

Draft Budget 2023/2024

For Cabinet on 8 December 2022

Summary

Lead Member: Councillor Chris Hall, Finance and Performance Portfolio Holder

Lead Director: Lee Colyer, Director of Finance, Policy and Development

Head of Service: Jane Fineman, Head of Finance and Procurement

Report Author: Lee Colyer, Director of Finance, Policy and Development

Classification: Public document (non-exempt)

Wards Affected: All

Approval Timetable	Date
Management Board	9 November 2022 Verbal update
Portfolio Holder	4 November 2022 Verbal update
Finance & Governance Cabinet Advisory Board	15 November 2022
Cabinet	8 December 2022

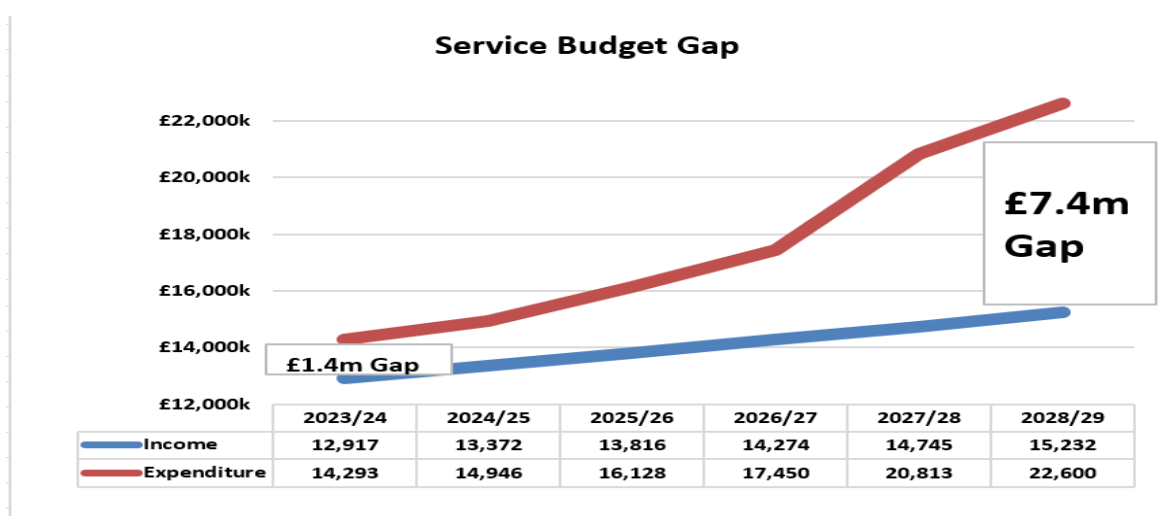
Recommendations

Officer / Committee recommendations as supported by the Portfolio Holder:

1. That Cabinet comments on the draft budget and identifies any areas that they believe need to be strengthened or where there are omissions; and
2. That subject to the above recommendation, Cabinet agrees the draft budget for public consultation.

1. Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines the assumptions that have been built into the draft budget for 2023/24.
- 1.2 The draft budget assumes that the impact of the pandemic remains stable with no further adverse consequences or economic restrictions. It is also assumed that there are no adverse financial consequences from either the Local Government Finance Settlement or the Autumn Statement.
- 1.3 The draft budget includes the remaining impact to the Council's income from the pandemic and additional cost pressures largely because of rising inflation, labour shortages and supply chain disruption. The situation continues to be fluid and further significant variances can occur across the Council's budget.
- 1.4 The Local Government Association (LGA) has said that councils face a funding gap of £3.4 billion just to maintain services at pre-covid levels and filling the gap using council tax would see bills increase by over 10 per cent next year.
- 1.5 The Council currently has a draft budget gap of £1,375,900 which if left unmanaged increases to £7.4m in 2028/29. This will require the Council's administration to set out their prioritisation of services and allocation of the limited funding available before the final budget is set. To help rebalance the finances over the medium-term, the public will be asked to set out their allocation of funding in comparison to that of the draft budget. This will assist the political administration in the reallocation of funding between services and reserves.
- 1.6 The budget consultation exercise will also help to explain both the range of services the Council must provide and those it chooses to provide in the context of lower levels of income available. This will help to determine the range and quality of services that can be afforded.



- 1.7 For 2023/24 Revenue Support Grant for this Council is expected to remain at zero and at the time of writing there are no firm details of government financial support. These will be set out in the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement expected in early December 2022.
- 1.8 The longer the economic disruption persists and with councils only given a single year settlement, the more difficult it is to plan over the medium-term which impacts on residents, businesses, and visitors to the borough.
- 1.9 The draft budget is a projection and following approval it will be published on the Council's website along with a budget consultation survey.

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 Cabinet received the first report leading to the setting of the 2023/24 budget at the meeting on 22 September 2022 entitled Budget Projection and Strategy which had also been considered by the Finance & Governance Cabinet Advisory Committee (F&GCAB). This was followed by the Budget Update report on 27 October 2022 which had also been considered by the F&GCAB and included a detailed financial benchmarking exercise.

Autumn Statement

- 2.2 The Chancellor will present an Autumn Statement accompanied by a full economic and financial outlook by the Office of Budget Responsibility on 17 November 2022. A verbal update to councillors will be provided on the implications for Local Government and the Council.
- 2.3 The Draft Local Government Finance Settlement is expected towards the end of December 2022 which will detail the funding parameters for Local Government and individual councils' Baseline Funding Levels and support grants.

