenue budget.

2 Background

- 2.1 In order to qualify as a carry forward, an item should meet the following criteria.
 - The budget should have been for one-off or specific expenditure in the year.
 - There should be an appropriate reason for the delay.
 - There are no specific sources of funds to meet the expenditure in the next financial year.
- 2.2 The items contained in the Annex to the report represent those items that are put forward for approval. An explanation as to why each of these items is requested to be carried forward to 2022/23 is also included.

3 Risk Management

- 3.1 An evaluation of the risks associated with the matters in this report indicates that further risk assessment is not needed because the changes/issues covered do not represent significant risks.

4 Resource Implications

- 4.1 The items recommended to be carried forward were included in the forecasts for 2021/22 and have not been spent. This means there will be a positive variance on Service estimates in 2021/22, providing no other areas of the Service are overspent.
- 4.2 The resultant increase in balances at 31 March 2022 will mean sufficient funds are available to enable these items to be added to the 2022/23 revenue budget.
- 4.3 The reason for bringing this report before the final revenue account position is known is to let Services know as soon as possible the decision as to whether or not the funds will be carried forward. This should prevent further delays in committing the expenditure.
- 4.4 The latest budget position has been taken into account in preparing these carry forward requests.
- 4.5 The recommended amount of £101,500 to be carried forward into the 2022/23 revenue budget will be equal to the variance on these items in 2021/22. Assuming all other items remain on budget in the 2021/22 revenue accounts, there will be no additional resource implications.

5 Legal Implications

- 5.1 There are no legal implications.

6 Equality Issues

- 6.1 An EQIA screening has been completed in accordance with the Council's EQIA methodology and no potential for unlawful discrimination has been identified, therefore a full EQIA has not been carried out.

7 Other Issues

- 7.1 There are no other issues.

8 Conclusion and reasons for recommendation

- 8.1 This report gives the Cabinet the opportunity to consider including unspent revenue items from the 2021/22 estimates in the current year's budget.
- 8.2 The Annex shows a small number of projects that were expected to be completed in 2021/22 but are now planned for delivery in 2022/23. The budget for these projects is available to carry forward without impacting on future service delivery. For this reason the budget carry forwards are recommended for approval.

<u>Background Papers (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)</u>			
None			
<u>Confidentiality</u>			
It is considered that this report does not contain exempt information within the meaning of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and can be made public.			
No of Annexes:	1	File Ref:	N/A
(Portfolio: Finance & Resources) Councillor M Flood			
Officer:	Jenni Carter	Ext:	8236
Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	30 March 2022

UNSPENT REVENUE ESTIMATES FROM 2021/22
TO CARRY FORWARD TO 2022/23

Detail	Amount £	Reason for requesting carry forward
IT		
Project Consultancy	10,000	<p>During 21/22, the IT service experienced a number of changes in staff and subsequent challenges in recruitment - coupled with the impact to IT of the return to the office post Covid, running alongside some significant procurements (Microsoft Enterprise Agreement for example) - these factors all contributed to reducing the time available for IT staff to bring in and work alongside 3rd parties, to undertake planned consultancy work.</p> <p>Consultancy project work is important for IT, where expert third parties can help train and supplement existing staff and their knowledge, plus help deliver new technologies at the same time.</p> <p>The 21/22 planned cyber security consultancy work has been deferred to 22/23, where it has not been budgeted for and is in addition to 22/23 budget. Plan to spend in first 6 months of 22/23.</p>
Legal & Democratic	7,000	The budget will be used for consultants' fees to assist in updating taxi licence policies & procedures.
Property & Asset Management		
Project Consultancy	70,000	The budget will be used to commission consultants to provide specialist reports to review feasibility options and identify true budget costs for future AMP identified projects.
Planning Policy & Economic Development		
Town Centre Management - Andover	10,000	The Council has commissioned consultants to create a 'place brand' for Andover. This will help encourage investment and community support for the town and specifically the town centre. In order to implement the recommendations of this work it is proposed that the £10,000 be carried forward to deliver promotional material and other recommendations of that study. The budget will be used in Q1/Q2 2022/23.

