

Open

Cabinet

Agenda

**To be held remotely
6PM
Tuesday, 23rd March 2021**



Wyre Forest District Council



Cabinet

The Cabinet Members and their responsibilities:-

Councillor G Ballinger	Leader of the Council & Strategy, Culture & Leisure
Councillor H Dyke	Deputy Leader & Economic Regeneration, Planning & Localism
Councillor N Martin	Housing, Health, Well-being & Democratic Services
Councillor M Rayner	Finance & Capital Portfolio
Councillor J Thomas	Operational Services

Scrutiny of Decisions of the Cabinet

The Council has one Scrutiny Committee that has power to investigate policy issues and question members of the Cabinet who have special responsibility for a particular area of the Council's activities. The Cabinet also considers recommendations from this Committee.

In accordance with Section 10 of the Council's Constitution, Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, and Standing Order 2.4 of Section 7, any item on this agenda may be scrutinised by the Scrutiny Committee if it is "called in" by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and any other three non-Cabinet members.

The deadline for "calling in" Cabinet decisions is 5pm on Tuesday 6th April 2021.

Councillors wishing to "call in" a decision on this agenda should contact Louisa Bright, Principal Committee and Member Services Officer, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster. Telephone: 01562 732763 or email louisa.bright@wyreforestdc.gov.uk

Urgent Key Decisions

If the Cabinet needs to take an urgent key decision, the consent of the Scrutiny Committee Chairman must be obtained. If the Scrutiny Committee Chairman is unable to act the Chairman of the Council or in his/her absence the Vice-Chairman of the Council, must give consent. Such decisions will not be the subject to the call in procedure.

Declaration of Interests by Members – interests of members in contracts and other matters

Declarations of Interest are a standard item on every Council and Committee agenda and each Member must provide a full record of their interests in the Public Register.

In addition, alongside the Register of Interest, the Members Code of Conduct ("the Code") requires the Declaration of Interests at meetings. Members have to decide first whether or not they have a disclosable interest in the matter under discussion.

Please see the Members' Code of Conduct as set out in Section 14 of the Council's constitution for full details.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) / Other Disclosable Interest (ODI)

DPI's and ODI's are interests defined in the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the District.

If you have a DPI (as defined in the Code) in a matter being considered at a meeting of the Council (as defined in the Code), the Council's Standing Orders require you to leave the room where the meeting is held, for the duration of any discussion or voting on that matter.

If you have an ODI (as defined in the Code) you will need to consider whether you need to leave the room during the consideration of the matter.

1. The Cabinet meeting is open to the public except for any exempt/confidential items. These items are normally discussed at the end of the meeting. Where a meeting is held remotely, "open" means available for live or subsequent viewing.
2. Members of the public will be able to hear and see the meetings by a live stream on the Council's website:

<https://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/streaming.aspx>

3. This meeting is being held remotely online and will be recorded for play back. You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act 2018. All streamed footage is the copyright of Wyre Forest District Council.

For further information

If you have any queries about this Agenda or require any details of background papers, further documents or information you should contact Louisa Bright, Principal Committee and Member Services Officer, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster, DY11 7WF. Telephone: 01562 732763 or email louisa.bright@wyreforestdc.gov.uk

Documents referred to in this agenda may be viewed on the Council's website - www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/council/meetings/main.htm

Wyre Forest District Council

Cabinet

Tuesday, 23rd March 2021

To be held remotely

Part 1

Open to the press and public

Agenda item	Subject	Page Number
1.	Apologies for Absence	
2.	Declarations of Interests by Members In accordance with the Code of Conduct, to invite Members to declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI's) and / or Other Disclosable Interests (ODI's) in the following agenda items and indicate the action that they will be taking when the item is considered. Please see the Members' Code of Conduct as set out in Section 14 of the Council's Constitution for full details.	
3.	Minutes To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on the 9th February 2021.	7
4.	CALL INS a verbal update will be given on any decisions which have been "called in" since the last meeting of the Cabinet.	
5.	Items Requiring Urgent Attention To consider any item which, in the opinion of the Chairman requires consideration at the meeting as a matter of urgency.	
6.	Public Participation In accordance with the Council's Scheme for Public Speaking at Meetings of Full Council/Cabinet, to allow members of the public to present petitions, ask questions, or make statements, details of which have been received by 12 noon on Monday 15 th March 2021. (See front cover for contact details).	

7.		
	Councillor M Rayner	
7.1	Budget Monitoring Third Quarter 2020-21 To consider a report from the Corporate Director: Resources on the Council's financial performance for Quarters 1 to 3 ending 31st December 2020 and to present the current projected outturn position for the 2020-21 financial year for both revenue and capital expenditure. <i>The appendices to this report have been circulated electronically.</i>	14

8.		
	Councillor H Dyke	
8.1	Review of Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) To consider a report from the Community Services Manager to invite members to consider whether the Council should make any changes to Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) following the review after a 6-month period of implementation and results of the consultation process. To also consider recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee from its meeting on 4 th March 2021. <i>The appendices to this report have been circulated electronically.</i>	30 33

9.		
	Councillor N Martin	
9.1	Green Homes Grant – Local Authority Delivery Scheme Phase 2 To consider a report from the Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity and Place to recommend amending the Capital Programme to enable the distribution of the Green Homes Grant, Local Authority Delivery Scheme Phase 2.	34
10.	To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Solicitor to the Council before the commencement of the meeting, which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.	

11.	Exclusion of the Press and Public To consider passing the following resolution: “That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of “exempt information” as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act”.	
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Part 2

Not open to the Press and Public

12.		
12.1	To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Solicitor to the Council before the commencement of the meeting, which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.	

**WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
CABINET
HELD REMOTELY
9TH FEBRUARY 2021 (6PM)**

Present:

Councillors: G W Ballinger (Chairman), H E Dyke (Vice-Chairman), N Martin and J W R Thomas.

Observers:

Councillors: C J Barnett, J F Byng, R H Coleman, N J Desmond, S Griffiths, I Hardiman, M J Hart, K Henderson, S Miah, F M Oborski MBE, M Rayner, C Rogers, L Whitehouse and P W M Young.

CAB.52 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

CAB.53 Declarations of Interests by Members

No declarations of interest were made.

CAB.54 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 22nd December 2020 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

CAB.55 Call Ins

No decisions had been called in since the last Cabinet meeting.

CAB.56 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

There were no items requiring urgent attention.

CAB.57 Public Participation

There was no public participation.

CAB.58 Future High Streets Fund

A report was considered from the Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity & Place following the announcement of the Council's successful bid for Future High Streets Fund (FHSF) monies and to recommend a consequential amendment to the Capital Programme.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning and Capital Investments and for Localism, presented the report which set out the full background details of the bid and outlined the proposed project delivery and governance arrangements for delivering FHSF programme in the agreed time line.

She reminded members that the Council was notified on 26th December 2020 it had been successful with its submission to Government for the newly FHSF. She explained that the Council was one of 15 successful applicants to be awarded funding unconditionally; 57 further projects had only received provisional funding.

Councillor I Hardiman joined the meeting at this point.

She added that the Council had received the full funding request, which was the fifth highest award of all the bidders. The projects comprising the bid was the improvement of the former Crown House site and bull ring; the acquisition of key properties in Worcester Street to improve access to the Lionfields site in Bromsgrove Street and the refurbishment of the old magistrates court and indoor market on Worcester Street.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning and Capital Investments and for Localism, formally moved the recommendations for approval; she said that the project had to be one of the most exciting things that Wyre Forest District Council had been involved in for many years and hoped her Cabinet colleagues would support the proposals.

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Health, Well-being and Democratic Services said it was an excellent project and looked forward to it going forward.

The Leader of the Council seconded the recommendations which were unanimously supported by the Cabinet.

Decision: The Cabinet RECOMMEND to Council:

- 1.1 That the Capital Programme is amended to accommodate the sum of £21.761m to ensure the delivery of the Future High Streets Fund programme of initiatives. Funding will be met from the £20.51m external funding award and £1.25m allocation following the principles of, but in addition to, the existing Capital Portfolio Fund for co-funding from this Council.**

Cabinet AGREED:

- 1.2 To delegate authority to the Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity & Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning & Capital Investments to establish the governance arrangements set out in the report to oversee the delivery of the Future High Streets Fund programme;**
- 1.3 To delegate authority to the said Director in consultation with said Cabinet Member to take decisions as required to ensure that**

the projects comprising the Future High Streets Fund programme are delivered, including, but not limited to:

- a) The appointment of specialist advisers (in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedures);**
- b) The preparation of specifications and procurement of contractors (in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedures);**
- c) The soft testing of the most appropriate delivery model for the commercial development sites associated with the FHSF works;**
- d) The soft testing of the most appropriate delivery model for the future operation of the former Magistrates' Court building.**

CAB.59 Pay and Grading Review

A report was considered from the Chief Executive to make recommendations to Council in respect of approval and implementation of the pay and grading review and associated personnel issues.

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Health, Well-being and Democratic Services presented the report and formally moved the recommendations for approval.

She said it was an aim of the Administration to ensure that Council staff were appropriately paid for the work they do and as such Council agreed in 2019 that the authority would apply the national pay increases from April 2021. It was also agreed that there would be a pay and grading review in order to modernise the Council's pay structure and ensure that staff on the lowest paid jobs within the authority were lifted above the national living wage.

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Health, Well-being and Democratic Services said she was delighted that there was overwhelming support from the Union ballots and that a collective agreement had been reached. She said that whilst most staff members would benefit from the review, the lowest paid will benefit the most. She explained that there were a few staff who would be adversely affected and an arrangement had been agreed to protect their pay for 18 months.

In conclusion, she said that the Council's staff continually go the extra mile and whatever is asked of them; they deliver. She said it was appropriate that the Council should recognise the contribution of its staff for their hard work during the pandemic with a one-off payment.

The Leader seconded the proposals. He said the agreement of the pay and grading review was a substantial achievement for the authority going forward. He acknowledged the hard work that had gone into the process by Trade Unions, the Human Resources Team, Chief Executive, and the Cabinet

Member.

Decision: The Cabinet RECOMMEND to Council that:

- 1.1**
- a) it approves the implementation of the pay and grading review, as summarised in appendix 1;**
 - b) it approves a non-consolidated COVID response acknowledgement payment of £125 for every employee who was employed continuously between 26 March 2020 and 31 December 2020 and who undertook regular work during that period, other than staff on the Deputy Chief Officer grade or higher;**
 - c) it adopts the revised pay policy statement for the financial year 2020-21 and each subsequent financial year, until it is amended by Council (appendix 2).**

**CAB.60 Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021-2024
Capital Strategy 2021-2031**

A report was considered from the Corporate Director: Resources which provided an update on the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2021-2024 and sought to make recommendations to Council on the proposed budget decision. The report also sought approval of the Capital Strategy for 2021-2031 including prudential indicators which set limits for non-financial investments and to fulfil the key requirements of the MHCLG Investment Guidance.