New Homes Bonus (NHB)

- 2.4 The NHB scheme was introduced by the Government in 2011 as a “powerful, predictable, permanent incentive to reward the delivery of housing growth”, funded by a £900 million top-slice of Revenue Support Grant.
- 2.5 Since 2011 various amendments have been made to dilute the financial incentive and in advance of consulting on changes the Government announced that in effect the current scheme will be phased out. The official position remains that no decision has been made on the future of NHB.
- 2.6 It is assumed that the Council will receive a similar allocation to the current year of £1,145,000 regardless of whether NHB is replaced with an alternative scheme.

Retained Business Rates

- 2.7 The revaluation of business rates was postponed until April 2023 and is to be based on the property market on 1 April 2021 so will reflect the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the commercial rental market.
- 2.8 It was expected that there would be a reset of the business rates baseline, that determines the Settlement Funding Assessment for local authorities. However, councils have been invited to make submissions for business rates pools for 2023/24 which means that the reset will not occur.
- 2.9 The continuation of the Kent business rate pool using the existing baseline will enable this Council to continue to retain a greater share in the proceeds of business rates growth for a further year. The retained business rate growth share is shown below:

Type of Authority	Local Business Rate Growth Share
Districts	40%
Kent County Council	9%
Kent Fire & Rescue Service	1%
Total	50%
Government	50%

- 2.10 The Council has prudently not included the proceeds of business rates growth within the base budget and transfers any receipts into reserves at year end. It is inferred within the spending review that there will not be a baseline reset until 2025/26 which will help this Council to continue to benefit for longer from the proceeds of growth.
- 2.11 There is an inherent uncertainty over the actual share of business rate growth receivable within the scheme until the collection fund is reconciled at year end due to the settling of appeals by the Valuation Office Agency and the need to make provisions for future appeals and refunds.
- 2.12 The table below shows the net proceeds the Council has received from the scheme and the current forecast for 2022/23.

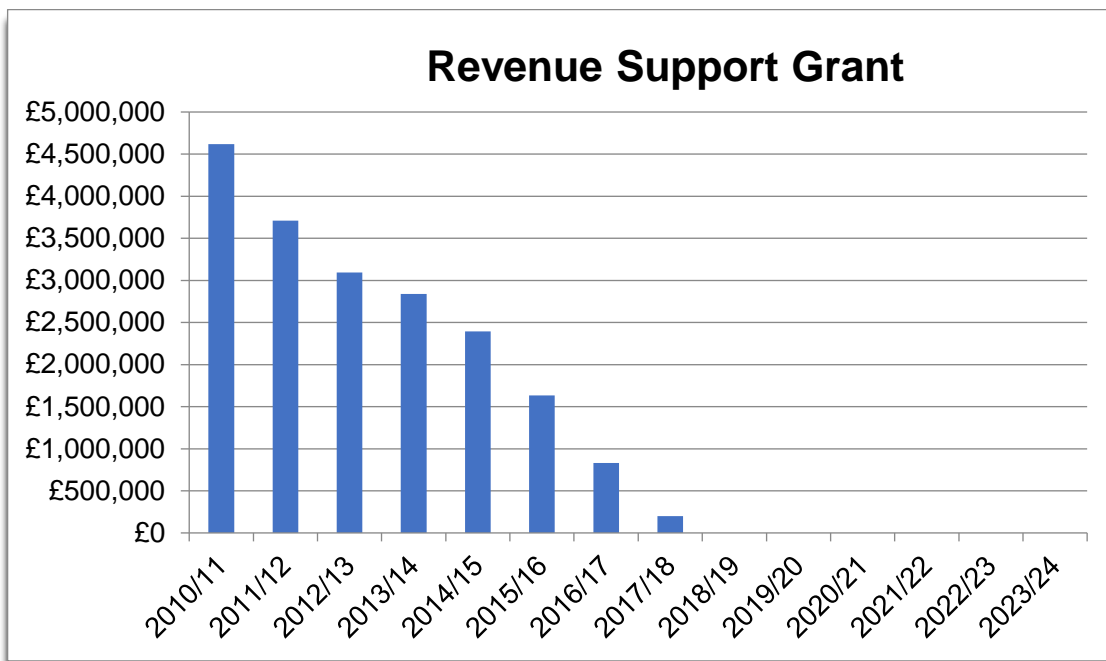
Year	Type of Business Rates Retention	Local Growth Share	TWBC Share of Growth
------	----------------------------------	--------------------	----------------------

			£000s
2015/16	Kent Pool	50%	64
2016/17	Kent Pool	50%	595
2017/18	Kent Pool	50%	1,700
2018/19	Kent & Medway Pilot	100%	5,000
2019/20	Kent Pool	50%	806
2020/21	Kent Pool	50%	1,031
2021/22	Kent Pool	50%	1,791
2022/23	Kent Pool (Q2 estimate)	50%	1,100
			12,087

