

**Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet  
Member for Economic Growth &  
Cabinet Member for Finance & Corporate  
Transformation**

**Budget 23/24 & MTFS**

**Performance Management Scrutiny  
Committee**

**1<sup>st</sup> February 2023**

# Key Changes since the November PMSC

# Key Changes from Nov 2022

## Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement

- Net increase in cash grants from that assumed in 23/24, but includes one-off 'Funding Guarantee' so uncertainty over subsequent years
- CPI linked increase in retained business rate income
- New Homes Bonus allocation £1.4m
- Council Tax Referendum Principles increased to 3% or £5 for shire districts
- Essex Business Rate Pool
- Other grants – Homelessness Prevention Grant & Core Housing Benefit Subsidy Administration
- Consultation period of 4-weeks – Cabinet Member submitted response on 13<sup>th</sup> Jan.

# Key Changes from Nov 2022

## Other

- Pension Fund – higher ongoing employer rate offset by reduced contribution to reserve
- Staffing budgets updated for current establishment & other inflationary adjustments
- Additional investment income due to interest rates
- Reduction in growth bid for PMO by using existing resources & small downward change in savings proposed
- Extra Council Tax Base growth
- Parking Protocol – further changes anticipated relating to commuter car park charges
- Funding for Silver End Bowls Club dropped kerb (Relates to Cllr Capital Bid)

# Budget 2023/24

## Our Proposals

# Budget 23/24 – Our Proposals

## Overriding Aims

- Supporting residents through the cost-of-living crisis
- Investing in services and key priorities, and improving the way the Council works
- Protecting front-line services and maintaining service standards
- Focusing on efficiencies and increasing our income over service reductions
- Addressing our financial challenges whilst strengthening our financial resilience

# Budget 23/24 – Our Proposals

## *Our Consultation & Engagement*

- Invited comments from stakeholders and partners, including all Town & Parish Councils on Options & Choices
- Meetings with the Town Councils
- Performance Management Scrutiny Committee - 23<sup>rd</sup> Nov & 1<sup>st</sup> Feb
- Business Newsletter & Braintree District Businesses Facebook
- Press releases, website News Page, social media, and staff briefings

# Budget 23/24 – Our Proposals

## *Supporting Residents*

- An extra £1m to support residents impacted by the cost-of-living crisis
- Building on the good work already in place as recognised by the recent scrutiny review
- A three-point plan to be delivered over the next two years:
  - Providing food security
  - Helping the most vulnerable by supporting existing community groups
  - Increase access to facilities that enable physical and emotional health & wellbeing

# Budget 23/24 – Our Proposals

*Investing in our services and improving the way we work:*

- A12 Street Cleansing partnership
- Councillor Community Grant Scheme
- Investing in our Economic Growth and Healthy Housing strategies
- Strengthening our project and programme management through a new Programme Management Office
- Over £900k of new capital investment (E.g. sports & leisure, community facilities, council offices, IT and operational equip.)

# Budget 23/24 – Our Proposals

## *Addressing the financial challenge:*

- Over £1m of new savings and extra income have been identified
- Discretionary fees & charges have been carefully reviewed
- We have considered changes to our Parking Protocol incl. tariffs
- Confirms intention to introduce a charge for collecting green waste – this will be significant in closing the 24/25 budget gap – further details to be considered at March Cabinet

# Budget 23/24 – Our Proposals

*Addressing the financial challenge – the ongoing gap has reduced but remains significant*

	23/24 £000	24/25 £000	25/26 £000	26/27 £000	Total £000
Nov	1,406	570	318	109	2,403
Feb	644	833	406	151	2,034

- Ongoing savings or extra income of over £2m is still required to close the MTFS gap
- The shortfall in 23/24 to be met from balances meaning £1.4m needs to be found for 24/25
- LGFS has shifted the budget gap with Govt. funding in 24/25 uncertain

# Budget 23/24 – Our Proposals

*Addressing the financial challenge – some of the activity that is already underway:*

- Investment & Development Programme (IDP)
- Review of commercial activities
- Asset Management review
- Services/ Zero-Based Budget reviews
- Shared Services & Collaboration
- Devolution

# Budget 23/24 – Our Proposals

## *Council Tax*

- Recommendation to **increase Council Tax by 2.5% giving a Band D Tax rate of £194.31**, an extra 9p per week.\*
- Will remain one of the lowest Council Tax rates in Essex and below the Shire District average
- Council Tax Support Fund will give a discount to those on Local Council Tax Support of up to £25
- Additional discretionary support for others, alongside our current hardship schemes and help through Citizens Advice and our own staff welfare officers

\* Govt limit is 3%

# Next Steps

# Next Steps and Timeline

- **Early Feb** – Government to confirm the Local Government Finance Settlement for 23/24
- **6th February** - Cabinet finalise their recommendations to Full Council
- **20<sup>th</sup> February** - Full Council agree Budget for 23/24 & Council's share of the overall Council Tax bill, and set the Council Tax rates including all precepts for the District and each Town & Parish Council area