The Leader presented the report and formally moved the recommendations for approval. He said the report presented the Cabinet Budget proposals to balance the books following one of the most challenging years in Wyre Forest District Council's history. It included recommendations for both the Revenue budget and the Capital Strategy.

He added that the Council had already been facing a £1.7 million shortfall by 2022-23 before Covid-19 struck, putting extra demands on services and resources and drastically reducing income. And although Government funding had offset some of the costs of the pandemic, it did not cover all costs and losses incurred and the funding gap was now forecast to increase to £2.7m by the end of 2023-24.

The Leader said the Final Settlement was issued on Thursday 4th February and would be debated in parliament tomorrow. There were no significant changes from the Provisional Settlement which provided additional one-off funding for 2021-22 of £869k. He explained that disappointingly there was no flexibility to allow the discretion for districts to approve slightly higher council tax increases without a referendum. He added that the new funding, however was very welcome but would not fundamentally change the Council's funding position as the new funding was for one-year only. He added that table 6.2 of the report showed variations to the December Cabinet report.

In conclusion he said that this MTFS was set against the greatest uncertainty and resultant risk the Council had ever faced. The Cabinet proposals represent a realistic way forward that will allow the authority to balance the books in the wake of the most challenging period in the Council's history

The Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning and Capital Investments and for Localism seconded the proposals.

Decision: The CABINET having re-considered the Financial Strategy 2021-2024, the results of the Budget consultation exercise, alternative budget proposal and recommendations of the Strategic Review Panel RECOMMENDS TO COUNCIL that it:

1.1 THREE YEAR BUDGET, CAPITAL STRATEGY AND POLICY FRAMEWORK 2021-2024

1.1.1 APPROVES the updated Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2021-2024;

1.1.2 APPROVES the Cabinet Proposals – taking into account the impact on the Council's Capital and Revenue Budgets for 2021-2024 as shown in the tables in paragraphs 6.1 and 6.3 and as set out below:

- a) Approval of a further programme of phased savings for the strategic repositioning of the Council from the Wyre Forest Forward Savings Programme included in tables 6.3 and 6.5.1 of £0.8m in 2021-22, £1.2m in 2022-23, £1.5m in 2023-24 ongoing after this year;**
- b) Approval of £200k generic capital budget to support expansion of the Council's income generating activity, to be funded from prudential borrowing with the revenue costs met from within approved financially viable business cases. The Innovation Fund will be used to fund any one-off revenue business case costs.**
- c) Approval of a reduced Community Leadership Fund of £16.5k being £500 per Councillor in 2021-22, followed by £8.5k being £250 per Councillor in 2022-23 and zero thereafter.**

1.1.3 APPROVES the fees and charges in line with this Strategy and in line with the recommendations of the Licensing and Environmental Committee of 9th December 2020, and the impact on the Council's Revenue Budget for 2021-2024, as shown in Appendix 3;

1.1.4 APPROVES The removal of the priority about affordable housing from the Corporate Plan as set out in Appendix 6.

1.1.5 APPROVES the Council's updated Capital Strategy including the

following indicators and limits that will be further revised for the February 2021 Council Meeting following any changes to the Capital Programme brought about as a result of the budget process:

- a) Approval of the Capital Strategy 2021-2031 including the associated Quantitative Indicators in Appendix 2 of the December Cabinet report;
- b) Approval of variations to the Capital Programme and Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewals Schedule as set out in Appendix 2 of the report (which updates Appendix 1, Appendices A and B of the Capital Strategy report to December 2020 Cabinet);
- c) Approval of the limits for gross debt of non treasury investments compared to net service expenditure and for commercial income as a percentage of net service expenditure as set out in Appendix 2 of the December report;
- d) Approval of the limits for loan investments as set out in paragraph 5.1 of the 22nd December 2020 report.

1.1.6 APPROVES that any Final Accounts savings arising from 2020-2024 over and above the target allowed for in the Council's Financial Strategy, together with surplus Earmarked Reserves, be allocated by the Corporate Director: Resources in consultation with the Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy and Finance;

1.1.7 The General Fund Revenue Budget be APPROVED including all updates from the position in December 2020 as set out in the report.

1.2 COUNCIL TAX AND BUSINESS RATES

1.2.1

- a) SETS the Council Tax for Wyre Forest District Council on a Band D Property at £224.34 for 2021-2022 (£219.34 2020-2021) which represents an increase of 2.28% on Council Tax from 2020-2021.
- b) ENDORSES the provisional Council Tax on a Band D Property in 2022-2023 of £229.34 and £234.34 in 2023-2024, being increases of 2.23% and 2.18% respectively.

1.2.2 NOTES the Corporate Director: Resources (as Chief Financial Officer) opinion on the budget proposals, recommended by the Cabinet in the report, as detailed in Appendix 4 of the report.

1.2.3 NOTES that the Local Council Tax Support Grant in 2021-22 will initially be added to General Fund Reserves to offset the Collection Fund loss as a result of the reduction in Council Tax

Base and APPROVAL of delegation to the Corporate Director: Resources in liaison with the Cabinet Member for Strategy and Finance to divert any portion of this for Hardship relief if appropriate.

1.3 Cabinet APPROVED that:

1.3.1 Delegated authority is given to the Corporate Director: Resources, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Strategy and Finance/Leader of the Council, to make any appropriate adjustments to the General Fund Revenue Budget recommended under paragraph 1.1.7 above, as a result of any further notifications from Central Government.

1.4 The Cabinet NOTED in line with the recommendations of the Strategic Review Panel:

1.4.1 The Alternative budget proposals as detailed within Appendix 5 of the report, further noting that updated versions as appropriate will be provided for Full Council on the 24th February 2021.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 6.37pm.

The full meeting is available for viewing on the Council's website
<https://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/53298>

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

23rd MARCH 2021

Budget Monitoring Third Quarter 2020-21

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor M Rayner, Cabinet Member for Finance and Capital Portfolio
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Corporate Director: Resources
CONTACT OFFICERS:	Tracey Southall Ext. 2100 Tracey.southall@wyreforestdc.gov.uk Helen Ogram Ext. 2907 Helen.Ogram@wyreforestdc.gov.uk Lisa Hutchinson Ext. 2120 Lisa.Hutchinson@wyreforestdc.gov.uk Kath Pearsall Ext.2165 Kathryn.pearsall@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
APPENDICES:	Appendix 1 - Wyre Forest District Council Revenue Budget Total Requirements - District Council Purposes Appendix 2 - Budgetary Control Report - Revenue Appendix 3 - Capital Programme 2019-20 with slippage to 2020-21 Appendix 4 - Wyre Forest Forward Appendix 5 - Budget Risk Matrix Appendix 6 – Analysis of Outstanding Debt <i>The appendices to this report have been circulated electronically and a public inspection copy is available on request. (See front cover for details.)</i>

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to brief members on the Council's financial performance for Quarters 1 to 3 ending 31st December 2020 and to present the current projected outturn position for the 2020-21 financial year for both revenue and capital expenditure.

Revenue – the forecast outturn is an estimated net saving of £175,000 against the Revised Budget approved by Council 1st March 2021. There are no requests for approval of supplementary estimates.

Capital – the forecast outturn is £14.91m (£6.91m excluding the Capital Portfolio Fund and Development Loans Fund) against the Revised Programme approved by Council 24th February 2021 of £15.35m. £0.36m of this already re-phased programme is currently forecast to be re-profiled to future financial years, further the Capital Portfolio and Development Loans Fund Capital Budgets may slip; £8m is retained in the current year for maximum flexibility.

- 1.2 The report also briefs members on current progress against the savings and efficiency targets being delivered by the Wyre Forest Forward Programme and the Localism agenda. The Wyre Forest Forward target of £2.889m for 2020-21 has substantially been achieved. The balance of £96k was not included as a target in the revised budget, it will though be met from final account savings identified in this report (income growth planning/pay variances).
- 1.3 The report informs members of the Housing Benefit Overpayment debt position, the Sundry/General Property debt position and also the Capital Portfolio Fund debt collected and managed on our behalf by BNP Paribas as at 31st December 2020 (Quarter 3).
- **Housing Benefits overpayment recovery-** The total debt outstanding at 31st December 2020 is £1.522m which represents a 5.3% reduction over the balance outstanding at the end of Quarter 3 2019-20 (prior year).
 - **Sundry/Property Debt** - The total debt outstanding at 31st December 2020 was £0.87m which represents a 16.0% increase over the balance outstanding at the 31st December 2019 (Quarter 3). This figure includes debt within payment terms.
 - The overdue debt has increased by £119,450 (including debt within payment terms); compared to the same period in 2019-20.
 - **Capital Portfolio Fund Debt** (Externally managed only – Forest House and Goldthorn Road included in general property figures above)– The total overdue debt 31st December 2020 is £262,700 which represents 20% of the overall balance due.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is asked to DECIDE: -

- 2.1 That the projected budget variations and comments outlined within this report and appendices 2 to 6 be noted.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. Budget projections are reviewed regularly and reported to Cabinet on a quarterly basis. The 2020-21 Original Budget was approved as part of the 2020-23 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) by Council on 26th February 2020. The 2021-24 MTFS was presented to Cabinet on 22nd December 2020 for progression to the Strategic Review Panel for scrutiny on the 13th and 25th January 2021. The final draft was endorsed by Cabinet on 9th February and approved by Council on the 1st March 2021. The 2021-24 MTFS incorporated growth and savings items that are impacting on 2020-21 budgets and presents the 2020-21 Revised Budget. Performance is measured against the Revised Current Year Budget presented within the 2021-24 Strategy (Appendix 1). The current forecast shows an underspend against the Revised Budget of £175,000. This takes into account the costs of the one-off recognition payment to staff of £49k that can be funded by forecast pay savings as set out in the Cabinet Report on the 9th February 2021 and approved by Council on 24th February

2021. Reduced expenditure budgets and revised income targets included within the Revised Budget reduce the likelihood of further under spends/over achievement of income at Final Outturn for 2020-21 however the revised assessment is still based on a wide range of assumptions, predicted patterns of cost, service demand and behaviours. The on-going pandemic has been a huge drain on resources and has resulted in delays to normal work programmes and a revision of priorities and plans. The outturn position is very difficult to quantify with confidence due to the on-going impact of the pandemic and the latest national lock-down. Indications are that forecasts are proving to be robust, but it is highly likely that some of the forecasts will be reset before the end of the financial year.