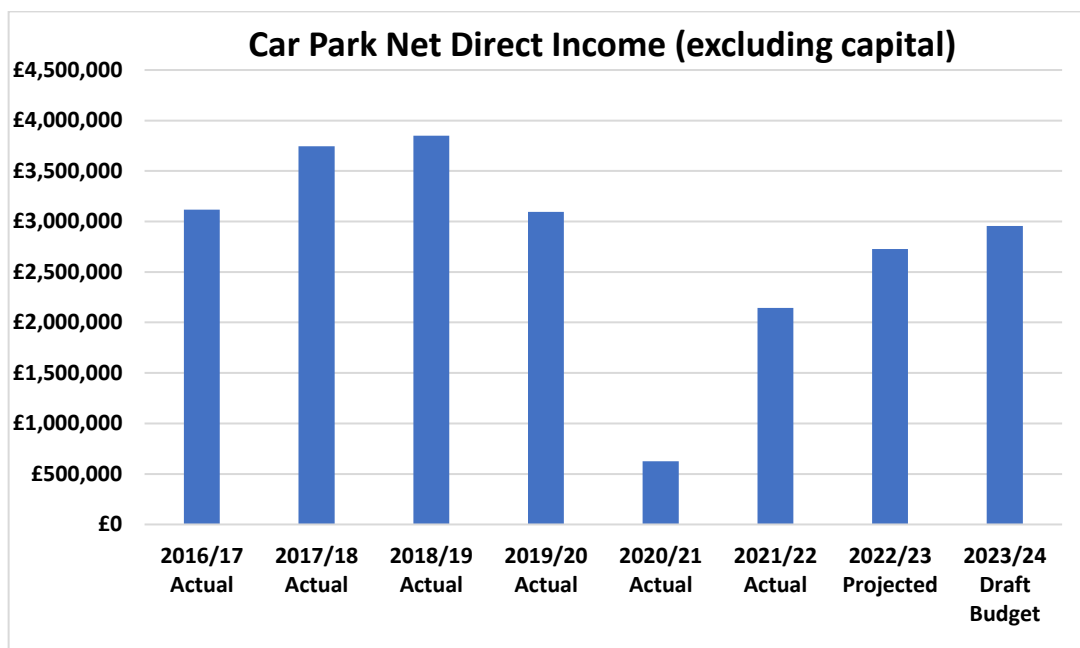
- 2.13 The Council now has a successful track record of forecasting appeals and setting aside appropriate levels of provisions to smooth the impact on the collection fund and the amount that can be retained by the Council.
- 2.14 There have recently been some significant planning consents granted which if delivered will provide a good stream of new business rate growth for the next five years, these include Kingstanding Way Business Park (estimated total business rate growth £1.7m) and Swatlands Industrial Estate (estimated total business rate growth £300,000). This gives more confidence in business rate proceeds, providing a consistent source of income that could be included within the revenue budget. There is already an assumption that £500,000 of business rate growth proceeds will be used to provide the minimum level of funding required for the capital programme.

Financial Trends

- 2.15 Revenue Support Grant (RSG) was in place to recognise the cost of services to be delivered by councils, as demanded by central government, cannot be met from Council Tax and so a Revenue Support Grant was paid to each council. Successive governments have been reducing RSG and the graph below shows that this Council ceased to receive any RSG since 2018/19. There is still a risk that this council could be at risk of negative RSG.



2.16 The Covid-19 Pandemic had a fundamental impact on economic activity especially in town centres. The graph below shows the net income the Council received from car park income which is relied on to help fund local services (due to the removal of RSG) and how this is now gradually recovering.

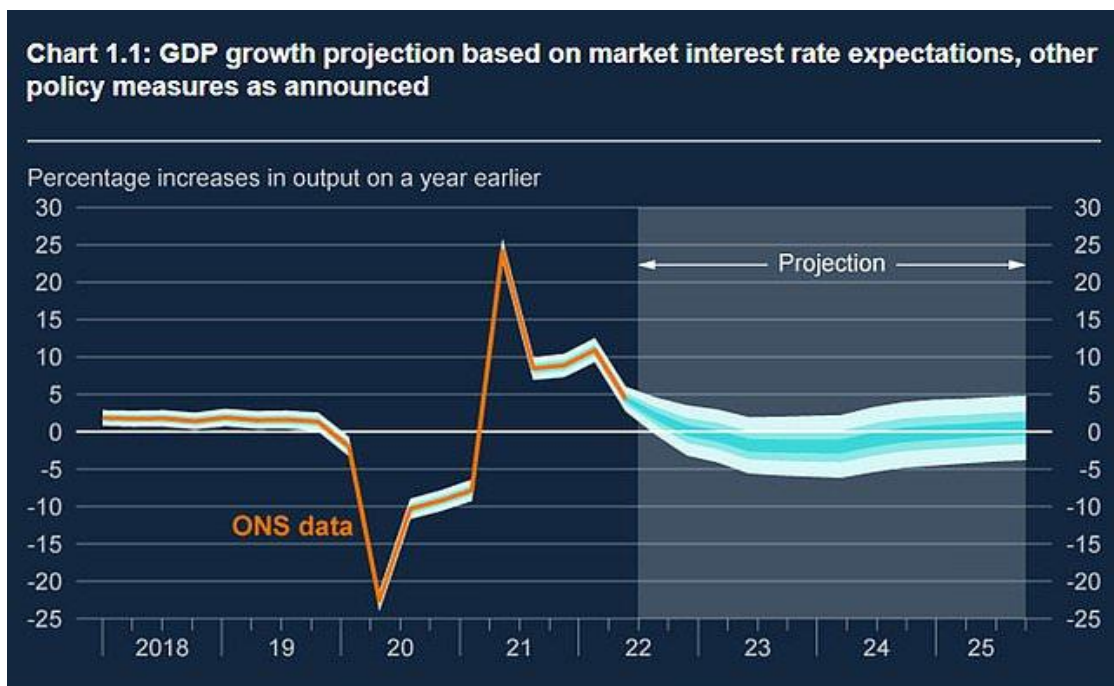


National Economic Forecasts

2.17 At the time of writing the report, the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) has yet to issue their Economic and Fiscal Outlook that will follow the Autumn Statement.

2.18 The Bank of England's (BoE) Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) increased interest rates further to 3 per cent on 2 November 2022 in an attempt to address soaring inflation which is over five times the BoE target of 2 per cent.

2.19 Alongside the MPC's decision to increase interest rates by the largest amount since 1989, the BoE has said that Britain faced the longest recession this century. The graph below shows the projection for Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as the BoE tries to get a grip on soaring inflation.



Local Economic Forecasts

2.20 The borough has been very resilient during previous times of financial uncertainty with the impact being less severe and the rate of recovery quicker than the national situation. However, disruption from soaring inflation and labour shortages along with a cost-of-living crisis continues to create huge uncertainty and pressure points for residents and local businesses.

