

Written statement of a budget and policy framework decision

Title	2024/25 Budget, Medium Term Financial and Treasury Management Strategy - Revenue
Decision maker	<p>Cabinet for recommendation to Council on 9 February 2024</p> <p>* Information about cabinet, including the names and contact details of the cabinet members, can be found here:</p> <p>http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=251</p>
Date of decision	25 January 2024
Report exemption class	
<p>A notice was served in accordance with Part 3, Section 9 (Publicity in connection with key decisions) of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.</p>	
General exception or special urgency (as defined in the constitution)	No
Purpose	To recommend to Council the proposed 2024/25 revenue budget, Medium Term Financial Strategy and the Treasury Management Strategy
Decision	<p>That Cabinet recommend to Council for approval:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the council tax base of 71,999.97 Band D equivalents in 2024/25; b) an increase in core council tax for 2024/25 of 2.99%; c) an additional precept in respect of adult social care costs of 2% applied to council tax in 2024/25 resulting in a total council tax increase of 4.99%, increasing the band D charge from £1,786.61 to £1,875.76 for Herefordshire Council in 2024/25; d) the balanced 2024/25 revenue budget proposal totalling £207.7 million, subject to any amendments approved at the meeting, specifically the net spending limits for each directorate as at appendix C; e) delegates to the section 151 officer the power to make necessary changes to the budget arising from any variations in central government funding allocations via general reserves;

	<p>f) the allocation of additional funding of £2.5 million announced in the Local Government Settlement in December 2023 to support strategic housing (£1.0 million), to reverse planned parking charge increases (£400k), an allocation of £300k to the Leominster Heritage Action Zone, removal of proposed savings in Community Wellbeing to reduce library hours (£55k), £56k to provide funding officer resource to identify external funding opportunities, £200k of funding to support the community and voluntary sector across Herefordshire and a £500k transfer to the Financial Resilience Reserve.</p> <p>g) the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2024/25 to 2027/28 at appendix A be approved;</p> <p>h) the Treasury Management Strategy at appendix D be approved; and</p> <p>i) the responses to scrutiny committee recommendations to follow in a supplementary paper to be approved;</p> <p>j) following the announcement by Government on 24 January of additional measures for local authorities, the allocation of £1,835k additional Social Care Grant to a Social Care Resilience Reserve and £945k increase in Rural Services Grant to provide additional funding for the lengthsman scheme (£250k), additional funding for drainage works across the county (£445k) and improvements to Public Rights of Way (£250k).</p>
Reason for the decision	<p>As set out in the report. Documents relating to this decision are available at</p> <p>http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?Id=50047053</p>
Options considered	<p>1. It is open to Cabinet to recommend alternative spending proposals or strategies; however, given the legal requirement to set a balanced budget, should additional expenditure be proposed compensatory savings proposals must also be identified. If it is proposed to spend less, the impact on service delivery of the proposed reduction should be considered.</p> <p>2. Cabinet can agree a council tax increase above the referendum principle levels. This is not recommended as doing so would require the increase to be subject to a local referendum, incurring additional costs to the council.</p>
Declarations of interest (see below)	
Call-in expiry date	<p>Budget and policy framework item</p> <p>Under part 4, section 3 of the constitution, this decision is not subject to the usual call-in procedure as it is a budget and policy framework item and therefore must be decided at a meeting of the</p>

	full Council.
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Councillor:	Date 25 January 2024
Leader of the Council (Councillor Jonathan Lester)	

- a record of any conflict of interest declared by any executive member who is consulted by the member which relates to the decision;
- and
- in respect of any declared conflict of interest, a note of dispensation granted.