- 3.2. The balanced budget approved by Council focuses on ensuring that the Council optimises the full range of income sources that affect its overall budget including Council Tax and Business Rates revenue, external specific grants, fees and charges and other elements of income from commercial activities including returns from property and treasury investments.
- 3.3. Wyre Forest District Council is a member of the Pan Worcestershire business rates pool and receives a share of any growth in rateable value achieved. Any gain will be shared between the County Council, the Fire authority and the 6 District Councils.
- 3.4. The year to date monitoring shows that income from business rates payers will be significantly lower than estimated, this will result in a deficit on the collection fund and our share will be recouped from the General Fund in 2021-22 with a proportion being spread to 2022-23 and 2023-24. The Government has paid S31 grant and is providing a 75% co-funding tax income guarantee to compensate for this loss. The S31 grant in respect of retail reliefs granted as part of the Covid-19 support package to businesses (circa £7.5m) will be carried forward in the Business Rates equalisation reserve to fund the deficit created, payable in 2021-22 due to the lagging inherent in the business rates retention scheme. The position in relation to year-end provisions for appeals cannot be estimated with accuracy at this time so this could result in further variances that will be reported as part of the Final Accounts process.
- 3.5. The 2021-24 Medium Term Financial Strategy makes prudent assumptions about the income stream that is expected to be generated from the Capital Portfolio Fund and the Development Loans Fund. Covid-19 has had a significant impact on some of our tenants and we currently have a large arrears balance. To recognise the possibility that a proportion of these debts will never be recovered we have made allowance in the MTFS for an increased contribution to the bad debt provision in the current financial year. Discussions with tenants are on-going and we are optimistic that we will be able to recover a significant proportion of the current arrears. The uncertainty and ongoing risk to these income streams is recognised and being managed as far as possible. Jones Valerio, our property specialist advisors, have developed a suite of performance reports, presented to Cabinet on a quarterly basis and Overview and Scrutiny Committee bi-annually. We continue to work with our advisors to ensure that current financial performance, specifically the impact on the MTFS, of the fund is clearly presented.
- 3.6. A revised Capital Strategy 2021-31 was presented to Cabinet in December 2020 and was approved by Council on 1st March 2021. The revised Strategy covers all capital expenditure and also sets out reporting and planning for financial risk implications in relation to non-treasury investments.

4. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

4.1 Overview

The monthly budget monitoring includes the forecast position for the current financial year. Revenue summary shows net expenditure by Directorate and where some costs are funded by reserves this is incorporated.

Revenue The Revised budget is £11.765m and the forecast outturn is £11.590m which is an under spend of £175k.

Capital The original approved programme was £9.45m. Slippage from 2019-20 totalled £22.01m and includes £7.68m from the Capital Portfolio Fund and £10m from the Development Loans Fund. The 2020-21 updated budget is currently £15.35m. The updated Capital Programme and Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewal Schedule for 2020-21, including slippage from 2019-20 are enclosed as Appendix 3.

4.2 The ongoing impact of COVID-19

4.2.1 The table below summarises the refreshed estimate of the overall impact of the ongoing pandemic on the Council's financial position.

4.2.2 Pre the pandemic the Council has done exceptionally well in generating additional income and implementing efficiency savings that have put back the date at which it has to bring its expenditure into line with income. However, in the absence of additional Government funding the impact of COVID-19 is that the Council will exhaust its general balances within the lifetime of the MTFS, early in 2023-24 unless savings and efficiency targets are met.

Agenda Item No. 7.1

	2020-21 £	2021-22 £	2022-23 £	2023-24 £
COVID-19				
Additional Costs (Excluding funding gap (WFF) targets not achieved and Leisure costs)	579,470	16,870		
Estimated additional costs of Leisure provision subject to reconciliation	611,100			
WF Forward Savings not achieved	168,310			
Loss of Income - Leisure Centre	581,720			
Covid related pressures		700,000		
Loss of non Collection Fund Income (excluding Leisure)	1,254,800	393,430		
Loss of HB Overpayments/ increased bad debt provision	675,200	225,000		
Loss of WFDC share of Council Tax (including extra CTRS costs)	285,300	67,000		
Loss of Tax Base Reduced CTax Income		104,310	129,580	155,840
Loss of WFDC share of Business Rates	819,300	253,410	254,000	283,000
Expenditure in relation to EDRF Town Centre Funding (max)	90,200			
Total COVID costs/Lost Income	5,065,400	1,760,020	383,580	438,840
Reduced costs and extra income as a result of Covid	- 207,000			
Net COVID costs/Lost Income	4,858,400	1,760,020	383,580	438,840
Government Funding not pass ported				
Emergency Grant Funding Received in 2020-21 (note £50k accounted for in 2019-20 but costs in 2020-21)	- 1,603,970			
New Burdens Funding	- 130,000			
EDRF Town Centre Funding (max)	- 90,200			
Income Co-Funding	- 1,110,560	- 383,940		
Homelessness	- 4,500			
Additional Housing benefit on Homelessness expenditure	- 89,000			
Additional COVID Grant 2021-22 (announced at settlement)		- 563,800		
Spread of 2020-21 Council Tax Collection Fund Losses over 3 years (CTax)	- 285,300	95,100	95,100	95,100
New Tax Income Guarantee (75% of qualifying losses) (CTax)	- 17,000			
Settlement - Council Tax Support Grant		- 184,250		
NNDR Irrecoverable Loss spread over 3 years	- 819,300	273,100	273,100	273,100
New Tax Income Guarantee (75% of qualifying losses) (NDR)	- 350,000			
Total COVID Funding	-4,499,830	- 763,790	368,200	368,200
Net Impact COVID	358,570	996,230	751,780	807,040

4.3 Summary Revenue Forecast variances by Directorate

4.3.1 The following table details the current projected outturn position and variances against the Revised Budget for each Directorate and the Capital Account approved by Council on 1st March 2021.

Agenda Item No. 7.1

DIRECTORATE	Original Budget	Revised Budget	Estimated Outturn	Variance Revised to Est.Out
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Community and Environmental Services	4,422	1,907	1,873	(34)
Resources	3,690	6,593	6,601	8
Economic Prosperity and Place*	2,370	2,973	2,793	(180)
Chief Executive and Solicitor to the Council	1,374	3,626	3,608	(18)
Capital Account	(392)	(619)	(619)	0
COVID Support grants		(2,715)	(2,715)	0
Corporate costs - recognition payment			49	49
TOTALS	11,464	11,765	11,590	(175)

Underspends and income denoted by ()

- * The Economic Prosperity and Place line in the table above includes an adjustment to replace depreciation with the statutory Minimum Revenue provision (MRP) and debt interest charges for the Capital Portfolio fund properties rather than these being included in the Capital Account.

The full year outturn projection based on Quarter 1 to 3 income and expenditure analysis (at 31st December 2020) is an over spend of £126k against the original budget and £175k underspend against the current approved (Revised) budget after COVID support grants are taken into account.

The following budget pressures and savings against revised budget have been identified:

COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Service Area	Detail	Cost Pressure £	Income shortfall £	Cost Reduction £	Income Growth £
Car Parks	Fewer reactive repairs and saving on security services due to reduced ticket receipts			(22,000)	
Civil and Environmental enforcement	Increased number of tickets issued				(15,000)
Landscaping Services	Additional external work awarded				(10,000)
Arboricultural Services	Lower uptake of service due to 2nd national lock down		30,000		
Driver Training	No demand, trainer redeployed to cover shielding/isolating frontline staff		23,000		
Cemetery	National Assistance Act burials			(7,500)	
Trade & Garden Waste	Additional demand and reduced tipping charges				(24,400)
Domestic Waste	Operational expenses	11,800			
Bewdley Museum	Shop profits - impact of 2nd National Lockdown		10,000		
Various	Pay variations			(30,000)	
		11,800	63,000	(59,500)	(49,400)
		Total Variance			(34,100)

Resources

Service Area	Detail	Cost Pressure £	Income shortfall £	Cost Reduction £	Income Growth £
ICT Various	Telephone recharges to staff Pay variations		9,500	(2,000)	
		0	9,500	(2,000)	0
		Total Variance			7,500

Economic Prosperity and Place

Service Area	Detail	Cost Pressure £	Income shortfall £	Cost Reduction £	Income Growth £
Land Charges Street naming Planning (DC) Housing Homelessness service	Fee income				(14,000)
	Revised income projection				(17,500)
	Fee income				(56,500)
	Private sector housing HMO's				(7,450)
	Revision of demand and confirmation of funding from County Council			(78,000)	
Property (General)	Longer voids between leases and associated costs of ownership	5,100	18,300		
Miscellaneous	Small variations			(15,000)	
Various	Pay variations			(15,000)	
		5,100	18,300	(108,000)	(95,450)
		Total Variance			(180,050)

Chief Executive and Solicitor to the Council

Service Area	Detail	Cost Pressure £	Income shortfall £	Cost Reduction £	Income Growth £
Member Allowances Various	Assumed uplift revised downwards to reflect agreement Pay variations			(15,680)	
				(2,000)	
		0	0	(17,680)	0
		Total Variance			(17,680)

4.4 Earmarked Reserves

4.4.1 The Council's earmarked reserves totalled £8.715m at 1st April 2020. The total balance remaining uncommitted at 31st December 2020, when MTFS 2021-24 transfers are included is £5.898m.

4.4.2 A General Risk Reserve is held to meet one-off unexpected costs and to manage most future operational risks. Allocations against the reserve are approved by the Corporate Leadership Team. Following in year allocations and top-ups the current level of the General Risk Reserve is £585k.