2.21 A summary of local economic data is shown below:

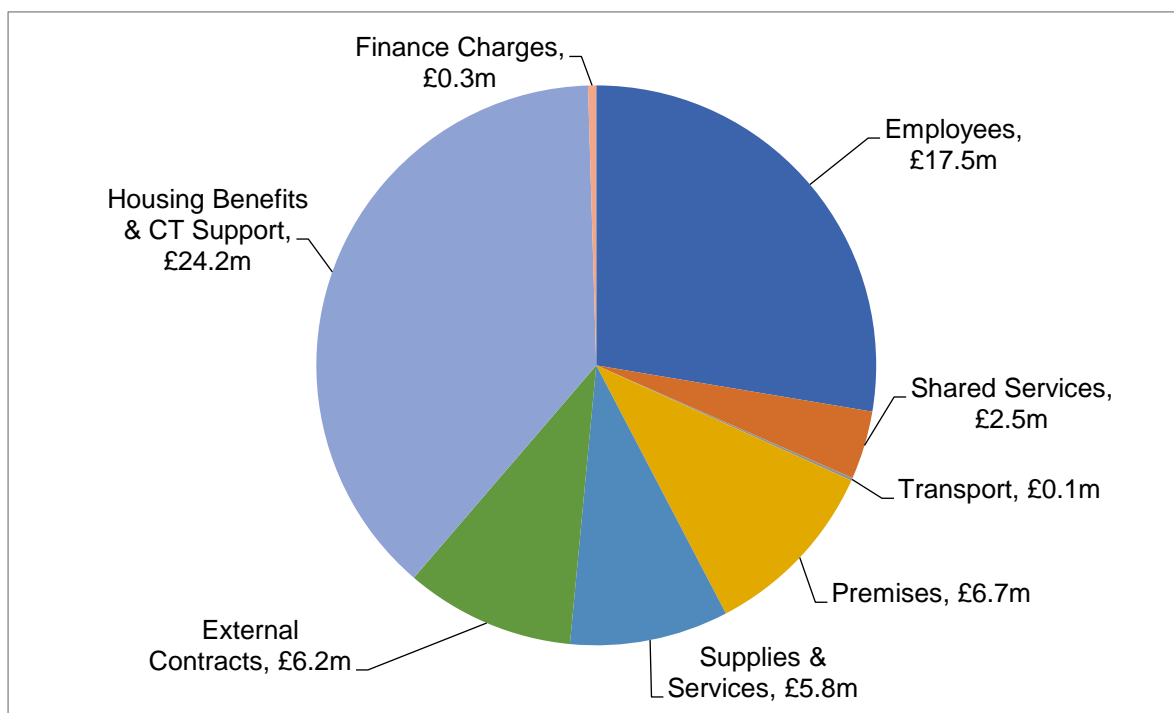
- Unemployment Rate for September 2022 for the borough is 2.3% (1,640 claimants) and the 3rd lowest in Kent where the average is 3.2%.
- Council Tax collection rates to July 2022 are down 0.9 per cent compared to target.
- Business Rates collection rates to July 2022 are up 2.74 per cent compared to target.
- Empty business properties were 344 (8.25 per cent) in July 2022 compared to 314 properties pre-covid.

Draft Budget Breakdown

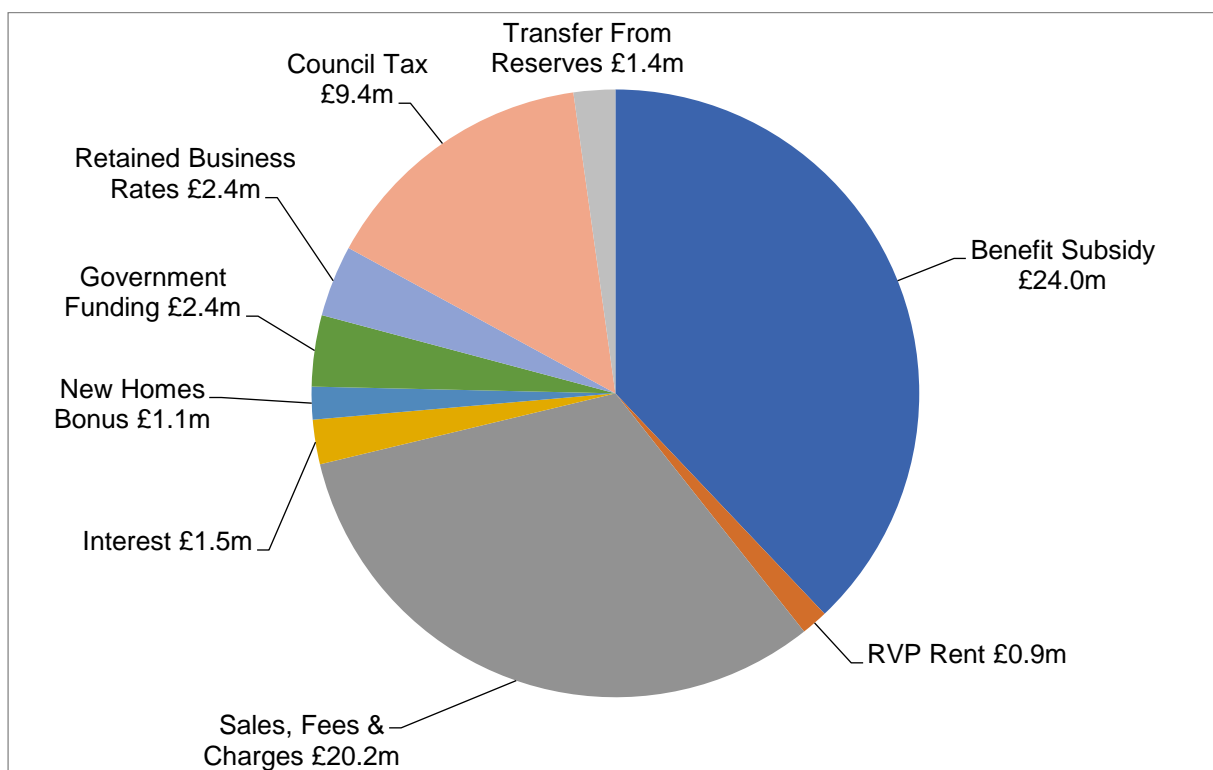
2.22 The Council provides a diverse range of services across the borough which is estimated to cost £63.3 million. The services are provided either by contractors, through