UNSPENT REVENUE ESTIMATES FROM 2021/22
TO CARRY FORWARD TO 2022/23

Detail	Amount	Reason for requesting carry forward
	£	
Town Centre Management - Romsey	1,000	The carry forward would be used to help support Romsey Town Council and Romsey Extra Parish Council in their recruitment for a new Town Centre Manager role which has recently become vacant. This will be undertaken in Q1 2022/23 and is estimated at £1,000.
Training	3,500	The planning policy team were unable to undertake the training in 2021/22 that was envisaged. This is due to the focus on local plan preparation, awaiting the consequences of changes to legislation (e.g. Environment Act) and the implications arising from the Planning white paper. Also, with several new starters joining in 2021/22 there was merit in allowing these staff to 'bed in' before undertaking the training. The training is necessary to upskill the team in preparation for future stages of statutory local plan preparation combined with an awareness of the implications of changes to legislation. The Planning Policy Manager is awaiting a response from course providers to confirm availability and quote. It is expected that these will take place in the first half of 2022/23.
Total of Carry Forwards	<u>101,500</u>	

ITEM 12

Write Off of Uncollectable Debt

Report of the Finance & Resources Portfolio Holder

Recommended:

That the debt detailed in the report, totalling £54,791, be written off in the Council's accounts as uncollectable.

SUMMARY:

- In accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations, the report seeks approval for the write off of a business rates debt that has proved to be uncollectable.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council has processes in place to ensure that income due is identified, collected, receipted and banked promptly. However, there are occasions where money owed to the Council proves to be uncollectable.
- 1.2 The Council's Financial Procedure Rules give the Head of Finance & Revenues authority, in consultation with the appropriate Chief Officer, to approve the write-off of bad debts or other sums due to the Council up to a limit of £5,000.
- 1.3 Amounts in excess of £5,000 must be authorised by the Finance & Resources Portfolio Holder and amounts over £25,000 must be referred to Cabinet for approval.
- 1.4 This report seeks approval for the write off one business rates debt above the £25,000 threshold that has proved to be uncollectable and for which there is little or no prospect of future recovery.

2 Background

- 2.1 Debts related to one business rates account are recommended to be written off as uncollectable.
- 2.2 It is inevitable that it will be necessary to write off certain amounts as uncollectable when businesses go into liquidation / individuals declare themselves bankrupt with arrears owed to the Council.
- 2.3 The Council has no power to pursue recovery of outstanding amounts owed when a company enters administration or goes into liquidation. However, the company may continue to occupy a premises and continue to be liable for business rates.

2.4 Up to the point that the company entered liquidation the Council had pursued its normal billing and recovery procedures. The debt in question relates to the 2020/21 financial year.

2.5 The debt recommended to be written off is summarised in the following table.

Business	Debt	Reason for Write-Off	Amount £
Snows Timber Ltd	Business Rates	Company in liquidation	54,791
Total			54,791

3 Options

3.1 The debt recommended to be written off relates to a business that is in liquidation. Proof of debt has been submitted, however there is no realistic prospect of any distribution to creditors.

3.2 There are no alternative options available to continue recovery action for these debts.

4 Risk Management

4.1 An evaluation of the risks indicates that the existing controls in place mean that no significant risks have been identified at this time.

5 Resource Implications

5.1 Each year, as part of the preparation of the Collection Fund (the statutory account through which Council Tax and Business Rates are administered) the Council makes an allowance for uncollectable debts. The allowance reflects that it is not possible to collect 100% of bills raised due, for example, to company failure.

5.2 The bad debt allowance calculation is based on a number of factors, including the age of the debt and the recovery stage to which the debt has been progressed. The bad debt allowance at 31 March 2021 included £5,479 in respect of this debt, of which the Council's share was £2,192.

5.3 The impact of writing off business rates debts is shared between the Council, central government, Hampshire County Council and Hampshire Fire and Rescue. The impact on the Council's budgets is shown in the table below.

	£
Total value of business rates debts to be written off	54,791
Other bodies' share of total debt (60%)	(32,875)

Council share of bad debt (40%)	21,916
Less: Amounts already provided in previous years' accounts	(2,192)
Reduced levy on business rates growth in 2021/22	(9,862)
Net cost to the Council in 2021/22	9,862

5.4 The net cost of the debt recommended for write-off can be contained within the bad debt allowance for the current year.

6 Equality Issues

6.1 This report does not identify any issues related to equality.

7 Conclusion and reasons for recommendation

7.1 The report identifies one debt for which there is no reasonable prospect of recovery. It is recommended that it is written-off in the Council's accounts.

<u>Background Papers (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)</u>			
None.			
<u>Confidentiality</u>			
It is considered that this report does not contain exempt information within the meaning of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and can be made public.			
No of Annexes:	0	File Ref:	N/A
(Portfolio: Finance & Resources) Councillor M Flood			
Officer:	Carl Whatley	Ext:	8540
Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	30 March 2022

ITEM 13

Exclusion of the Public

Recommended:

That, pursuant to Regulation 4 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, the public be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of the following report on the following matters on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the following Paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, indicated below. The public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information for the reason given below:

Property Matters

Paragraph 3

It is considered that this report contains exempt information within the meaning of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended in that it contains 'information relating to the financial or business affairs or any particular person (including the authority holding that information)'. It is further considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.