EARMARKED RESERVES	Quarter 3 Summary of Funding				
	Total Reserves at 1st April £000	Contribution to Reserves £000	Expenditure To Q3 £000	Commitments £000	Reserve Remaining £000
External Funding	1,393	311	262	900	542
External Funding/WFDC Budget	201	0	14	73	114
Shared Service	542	0	49	304	189
WFDC Budget	6,110	433	153	1,922	4,468
General Risk Reserves	469	150	(57) *	91	585
TOTAL	8,715	894	421	3,290	5,898

*Transfer from service specific reserve to General Risk reserve following CLT review

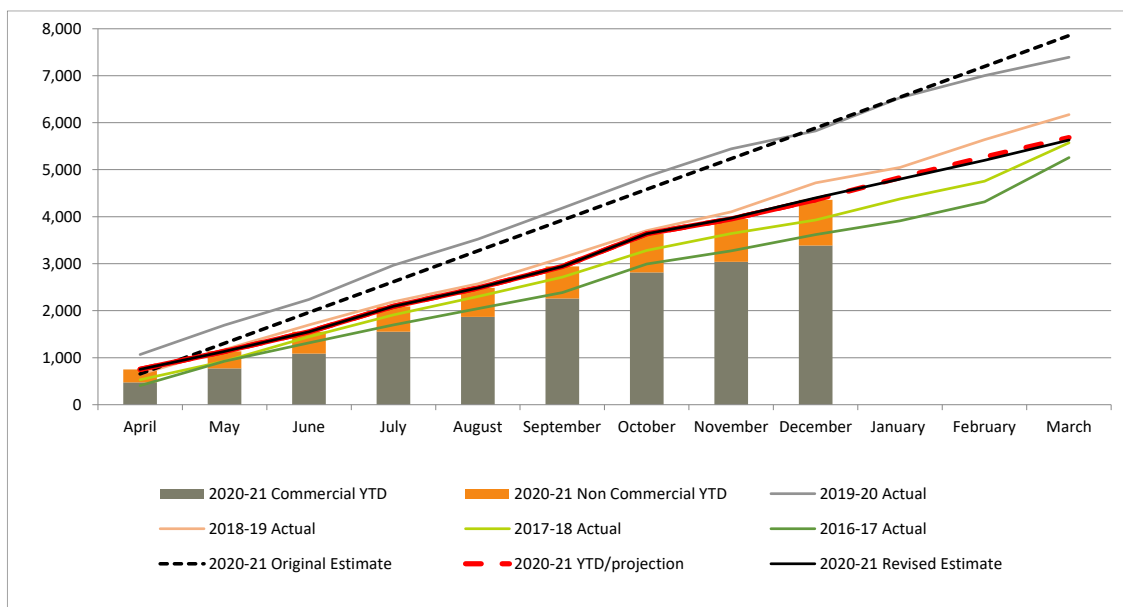
- 4.4.3 In addition to the contributions to reserves identified above there will be a further significant contribution to the Business Rates Equalisation reserve at the financial year end. The Section 31 grant received in year in respect of the additional retail reliefs granted to business rate payers as a COVID-19 relief measure needs to be carried forward to off-set the collection fund deficit created in 2020-21 and charged to the General Fund in 2021-22. We anticipate that circa £7.5m will be transferred.

4.5 External Income Performance

- 4.5.1 External Income is an important element within the finances of the Council, it affects the level of resources available to fund services and makes an important contribution to a balanced budget. The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact during the year to date, the impact is on-going and uncertain. The level of external income projected for 2020-21 at quarter 3 is £5,683k (original budget £7,852k, revised budget £5,629k), against a 2019-20 actual performance of £7,391k.

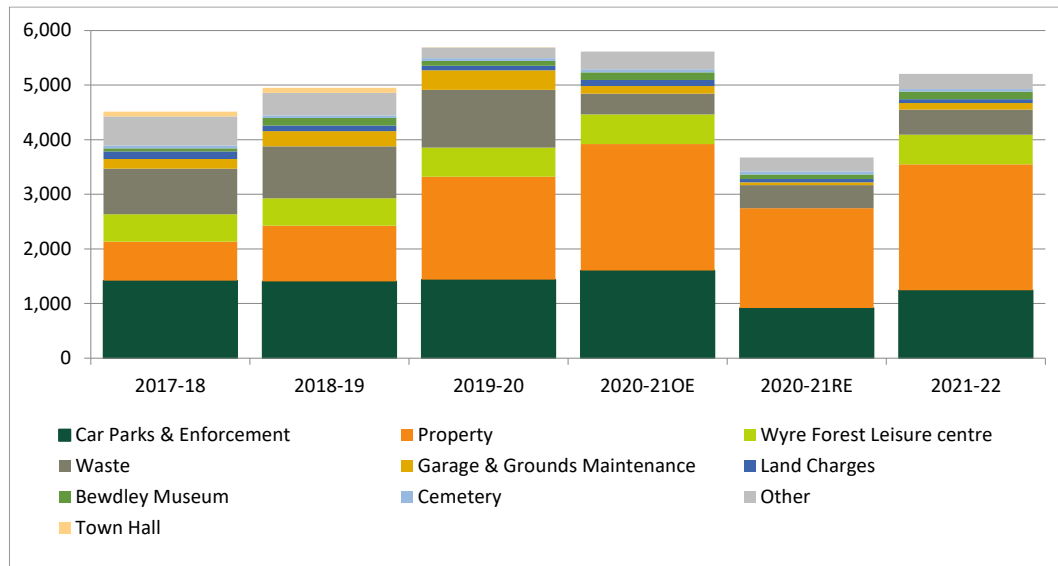
- 4.5.2 The previous success of the income generation work and the extent of the shortfall against previous targets is shown in the graph below.

Gross Income (Commercial and Non-Commercial) 2016-17 to 2020-21



- 4.5.3 The Council has expanded its commercial activities in recent years to generate revenue that reduces net cost releasing resources in order to help close the funding gap or be reinvested in Council Services. However, as set out above in the graph above and the table at 4.2.2, the COVID pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on demand for services and has severely reduced receipts in the current year. This has meant that future projections have been re-forecast resulting in a revised projection of £5.683m compared to an original estimate of £7.852m for the year (against an actual of £7.392m in 2019-20). The full year projection for 2020-21 is 23% below that achieved in 2019-20 and 28% (or £2.169m) below the original estimate. This loss is mitigated to some extent by the 75% fees and charges income guarantee scheme but the Government's 75% co-funding does not cover all of the income streams nor all of the income lost. Current calculations suggest that we will receive circa £1.11m in government support this financial year leaving a shortfall of £1.06m or 13%. We have currently received £471k, been allocated a further £378k, and anticipate a further allocation of £261k to cover the period until the 31st March. Some fixed costs have been transferred to provide resilience in other direct services and some costs have been allayed to partially reduce shortfall in the net position (see table at paragraph 4.5.10).
- 4.5.4 Due to the third unexpected lockdown there will be an overspend in the Council's support for the leisure centre losses this year of up to circa £100k. Estimates are still being finalised in liaison with Strategic Leisure and Places Leisure so this is an early forecast. It is anticipated that a proportion can be offset by the external funding reported below. *Note this is an emerging issue and so the potential overspend and also the grant detailed below are not included in draft tables or appendix 2. Unspent grant will be carried forward to be allocate in the 2021-22 financial year.*
- 4.5.5 The Council has recently received confirmation that funding has been secured from Sport England's National Leisure Recovery Fund to support the re-opening of Wyre Forest Leisure centre when national restrictions are lifted. The grant will help to fund the recovery from the adverse effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. The funding can be used to offset the impact of the third lockdown January to March 2021 (restrictions apply) and also to help facilitate the continued opening of the facilities and activities once the lockdown roadmap allows so the balance will be carried forward to the 2021-22 budget. Total funding allocated is £200,000 revenue grant and £1.5k Monitoring and Evaluation Grant. It is expected that the £200,000 will be passported to Places Leisure Ltd and the smaller grant is to cover costs of preparation of monitoring/detailed analysis reports required by the grant provider. The approved budget did not include an estimate of this grant as it was too early to predict what the level of this funding would be, but it will be used to fund unbudgeted expenditure so there should be no impact on the reported bottom line.
- 4.5.6 Whilst this grant award is very much welcomed, it is too early to determine the impact on the 2021-22 budget which currently assumes the Leisure Centre will be open and fully operational from April 2021-22 with the contract payment to the Council being received in full or being met in full from Government support. This is an optimistic assumption given the Government's COVID Recovery Roadmap which means that the Leisure sector cannot start to reopen until mid-April however in the Final Local Government Settlement the Government confirmed its intention to extend the 75% co-funding scheme for lost income in the first quarter (April to June) of the new financial year. The approved budget includes a contingent provision for unexpected COVID related costs; however, it is unknown if this will be sufficient, even taking into account this recent grant award. As more information emerges, updates will be included in future budget monitoring reports.

4.5.7 The Council continually reviews and is developing its approach to forecasting, setting targets and monitoring income and budgets but it is likely that the Council will struggle to maintain previous targets whilst the economy recovers. Business cases for the development of income generating initiatives will continue to be closely monitored and performance against both original and revised targets will be reported quarterly.



4.5.8 The impact of the current national lockdown has been estimated and will not be certain until final accounts are prepared. Whilst the impact of the current national lock-down is uncertain, current projections suggest that the revised budget projections for most income streams were robust and targets will be met. When adjustments are made for contract arrangements paid annually in arrears (County Council, other Local Government bodies and treasury investments) and accounting accruals for income received in the current year for services received in future years the full year (outturn) projection is in-line with the revised budget (resulting in a small positive variance of £54k).

4.5.9 Additional Planning fee income was received in November 2019 for the former Lea Castle hospital site (£98k). This income was accrued into the 2020-21 financial year which has mitigated the impact of Covid-19 on plan fee income.

4.5.10 **Commercial Strategy** - The table below shows the performance against target for income streams covered by the Commercial Strategy 2020-21 (excluding property – see section 5 below).

Commercial Activity Areas	Gross Income from Commercial Activity						Estimate of Co-funding Gvt Grant £
	2019-20 Outturn £	2020-21 Original £	Current Year 2020-21			Variance Revised to Outturn £	
			Revised £	YTD Month 9 £	Estimated Outturn £		
Parking and Enforcement	(1,439,270)	(1,603,530)	(925,260)	(814,139)	(940,260)	(15,000)	437,318
Waste Collection (Garden and Trade waste Services)	(1,056,903)	(1,071,100)	(1,030,780)	(941,777)	(1,055,180)	(24,400)	
Wyre Forest Leisure Centre	(531,642)	(541,520)	44,300	44,304	44,300	0	419,055
Garage, Tree Gang, Grounds Maintenance and Driver Training	(356,462)	(379,460)	(262,500)	(153,789)	(210,500)	52,000	112,493
Parks and Green Spaces	(131,905)	(213,980)	(192,430)	(167,461)	(192,430)	0	8,138
Bewdley Museum & TIC	(86,166)	(138,570)	(86,270)	(54,436)	(76,270)	10,000	41,528
Cemetery	(195,189)	(52,900)	(52,900)	(39,944)	(52,900)	0	
TOTAL	(3,797,537)	(3,959,060)	(2,505,840)	(2,127,241)	(2,483,240)	22,600	1,018,530

4.5.11 The movement in the revised budget illustrates the impact of the pandemic on demand led income streams. The budget is £1.453m below the original estimate. This income loss is mitigated to some extent by the Government's co-funding sales, fees and Charges grant. The net impact of this reduced income (before costs of delivering the service but after grant support) is £435k.

4.5.12 The table below presents net income after marginal costs are taken into account for activities that fall within the scope of the Commercial Strategy. It should be noted that only marginal costs that are specifically in relation to Commercial Activity are included so the table shows the net position for that element of the total cost centres only.