partnership with other councils or by directly employing staff. The draft budget is based on an approved establishment of 330.60 (325.25 2022/23) Full Time Equivalents (FTEs), the increase is due to posts funded from new specific government grants. The following pie charts show the draft revenue expenditure and how this is to be funded.

Pie Chart of 2023/24 Revenue Expenditure



Pie Chart of 2023/24 Revenue Income



2.23 A breakdown of the draft budget by service is provided in Appendix A. A subjective breakdown of the current budget per cost centre will be available on the Council's website.

Latest Budget Projection 2023/24

2.24 The current year's budget forms the base budget upon which projections are made for the medium-term and is summarised in Appendix C. Individual estimates have been provided for all service areas which have been consolidated to form the draft budget.

2.25 The key variances over the current budget are shown below:

Draft Budget December 2022	2023/24
Subjective Variance	£000s
Employment Costs	1,115
Transport	2
Premises	1,004
Business Rates	202
Supplies and Services	(210)
Contracts	875
Specific Government Grants	(946)
Income	(275)
Minor variances	(7)
Finance Charges	(47)
Investment Interest	(1,009)
No Collection Fund Balance	145
Council Tax Increase	(417)
Remove reserve based funding in 2022/23	944
Budget Gap	1,376

Budget Strategy

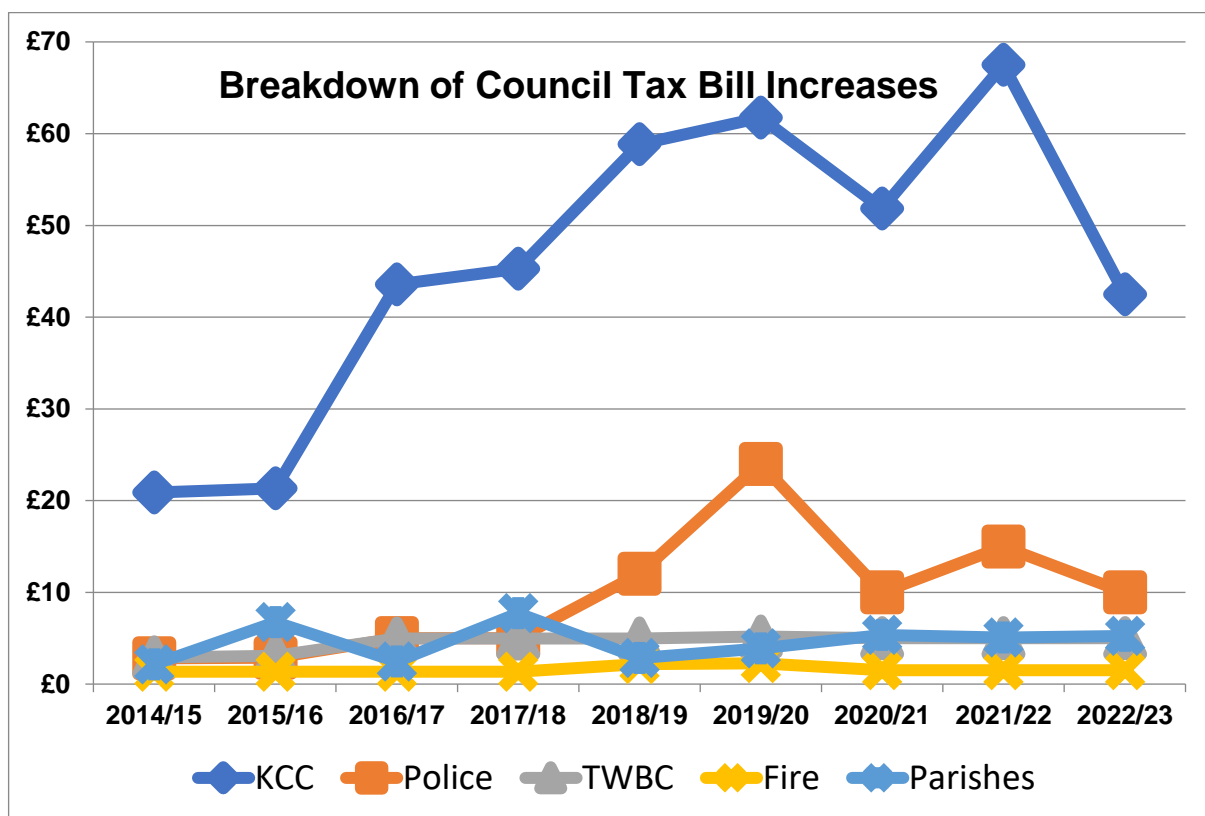
2.26 There remains a deficit forecast for 2023/24 of £1,376,000 which, if left unmanaged, would need to be funded from reserves. In normal times the use of general reserves is unsustainable over the longer-term which led Cabinet in 2012 to set a definition of a balanced budget as follows:

“Where ongoing expenditure is met from fees, charges, government grant and council tax with only the use of earmarked reserves being used to meet one-off priority expenditure.”