Commercial Activity Areas	Net* Income from Commercial Activity					Variance Revised to Outturn £
	2019-20 Outturn £	2020-21 Original £	Current Year 2020-21			
			Revised £	YTD Month 9 £	Estimated Outturn £	
Property	(580,789)	(604,700)	(568,994)	(331,551)	(560,674)	8,320
Parking and Enforcement	(439,784)	(570,950)	107,320	(125,534)	70,320	(37,000)
Waste Collection (Garden and Trade waste Services)	(321,234)	(272,353)	(232,033)	(546,730)	(244,633)	(12,600)
Wyre Forest Leisure Centre (after MRP & external interest)	(133,263)	(171,520)	44,300	44,304	44,300	0
Garage, Tree Gang, Grounds Maintenance and Driver Training	25,849	(4,370)	112,590	102,180	165,031	52,441
Bewdley Museum & TIC	(67,369)	(76,860)	(24,560)	(13,714)	(15,209)	9,351
Land Charges	20,277	(23,520)	28,680	11,806	20,255	(8,425)
Cemetery	(25,000)	(17,250)	(17,250)	(18,512)	(24,750)	(7,500)
Other	(8,731)	(26,375)	27,065	(24,170)	4,472	(22,593)
Parks and Green Spaces	(47,370)	(53,697)	(32,147)	(57,330)	(32,147)	0
TOTAL	(1,578,233)	(1,821,595)	(555,029)	(959,252)	(573,035)	(18,006)

* Subjective assessment based on 2019-20 marginal cost capture exercise, analysis of the activity on a full cost recovery basis (including an allocation of corporate overheads and debt charges) suggests that all activity will fall within the provision of the 2003 Act.

* Subjective assessment based on 2019-20 marginal cost capture exercise, analysis of the activity on a full cost recovery basis (including an allocation of corporate overheads and debt charges) suggests that all activity will fall within the provision of the 2003 Act.

Note that () denote income budgets, under spends or overachievement of income targets

4.5.13 The net outturn position, after marginal costs are considered, for income streams covered by the Commercial Strategy, is in-line with the revised budget (small positive variance of £18k). The variance against the original budget is £1.267m reducing to approximately £250k when the 75% Income guarantee co-funding grant for this sub group of income categories is taken into account (circa £1.02m – subject to final claim).

4.6 Capital Programme

4.6.1 The original capital programme 2020-21 was £9.45m. There was re-phasing (slippage) from 2019-20 of £22.01m, and total re-phasing to 2021-22 of £16.55m.

4.6.2 The gross expenditure to date is £2.75m (18.4%).

4.6.3 The updated Capital Programme and Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewal Schedule for 2020-21, including slippage from 2019-20 is provided at Appendix 3.

4.6.4 Capital Programme variances are summarised in the table below, full detail of scheme progress and variances is provided in Appendix 3:

	Directorate	£000
Re-phasing from 2020-21 to 2021-22	Community and Environmental Services	10
	Economic Prosperity and Place	348
Total		359

- 4.6.5 The majority of the Council's Capital Programme is financed from borrowing which has a revenue implication through interest charges and the statutory Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP).

5. **CAPITAL PORTFOLIO FUND AND DEVELOPMENT LOANS FUND**

- 5.1 The funding envelope for the Capital Portfolio scheme is £26.5m. A further £1.25m allocation to co-fund the Future High Street Programme has been included in the Capital Programme 2021-31 to support a self-sustainable, financially viable scheme to develop the former magistrates court subject to preparation and approval of a business case. This allocation will follow the principals of the Capital Portfolio Fund but be maintained and accounted for separately. The Capital Portfolio Fund supports regeneration, economic growth and housing allied to the Council's income generation/commercialism objectives and is financed from borrowing. Council continues to support a Development Loans Fund of £10m to help deliver the Council's regeneration and economic development objectives in terms of both housing and commercial regeneration, whilst also potentially generating future income streams. External Support has been procured to ensure that specialist advice and financial due diligence is readily accessible to support future proposals. The first loan, £1.9m to Suma (Developments) Ltd, was approved in February 2020 and relates to the construction of two blocks of industrial starter units at Plot L on Silverwoods Park, Kidderminster (the land opposite Aldi). The legal agreement was signed on 1st February 2021 and it is anticipated that the first draw down for the loan will be before the current 2020-21 financial year end.

Capital Portfolio Capital Fund	Expenditure		Committed
	Purchase Price/ Development Cost	SDLT, Fees and Capitalised Costs	
	£000	£000	£000
Acquisitions at 1st April 2019			
Worcester Street/High Street Retail Units, Kidderminster	1,034	51	
Stratford Court Offices, Solihull	6,110	434	1
Buntsford Gate Offices, Bromsgrove	1,487	87	
Forest House Start-up Units, Kidderminster	730	37	
Acquisitions 2019-20			
Riverside Food and Beverage Units, Kidderminster	2,420	135	43
Goldthorn Road Industrial Unit	4,100	240	28
Committed Schemes			
Industrial Units, Kidderminster		428	
	15,881	1,413	71
Total Capital Expenditure		17,294	17,365
Total Capital Approval			26,500
Balance of Funds remaining (Max)			9,135

- 5.2 The table below summaries the current projection of the revenue impact of the Capital Portfolio Fund in 2020-21 and the estimated impact in 2021-22. The Estimated Outturn is currently in-line with the Revised Budget and includes an impairment allowance to recognise the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on collection rates and the increased risk of debts being unrecoverable. This has resulted in a significant reduction in the net surplus that contributes towards the Council's funding gap as shown in the table. Every effort to recover rents and service

charges outstanding continues to be made and the position is closely managed and monitored.

Property Portfolio Fund	2019-20 Actual £	2020-21 Original £	2020-21 Revised/ Est. Out £	2021-22 Original £
EXPENSES				
Property specific	310,824	254,430	289,510	329,480
General expenses	53,156	48,410	59,670	55,000
Recharges	40,956	44,980	43,840	46,710
Bad debt provision	0	0	105,070	38,840
INCOME				
Gross Income from rents & service charges	(1,294,960)	(1,723,620)	(1,248,600)	(1,656,010)
COST OF CAPITAL				
Capital Financing (MRP & Interest)	512,730	1,043,870	752,600	1,119,970
NET IMPACT ON COUNCIL TAX	(377,294)	(331,930)	2,090	(66,010)
Transfer to/(from) sinking fund + other EMRs	43,650	14,740	(9,670)	31,270
NET CONTRIBUTION TO FUNDING GAP	(333,644)	(317,190)	(7,580)	(34,740)

*()denotes income, budget savings and over achievement of income targets

The original estimate in the table above assumed that the balance of the funding available had been spent in 2019-20 and rents off-set MRP and interest costs. Rent and cost of capital have been revised downwards to reflect current programme spend.

- 5.3 The current projection of the revenue impact of the Development Loans Fund in 2020-21 is estimated to be cost neutral. Take-up of the loans has been slow, although one is now being progressed. FDC (formerly Finance Birmingham) agreed to defer their £25k pa fund management fee from October 2019 as no approvals had been progressed at that date. Following the set-up of the first loan payment of the management (facilitation) fee will recommence.

6. FUNDING GAP, WYRE FOREST FORWARD SAVINGS PROGRAMME AND GENERIC INCOME TARGETS

- 6.1 The 2021-24 MTFS projects a funding gap in 2023-24 of just over £2.7m, against this background it is essential that expenditure is kept within the overall approved budget and that savings proposals continue to be developed so that the Council has as much flexibility as possible to meet the challenges which lie ahead.
- 6.2 Achieving financial sustainability is the most significant challenge facing the Council. Since 2009 the Council has had a track record of continuously identifying opportunities to make savings however the savings targets are proving increasingly challenging to achieve particularly due to the pandemic.
- 6.3 The Council has done exceptionally well in generating additional income and implementing efficiency savings that have put back the date at which it has to bring its expenditure into line with income. However, in the absence of additional Government funding the impact of COVID-19 is that the Council will exhaust its general balances

within the lifetime of the MTFS, early in 2023-24 unless the savings and efficiency targets are met.

Wyre Forest Forward Savings

- 6.4 The Wyre Forest Forward savings programme was established to review all aspects of the Council to ensure we deliver a balanced budget and services of real value to our residents. Substantial savings have already been achieved.
- 6.5 The budget approved for 2020-21 included Wyre Forest Forward budget reduction proposals totalling £2.889m, which is broken down in **Appendix 4** and summarised in the table below. Progress has been made towards achieving the target savings for 2020-21; the outstanding savings target is partially offset by the over achievement of localism savings (£70k) and the balance is likely to be achieved from final accounts savings identified in this report.

WYRE FOREST FORWARD SAVINGS	2020-21 £000	2021-22 £000	2022-23 £000	2023-24 £000
Savings Target (excl. Localism)	2,889	4,298	4,390	4,682
Savings achieved at 31/03/2020	2,700	2,937	2,961	3,002
Balance	189	1,361	1,429	1,680
Savings achieved 2020-21				
<i>Pension on-cost</i>	39	41	41	42
<i>Revenues salaries/restructure</i>	54	48	51	55
Savings identified in year	93	89	92	97
Total WFF Savings not yet achieved	96	1,272	1,337	1,583

Note that this table only considers WFF savings and income targets, and is only part of the funding gap. Localism savings are not included.

Localism Partnership Target

- 6.6 The 2020-21 revised Localism target has been met. Achievement of future targets is progressing and future budgets will be adjusted subject to the savings being achieved. Details are provided below:

LOCALISM PARTNERSHIP SAVINGS	2020-21 £000	2021-22 £000	2022-23 £000	2023-24 £000
Savings Target	135	245	350	525
Slippage MTFS 2021-24	(128)	(95)	15	
Balance	7	150	365	525
Savings achieved 2020-21				
<i>Community Safety</i>	14	46	47	48
<i>Events Posts Deleted</i>	18	18	18	18
<i>Summer Play Schemes</i>	43	72	72	74
Savings identified in year	74	135	137	139
Total Localism Savings not yet achieved	(67)	15	228	386

7. Supplementary Estimates and Virements

- 7.1 Service managers who wish to incur expenditure that falls within approved Council Policy for which either there is no or insufficient provision within approved estimates, may incur that expenditure by virement (transferring from one approved budget cost centre to another) or by supplementary estimate, subject to specified conditions as set out in the Financial Regulations – 6.7 and 6.8.
- 7.2 There are no requests for a Supplementary Estimates to be considered by Cabinet this quarter.

8. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Local Government Act 2003 (sections 25–29) placed additional duties on Local Authorities on how they set and prioritise budgets.
- 9.2 Section 28 places a statutory duty on an authority to review its budget from time to time during the year. If the Budget Monitoring Report shows that there has been deterioration in the Authority's financial position, the Authority must take such action as it concludes necessary. The Cabinet currently reviews the Budget on a quarterly basis.
- 9.3 Our External Auditor Grant Thornton makes an assessment based on the annual programme of external audit work. The focus is on ensuring there are proper arrangements in place for securing financial resilience and that the organisation has proper arrangements for challenging how it secures economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

10 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

This is a financial report and there is no requirement to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment.

11 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 11.1 The inability to deliver a balanced budget is one of the Council's key corporate risks. The Budget Risk Matrix has been reviewed to reflect the current assessment of risk. A copy is enclosed for information as **Appendix 5**.

12 CONCLUSIONS/ACTION

- 12.1 The information contained within Appendices 2, 3, 4 and 5 provides Members with an overview of financial trends within the period to 30th December 2020.

13. CONSULTEES

Corporate Leadership Team
Cabinet
Service Managers

14. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Council 1st March 2020

Strong Leader Report on Provisional Final Accounts 2019-20

Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021-24

Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020-23

Hyperlink to Committee Reports

<http://www.wyreforest.gov.uk/council/meetings/main.htm>

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**REVENUE BUDGET TOTAL REQUIREMENTS - DISTRICT COUNCIL PURPOSES**

SERVICE	2020/21		2021/22			2022/23			2023/24		
	Original Estimate £	Revised Estimate £	At Nov.20 Prices £	Inflation £	TOTAL £	At Nov.20 Prices £	Inflation £	TOTAL £	At Nov.20 Prices £	Inflation £	TOTAL £
CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND SOLICITOR TO THE COUNCIL	1,374,060	1,906,710	1,403,640	47,330	1,450,970	1,512,280	95,800	1,608,080	1,544,900	145,860	1,690,760
COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	4,421,860	6,593,050	4,436,120	156,590	4,592,710	4,006,490	311,080	4,317,570	3,788,900	476,540	4,265,440
ECONOMIC PROSPERITY AND PLACE	1,990,960	2,515,280	2,215,870	106,430	2,322,300	1,938,480	216,000	2,154,480	1,866,120	324,700	2,190,820
RESOURCES	3,689,640	3,625,920	4,677,290	(37,010)	4,640,280	3,853,470	(71,240)	3,782,230	4,252,510	(106,490)	4,146,020
LESS: CAPITAL ACCOUNT	11,476,520	14,640,960	12,732,920	273,340	13,006,260	11,310,720	551,640	11,862,360	11,452,430	840,610	12,293,040
INTEREST RECEIVED	237,960	(88,060)	97,560	2,360	99,920	306,650	4,750	311,400	379,870	7,250	387,120
CAPITAL PORTFOLIO FUND AND DEVELOPMENT LOANS FUND	(180,000)	(50,000)	(20,000)	0	(20,000)	(20,000)	0	(20,000)	(20,000)	0	(20,000)
	(71,200)	(23,530)	(3,130)	1,050	(2,080)	(4,080)	2,000	(2,080)	(5,080)	3,000	(2,080)
TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE ON SERVICES	11,463,280	14,479,370	12,807,350	276,750	13,084,100	11,593,290	558,390	12,151,680	11,807,220	850,860	12,658,080
LESS: REVENUE SUPPORT GRANT	0	0			0			356,790			356,790
BUSINESS RATES INCOME	(3,341,180)	(3,691,180)			(2,869,590)			(2,898,290)			(2,927,270)
EXPENDITURE RELATED COVID SUPPORT GRANT	0	(1,603,970)			(563,800)			0			0
CO-FUNDING COVID SUPPORT GRANT	0	(1,110,560)			(383,940)			0			0
COVID TAX INCOME GUARANTEE GRANT (CTAX)	0	(17,000)			0			0			0
COLLECTION FUND DEFICIT (CTAX)	70,220	70,220			146,000			95,100			95,100
NEW HOMES BONUS	(261,530)	(261,530)			(242,510)			(63,390)			0
LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT GRANT	0	0			(184,250)			0			0
LOWER TIER SERVICES GRANT					(121,190)						
GENERAL EXPENSES -											
COUNCIL TAX INCOME	(7,445,500)	(7,445,500)			(7,578,210)			(7,792,970)			(8,009,740)
(SURPLUS) / DEFICIT FOR YEAR	485,290	419,850			1,286,610			1,848,920			2,172,960
COUNCIL TAX LEVY		219.34			224.34			229.34			234.34
COUNCIL TAX BASE		33,945			33,780			33,980			34,180

Note budgets are presented before incorporation of MTFS 2021-24 Cabinet Proposals approved at Council 1st March 2021

BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT
MAJOR REVENUE VARIATIONS QUARTER THREE (to 31st December 2020)

Total Revised Budget 2020-21 - Net Expenditure on Services	14,479,370
Less: Covid Support grants - Expenditure	(1,603,970)
Covid Support grant - Co-funding Income loss	(1,110,560)
	11,764,840
Reduced Expenditure on Services	(175,330)
TOTAL QUARTER THREE PROJECTION TO YEAR END 2020-21	11,589,510

Description of Estimated Major Variances	Reduced Income	Additional Income
<u>Economic Prosperity and Place</u>		
1. Improved income position - Land Charges, Street Naming, Planning		(88,000)
2. Private sector housing (HMOs)		(7,450)
3. Homelessness Service		(78,000)
4. Property	23,400	
5. Miscellaneous small variations		(15,000)
<u>Community and Environmental Services</u>		
1. Car Parks - Reduced operational expenses		(22,000)
2. Civil and Environmental enforcement		(15,000)
3. Arboricultural Services	30,000	
4. Driver Training	23,000	
5. National Assistance Act burials		(7,500)
6. Trade, Garden and Domestic waste		(22,600)
7. Bewdley museum - shop	10,000	
<u>Resources</u>		
1. ICT - telephone recharges to staff	9,500	
<u>Chief Executive and Solicitor to the Council</u>		
1. Member Allowances		(15,680)
2.		
<u>Corporate Variations</u>		
1. Other pay variances		(49,000)
2. Recognition payment	49,000	
	144,900	(320,230)
Reduction on Revised Budget (based on Quarter Three 2020-21 Projection)		(175,330)

Q3 Budget Monitoring 2020-21 (to December 2020)
Capital Programme 2020-21

APPENDIX 3a

CAPITAL PROJECT DESCRIPTION	2020-21 Budget (Full Year) Includes 2019-20 slippage	YTD Actual Expenditure (Net Income)	Commitment	Year To Date Expenditure Including Commitments	Projected Total 2020-21 Expenditure	Slippage to 2021-22	Explanation
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
RESOURCES							
ICT Strategy	417,910	178,810	90,650	269,460	417,910	0	Laptop and various infrastructure upgrades in progress.
TOTAL RESOURCES	417,910	178,810	90,650	269,460	417,910	0	
COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES							
Brinton Park HLF Scheme	43,720	9,330	34,390	43,720	43,720	0	Project management now under way.
Green Street Depot Investment	208,950	16,010	79,170	95,180	208,950	0	Buildings now operational. Final retention and S278 works still to be completed.
Stourport Riverside	71,500	0	0	0	71,500	0	Project being progressed.
Commercial Activity Capital Funding	10,390	0	0	0	0	10,390	Likely to slip. Future spending dependent upon approval of business cases.
TOTAL COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	334,560	25,340	113,560	138,900	324,170	10,390	
ECONOMIC PROSPERITY AND PLACE							
Disabled Facilities Grants	1,799,370	633,930	205,000	838,930	1,799,370	0	Anticipated to be fully spent by year end.
Private Sector Measures	100,000	7,830	0	7,830	100,000	0	The new scheme for landlords that will work alongside enforcement had lower demand than anticipated, so we will need to redesign the scheme to link it into the social letting agency and bond scheme work.
Property Conversion, Stourport	60,000	32,580	6,290	38,870	60,000	0	Anticipated to be fully spent by year end.
Property Flood Grants	200,000	31,720	3,880	35,600	200,000	0	Currently anticipated to be fully spent by year end.
Flood Relief	28,410	0	0	0	0	28,410	Awaiting decision from Severn Trent for scheme in Stourport-on-Severn. May slip.
Green Homes Grants	300,000	0	0	0	0	300,000	Will possibly slip
Carbon Management Plan	20,000	0	0	0	0	20,000	Will possibly slip
Crown House Car Park	27,400	23,630	3,170	26,800	27,400	0	Scheme complete - final invoices to pay.
New Street Conversion	2,530	0	2,700	2,700	2,700	0	Balance of budget for stairwell replacement. Expected to slip to complete shortly.
Industrial Units Development	220,000	30	0	30	220,000	0	Deposit to be paid in Q4. Work to commence shortly
Capital Portfolio Fund	6,000,000	0	1,110	1,110	6,000,000	0	Further schemes being progressed. Work continues evaluating potential acquisitions as opportunities are presented.
Development Loans Fund	2,000,000	0	0	0	2,000,000	0	First proposal now approved - drawdown of funds to commence shortly.
Silverwoods Way (Former Frenco Site)	293,250	241,330	3,660	244,990	293,250	0	Scheme nearing completion.
Churchfields Development (Grant Funded)	2,700,000	1,213,870	0	1,213,870	2,700,000	0	Scheme commenced. First tranche of grant paid.
TOTAL ECONOMIC PROSPERITY & PLACE	13,750,960	2,184,920	225,810	2,410,730	13,402,720	348,410	
VEHICLE, EQUIPMENT AND SYSTEMS RENEWALS							
Vehicle Renewals (Capital Programme)	766,280	363,180	240,400	603,580	681,260	0	See separate Vehicle, Equipment and System Renewals schedule.
Financial Management System Replacement	69,500	0	0	0	69,500	0	Scheme being progressed.
Zip Boilers Replacement	10,000	0	0	0	9,890	0	To complete in Q4.
TOTAL VEHICLE, EQUIPMENT AND SYSTEMS RENEWALS	845,780	363,180	240,400	603,580	760,650	0	
TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME	15,349,210	2,752,250	670,420	3,422,670	14,905,450	358,800	

Q3 Budget Monitoring 2020-21 (to December 2020)
Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewals 2020-21