2.27 These are not normal times, and the Council will need to continue to meet as a priority the provision of statutory services. The external auditors have required the Council to now separate out those statutory services which it must provide by law and those discretionary services that the council has chosen to provide. The political view of the budget is further broken down by portfolio holder and is summarised in Appendix B.

Council Tax Strategy

- 2.28 One source of funding for the provision of local services is council tax. This Council has historically had a policy of very low council tax levels and the strategy is for council tax to increase up to the threshold (the 'cap') for triggering a referendum.
- 2.29 In previous years, the most efficient authorities such as this Council have been able to increase council tax by up to £5.00 (frozen since 2013) a year rather than the cap of 2 per cent. Confirmation is expected to be set out in the Provisional Local Government Settlement in December. The Government assumes this Council will increase council tax by the maximum permitted in their assessment of this Council's available financial resources.
- 2.30 The Government has set different 'caps' for the various authorities who make up the council tax charge appearing on the bills for this borough, this is shown below:



- 2.31 The MTFs assumes that Council Tax will increase by £5 annually. It will be for Full Council in March 2023 to decide the level of council tax.

Fees and Charges

- 2.32 For the fees and charges which are not imposed by central government a report will be considered by Cabinet on 17 November 2022.

Car Parking Charges

- 2.33 There are no further plans to increase pay and display car parking charges.

Cabinet Member Plans

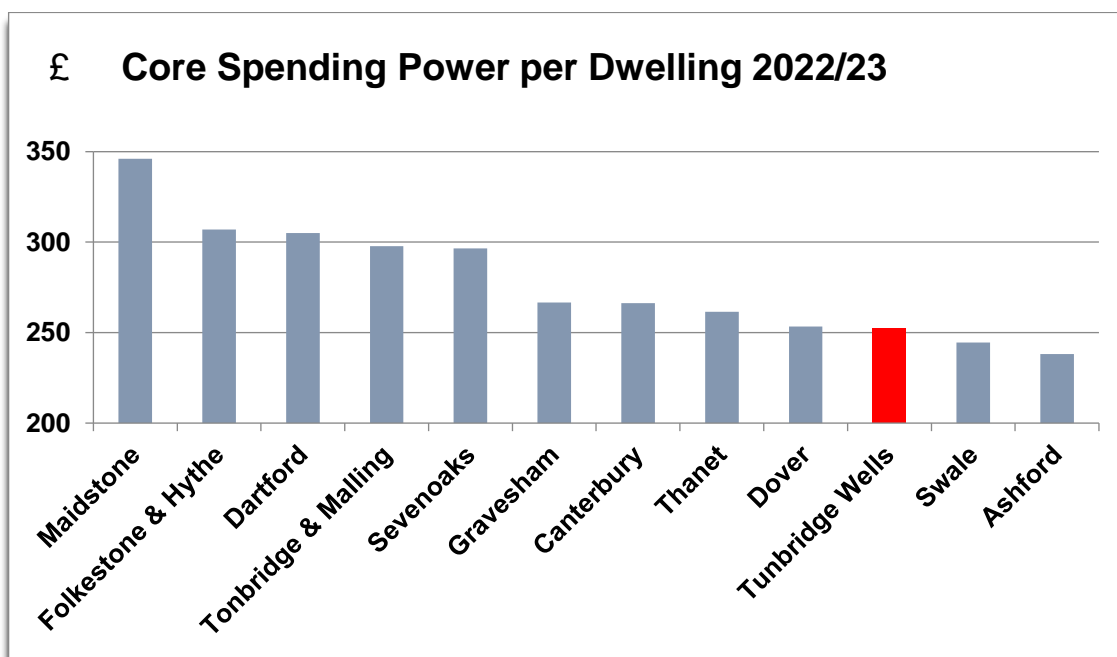
- 2.34 In the absence of a corporate plan the Borough Partnership are working on Cabinet Member Plans which will set out the direction of travel up to 2024 and must include a credible savings plan. This is a requirement of the Council’s external auditors and is needed to inform the going concern opinion of the Council by the s151 Officer.
- 2.35 Cabinet Members Plans are not part of the budget setting approval process and all initiatives included in the plans will need to be subject to financial and legal considerations as part of an options appraisal before going through the formal decision-making process.

Digital Transformation

- 2.36 It is not possible to keep working harder and faster with fewer resources and still provide safe, effective services. The Council will need to find new ways of working smarter and deliver services in a more digitally efficient form which meets with the way the public now interact with service providers. The Council has a Digital Services and Transformation Team in place to improve operational delivery and transform the way that services are provided. Details of these projects are reported quarterly to Cabinet and the resulting efficiencies will be incorporated into the budget-setting process.

Spending Power

- 2.37 The Government has developed a universal benchmarking indicator called ‘Spending Power’ to enable comparisons between councils of the income they receive from national and local taxpayers. This indicator appears to be the best available for identifying how much each council receives per household to provide local services. The graph below shows that using the Government’s own calculation TWBC has the third lowest spending power in Kent at just £252 per household (£236 in 2021/22):-



Capital and Revenue Reserves

2.38 The Medium-Term Financial Strategy maintains the following as an adequate level of reserves:

	Minimum
General Reserves (Revenue)	£3.0 million
Capital Receipts	£1.0 million

2.39 The reserves and balances are currently forecast to meet the above levels although maintaining this position relies on delivering not just a balanced budget in 2023/24 but a sustainable budget for the future.