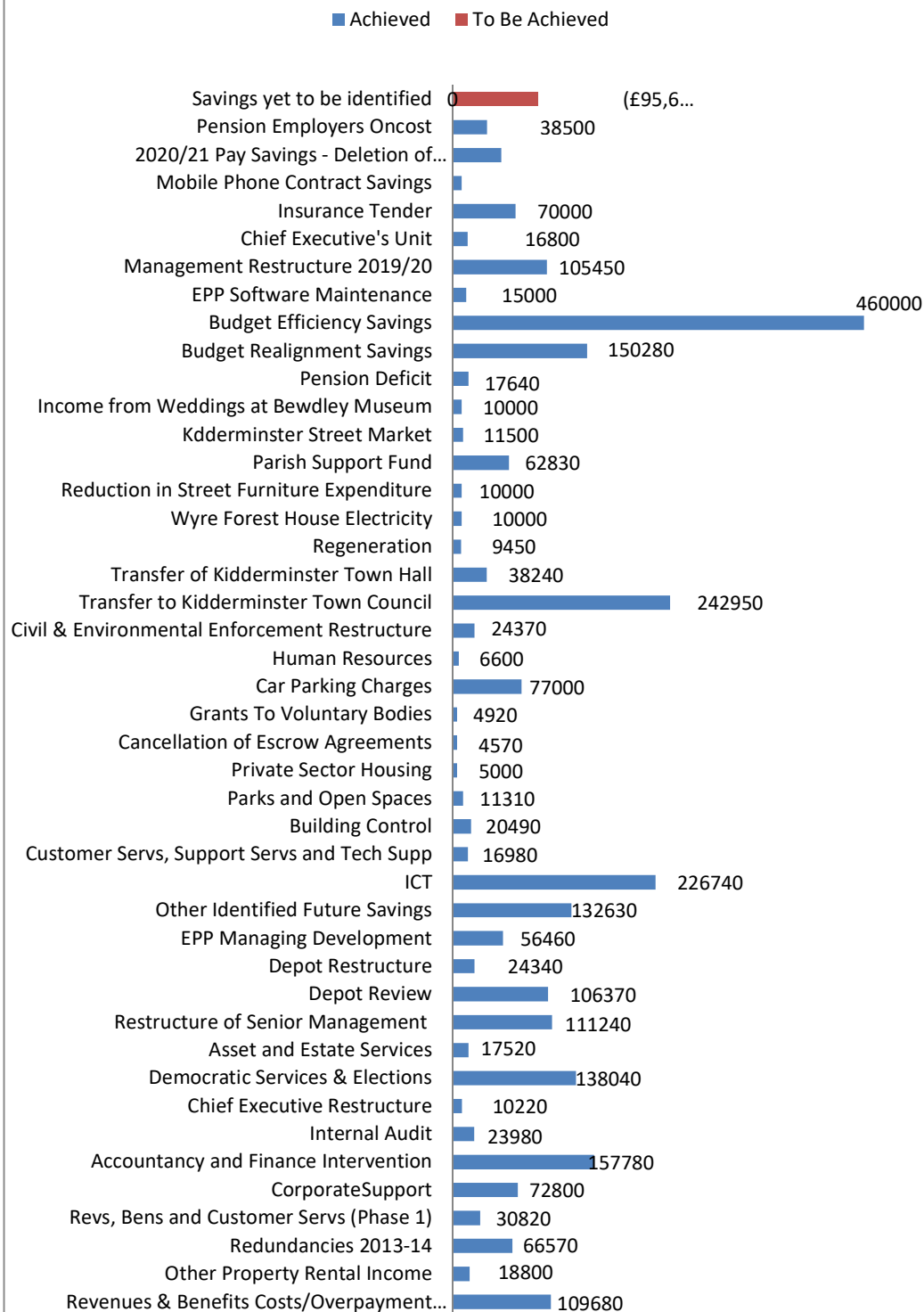
APPENDIX 3b

VEHICLE AND EQUIPMENT RENEWALS	2020-21 Budget (Full Year) Includes slippage from 2019- 20	Q3 Expenditure 2020-21	Projected Total 2020-21 Expenditure	Slippage to 2021-22	Old Vehicle Fleet Number to be replaced	Comments
(Based upon Revised Capital Budgets)	£	£	£	£		
1. VEHICLES						
GARAGE EQUIPMENT	31,280	0	13,600	0	N/A	Garage extraction system procured.
REFURBISHMENT FUND	30,000	0	0	0	N/A	Contingency fund. Will slip if not required in current year.
TIPPER 3500kg	30,000	26,680	0	0	AV063	Complete.
TIPPER 3500kg	30,000	0	0	0	AV223	Anticipating to procure, but will slip at year end if not complete.
LIGHT VAN	30,000	12,320	0	0	AV218	Complete.
LIGHT VAN	30,000	12,320	0	0	AV230	Complete.
LIGHT VAN	30,000	12,320	0	0	AV229	Complete.
TIPPER 3500kg	35,000	30,290	0	0	AV255	Complete.
TIPPER 3500kg	35,000	30,290	0	0	AV256	Complete.
PAVEMENT SWEEPER	80,000	67,130	0	0	AV258	Complete.
SMALL REFUSE FREIGHTER 7500kg RCV	90,000	0	86,470	0	AV261	Vehicle on order.
ROAD SWEEPER 15000kg	140,000	0	140,330	0	AV184	Vehicle on order.
REFUSE FREIGHTER 26000kg	175,000	171,830	0	0	New	Complete.
Total	766,280	363,180	240,400	0		

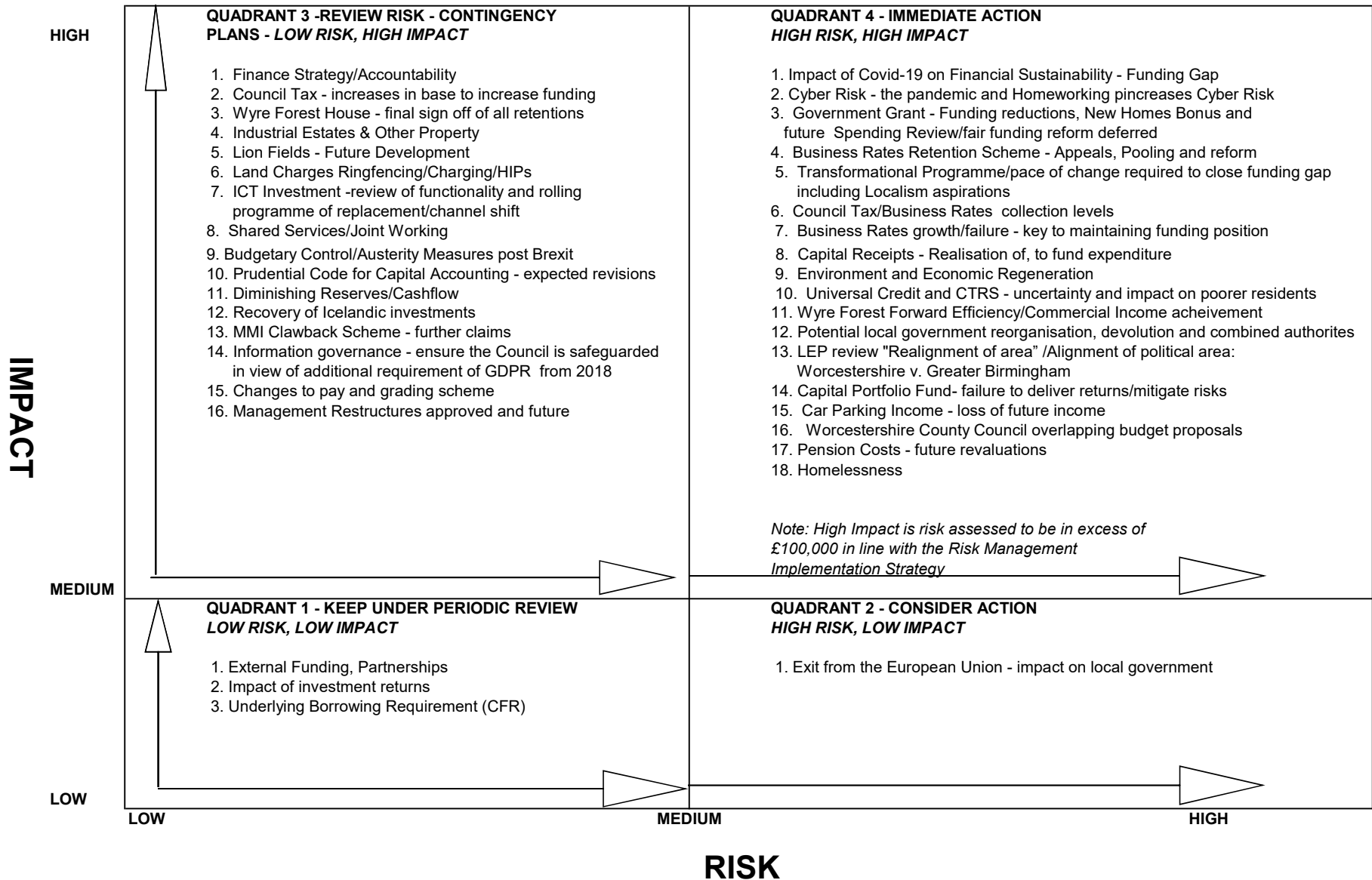
WYRE FOREST FORWARD

CHART 1

2020/21 WFF Savings Progress



BUDGET RISK MATRIX 2021-24



Appendix 6 – Analysis of Outstanding Debt

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
23rd March 2020

Budget Monitoring Third Quarter 2020-21

ANALYSIS OF OUTSTANDING DEBT

This appendix details the Council's income collection position at the end of Quarter 3 (31st December 2020). Debts collections was suspended from March to September 2020 due to the COVID pandemic.

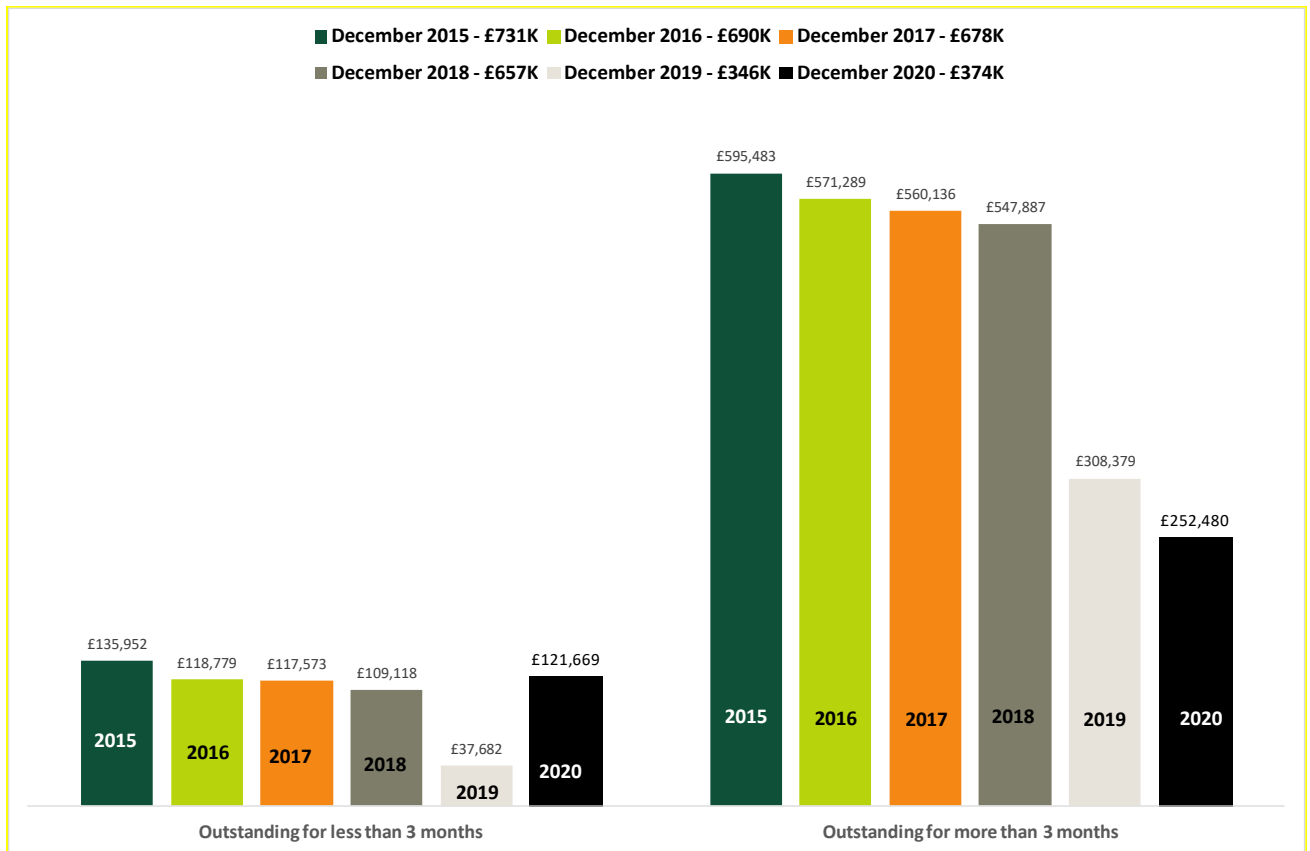
1.1. Housing Benefit Overpayment Recovery