Capital Programme

2.40 At the Full Council meeting on 23 February 2022 the four-year rolling capital programme was approved.

2.41 Over the course of the past year the Council has identified further surplus land and property that is no longer required for operational purposes. The Asset Management Plan (AMP) aims to deliver both capital receipts and to reduce operational running costs. The AMP provides a framework for further such work over the coming year and this work will be funded from a proportion of the capital receipts received (subject to the necessary approval).

2.42 The four-year capital programme will be rolled forward for another year. Any subsequent additions will be considered using the formal application approval process throughout the year.

2.43 Below is a summary of new applications to the capital programme which will require Full Council to agree in principle the additional total gross project funding of £720,000. The decision to procure each scheme and the source of funding will be determined by the s151 Officer.

New Schemes	Total Gross Project Cost £	Gross Cost £	Earmarked Reserve Funding £	Cap & Rev Initiatives Res. Funding £
A LIST - Health & Safety Related, Revenue or Capital Income Stream, S106 funded or Political Priority				
Crematorium Welfare Facility	23,000	23,000	0	(23,000)
Crescent Road CP Cladding	2,090,000	455,000	0	(455,000)
Crescent Road CP Switch Gear	35,000	35,000	0	(35,000)
ICT	80,000	80,000	0	(80,000)
TOTAL	2,228,000	593,000	0	(593,000)
B LIST - Service/Property Improvements				
Enforcement Van	27,000	27,000	0	(27,000)
TOTAL	27,000	27,000	0	(27,000)

TOTAL	2,255,000	620,000	0	(620,000)
Revenue Expenditure				
Benhall Mill Depot H&S Works	100,000	100,000	0	(100,000)

- 2.44 The significant recurring cost of; planned maintenance, responsive repairs and the above capital investment in the Council's Civic Buildings, Car Parks and Leisure Centres is not financially sustainable over the medium-term and a solution that provides value for money needs to be determined.
- 2.45 The Council has no external debt but with reserves largely allocated it will be necessary to commence borrowing to fund additional capital schemes. The Council does have the potential for using new capital receipts, building up usable reserves and access to internal and external borrowing. The determination as to which source of funding is most appropriate is a technical judgement that will be made by the s151 Officer.
- 2.46 In addition to the revenue budget and capital budgets, the Council has earmarked reserves which form part of the Budget and Policy Framework and are available to fund the specific purpose of the reserve in accordance with the virement procedure rules. The projected balances of these reserves are shown below and assume that the revenue budget is balanced without the use of reserves after 2023/24. Failure to do so will result in the level of reserves falling below the minimum £4 million control level:-

	31-Mar-22	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-24	31-Mar-25	31-Mar-26	31-Mar-27
	Actual	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
General Fund	4,336	4,336	3,898	3,062	2,331	1,831
Earmarked Reserves	15,766	10,623	2,082	2,082	2,082	2,082
2022/23 Budget Deficit	0	-706	-706	-706	-706	-706
2023/24 Budget Deficit	0	0	-1,376	-1,376	-1,376	-1,376
2023/24 Net New Capital Schemes			-220	-220	-220	-220
Grant Volatility (C Fund adj)	6,911	1,301	0	0	0	0
Capital Grants & Contributions	3,280	3,280	3,280	3,280	3,280	3,280
Capital Receipts Reserve	2,200	1,000	0	0	0	0
Total Reserves	32,493	19,834	6,958	6,122	5,391	4,891
Outstanding Financing						
33 Monson Road	-900	-855	-810	-765	-720	-675
Dowding House	-1,870	-1,781	-1,692	-1,603	-1,514	-1,425
The Lodge, Calverley Park	-468	-447	-425	-403	-381	-362
Royal Victoria Place	-924	-882	-840	-799	-757	-714
The Amelia Scott	-2,000	-2,000	-1,920	-1,840	-1,760	-1,680
Civic Site Essential Works	0	-451	-1,235	-1,185	-1,135	-1,084
Total Outstanding Financing	-6,162	-6,416	-6,922	-6,595	-6,267	-5,940

Note: Schemes not funded from reserves need to be charged to revenue and this repayment is reflected in the reduction in financing over the life of the asset.

2.47 The Council does not have any external debt but the s151 Officer has the flexibility to access borrowing as an alternative to utilising capital receipts.

Budget Calculations and Adequacy of Reserves

2.48 When the budget is set in March the Council's Section 151 Officer must give his view on the robustness of the estimates and adequacy of reserves (Section 25 Statement).

2.49 The Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy projects the financial impact of the Council's current and proposed policies in the short and medium-term. This report and the projections in Appendix C will form part of the MTFs Update for 2023/24.

2.50 It is important to recognise that there are many factors that can affect some budgets and where variances could be significant requiring closer budget management and action; these areas include:

Risk Area	Management
Climate Emergency	In July 2019 Full Council declared a climate emergency. A climate cross-party task force has been established and a dedicated report is due with actions to make the Borough carbon neutral by 2030. No financial requirements have been identified or provided for within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy. The cross-party group agreed to lobby central government to provide additional resources and to grant the necessary freedoms to deliver the above ambition.
Labour Shortages	Numerous parts of the economy are exposed to critical shortages of essential skills and professions. Where possible the Council will work with its contractors and across the sector to manage any disruption.
Growth	The Government is clear that local authorities have a responsibility to grow their local economies through new housing and businesses. The private sector is very selective in identifying those areas in which to invest and there is tough competition between destination towns. The borough needs to be viewed as 'open for business' and receptive to growth if it is to retain and attract residents and businesses and to deliver wider economic benefits. It is important to avoid a lack of confidence by the private sector to invest in the borough.
Market Failure	The Council is required to procure services and is reliant on a free and competitive market to obtain best value. In some circumstances the contractors may be unwilling or unable to take on the risk of providing services without significant cost increases in existing or new contracts.
Property Assets	The cost of maintaining property assets is currently around 10% of the Net Revenue Budget and annually consumes around £1- £3 million in capital expenditure. Despite this some property assets have reached the end of their useful life and are at risk of further responsive costs to keep them operational.

Planning Inquiry Costs	Whilst the primacy of planning is paramount, decisions taken by the Planning Committee can lead to formal planning inquiries which have the potential for substantial costs to arise which are not budgeted for.
Business Rates Retention Scheme	Part of the Council's funding is now linked to the amount of business rates due in the borough. However, the Government has also transferred the liability for business rate appeals already in the system. To help mitigate the impact of appeals the Council maintains a Grant Volatility Reserve and is part of a Kent Business Rate Pool.
Economic Conditions	<p>The majority of the Council's income is derived from sources which are subject to the prevailing economic conditions.</p> <p>Economic conditions can also alter the demand for council services and those provided by partners and the voluntary sector.</p>
Employee Costs	<p>The move to local pay offers some protection but a watching brief is still required especially regarding the vacancy factor. Changes to pensions, National Insurance and the introduction of an apprentice levy have been included where known but such further changes can have a significant cost.</p> <p>Demand for some professionals exceeds supply and this is exacerbated by the higher salaries available in London and parts of the private sector which can now be earned without the need to commute daily.</p>
Parking Income	Dependent on usage and the economic environment.
Planning and Licensing Income	Dependent on the economy and the impact of legislative changes which limit the full recovery of the cost of providing these services.
Crematorium Income	Dependent on mortality rates and competition.
Contracts	Dependent on inflation indices and a competitive market.
Utilities	Global supply and demand plus above inflation price rises.
Land Charges	The Infrastructure Bill was approved, paving the way for Local Land Charges to be centralised into a single computer system. The Land Registry are scheduled to take over from 2023/24.
Investment Returns	New cash deposits are dependent on interest rates and levels of balances.

	Property investments are dependent on the type of asset and rental demands.
Targeted Options to Reduce Net Expenditure	Assumes that savings identified are delivered and there are no unintended consequences.
Capital Receipts	Capital is tied up in non-operational assets which if released will help to reduce the use of cash reserves to fund the capital programme.
Government Policy and Announcements by Ministers	There has been a significant increase in the volume of legislation and announcements which can undermine strategic planning and compromise budget assumptions.
Capital Programme	Major capital schemes carry a significant risk which is managed through the Council's Strategic Risk Register. The funding of capital can also have a significant impact on the revenue budget where external borrowing is required.

National Policy and Legislative Changes

2.51 The above forecasts are subject to changes from the following government activities:

- Economic and financial measures including the cost-of-living crisis
- Reform of Local Government Finance; and
- The progress of the 'Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill.
- The Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee report, Governing England (31 October 2022).

3. Options Considered

3.1 The budget-setting process is well rehearsed and has largely been successful in delivering a balanced budget and engaging with the public. There may be other alternatives but ultimately the Council must produce a budget which meets its statutory responsibilities.

4. Preferred Option and Reason

4.1 This report is the third in the formal budget-setting process which will be informed through consultation and research. Decisions on priorities and services will be communicated on a regular basis.

5. Consultation on Options

5.1 Early public engagement is essential to arrive at suitable feedback which can be developed in time to be incorporated within the budget. Information will be placed on the Council's website along with articles in Local which allows members of the public,

staff and businesses to provide their ideas for how to reduce spending and optimise income while protecting the quality of public services.

- 5.2 The Cabinet Advisory Boards and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will continue to provide a good source of challenge in developing the budget and to the level of service provided.
- 5.3 Cabinet draft budget proposals will be tested through a budget survey which will be publicised and available both on the Council's website and in printed format on request. The closing date for the budget survey will be 20 January 2023.

6. Implementation

- 6.1 This report sets out the mechanism by which Cabinet will deliver its service and budget strategy. The draft budget proposals will be considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee in November 2022. Final proposals for the budget will be agreed by Cabinet in February 2023 and proposed for approval by Full Council in March 2023.

7. Appendices and Background Documents

Appendices:

- Appendix A: Draft Budget by Service
- Appendix B: Draft Budget by Portfolio
- Appendix C: Medium-Term Budget Forecast

Background Papers:

- None

8. Cross Cutting Issues

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Legal including Human Rights Act	The Five-Year Plan and budget form part of the Council's Policy Framework.	Director of Finance, Policy and Development, 4 November 2022
Finance and other resources	This report forms part of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.	Director of Finance, Policy and

		Development, 4 November 2022
Staffing establishment	Where savings proposals impact on staff then this will be managed in accordance with Human Resources policies.	Director of Finance, Policy and Development, 4 November 2022
Risk management	An assessment of the risk factors underpinning the budget will accompany the final budget report. The Strategic Risk Register also includes a risk on funding streams which is being monitored by Cabinet and the Audit and Governance Committee.	Director of Finance, Policy and Development, 4 November 2022
Environment and sustainability	The budget has regard to the environmental sustainability priorities within the Five-Year Plan.	Director of Finance, Policy and Development, 4 November 2022
Community safety	The budget has regard to the community safety priorities within the Five-Year Plan.	Director of Finance, Policy and Development, 4 November 2022
Health and Safety	The budget has regard to the Health and Safety obligations and priorities within the Five-Year Plan.	Director of Finance, Policy and Development, 4 November 2022
Health and wellbeing	The budget has regard to the health and wellbeing priorities within the Five-Year Plan.	Director of Finance, Policy and Development, 4 November 2022
Equalities	Changes to service delivery may impact on equalities; however, heads of service will ensure that an equality assessment is in place where this has been identified.	Director of Finance, Policy and Development, 4 November 2022