Where customers have a change in their circumstances and we are later made aware of this, customers are expected to repay any Housing Benefit that has been overpaid.

A change in circumstances transfers the customer to Universal Credit and the overpayment is via a customer invoice. Customers who remain on Housing Benefit and have received an overpayment, have a deduction from their on-going benefit.

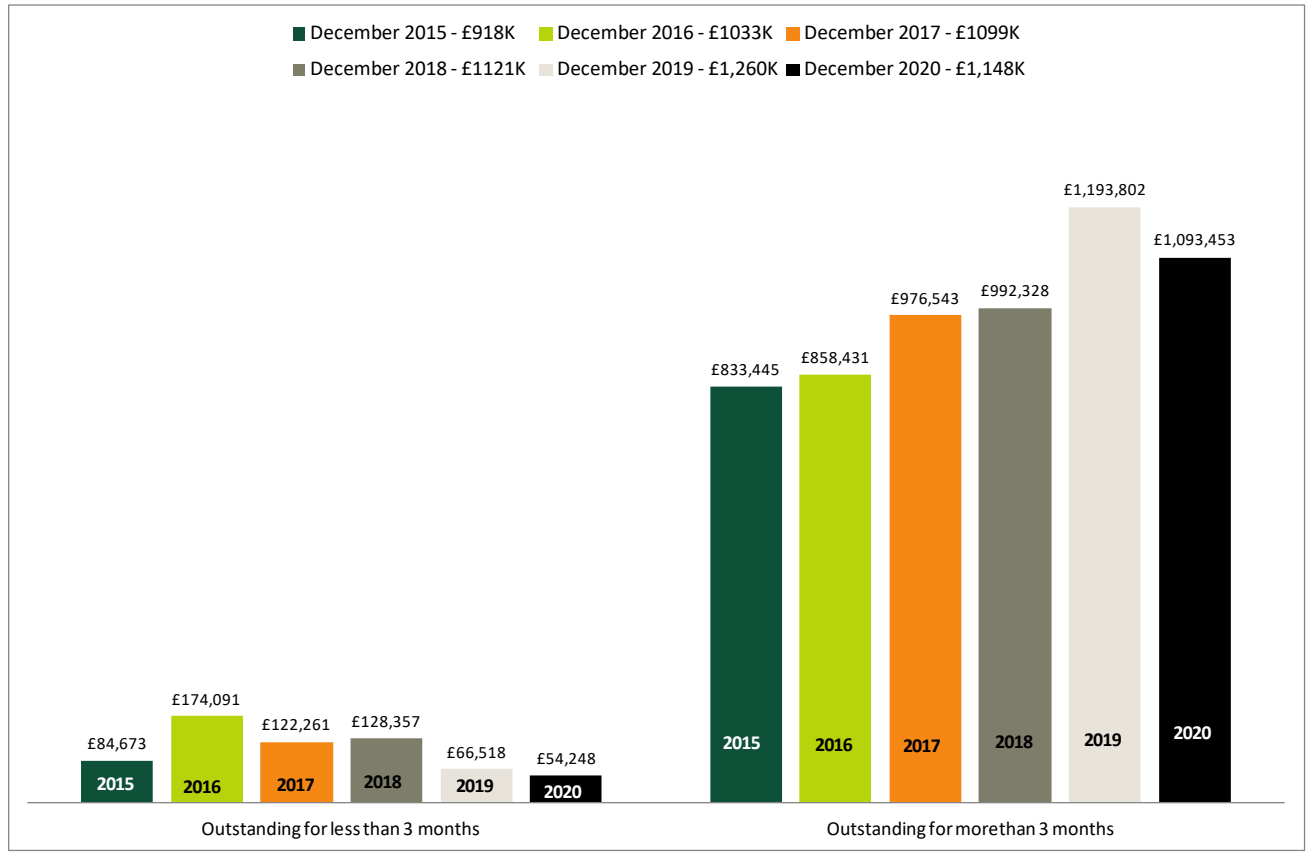
The position relating to Housing Benefit overpayment is shown in the next two graphs:

Recovery by On-going Benefit



Appendix 6 – Analysis of Outstanding Debt

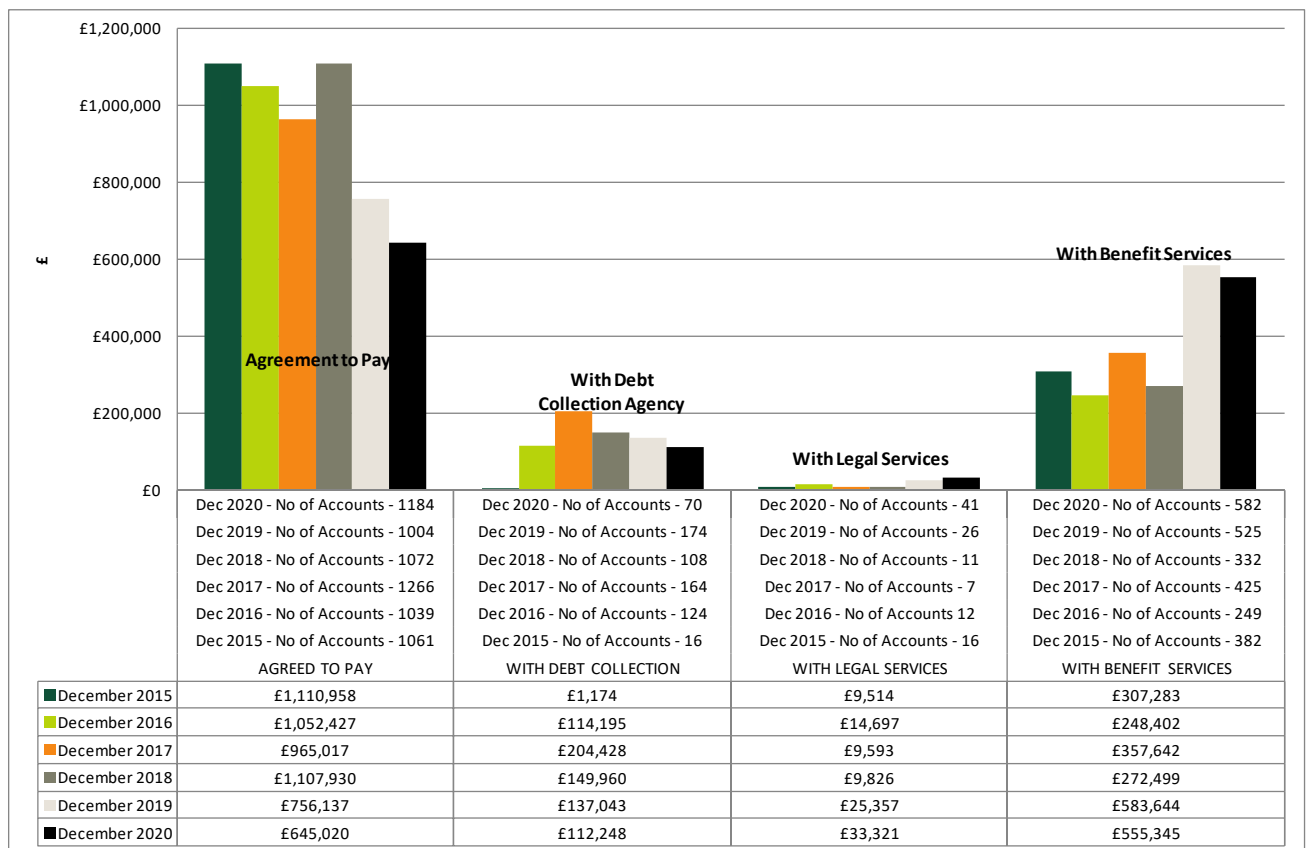
Recovery by Customer Invoice



Debts over three months old have either agreements in place to pay, have been referred to the Council's Legal Services, or remain with the Benefit Service to pursue. The Council employs the Debt Collection Agency Dukes. As at December 2020 debts of £7,361 have been recovered at a cost of £1,104 (2019-20 debts of £17,584 at a cost of £2,638). The number of accounts, the value outstanding and how this will be collected is shown in the following graph:

Appendix 6 – Analysis of Outstanding Debt

Value and Number of Housing Benefit Overpayments Accounts and Status



The total debt outstanding at 31st December is £1.522m which represents a 5% decrease over the balance outstanding at the end of Quarter 3 2019-20 (including debt within payment terms). The number of cases where there is an agreement to pay or our Benefit/Legal Services are dealing with the case, have increased to 1,807 (1,555 in 2019-20) a rise of 252 cases. Cases referred to an external debt collection agency have reduced to 70 (174 in 2019-20).

The introduction of Universal Credit in November 2018 has reduced the number of customers claiming Housing Benefit and the occurrence of overpayment and its collection via on-going benefit. Collection of overpayment via customer invoice has seen an increase in overdue debt. COVID-19 has had an impact on the collection of debt from customers on Universal Credit through the DWP and our own collection, as debt recovery was suspended at the beginning of the pandemic.

1.2. Sundry/ Property Debt

The total debt outstanding at 31st December (including debt within payment terms) was £868K (Sundry Debt £533k Property Debt £335k) which represents a 16% increase over the balance outstanding at the end of Quarter 3 2019 of £748k (Sundry Debt £398k Property Debt £350k).

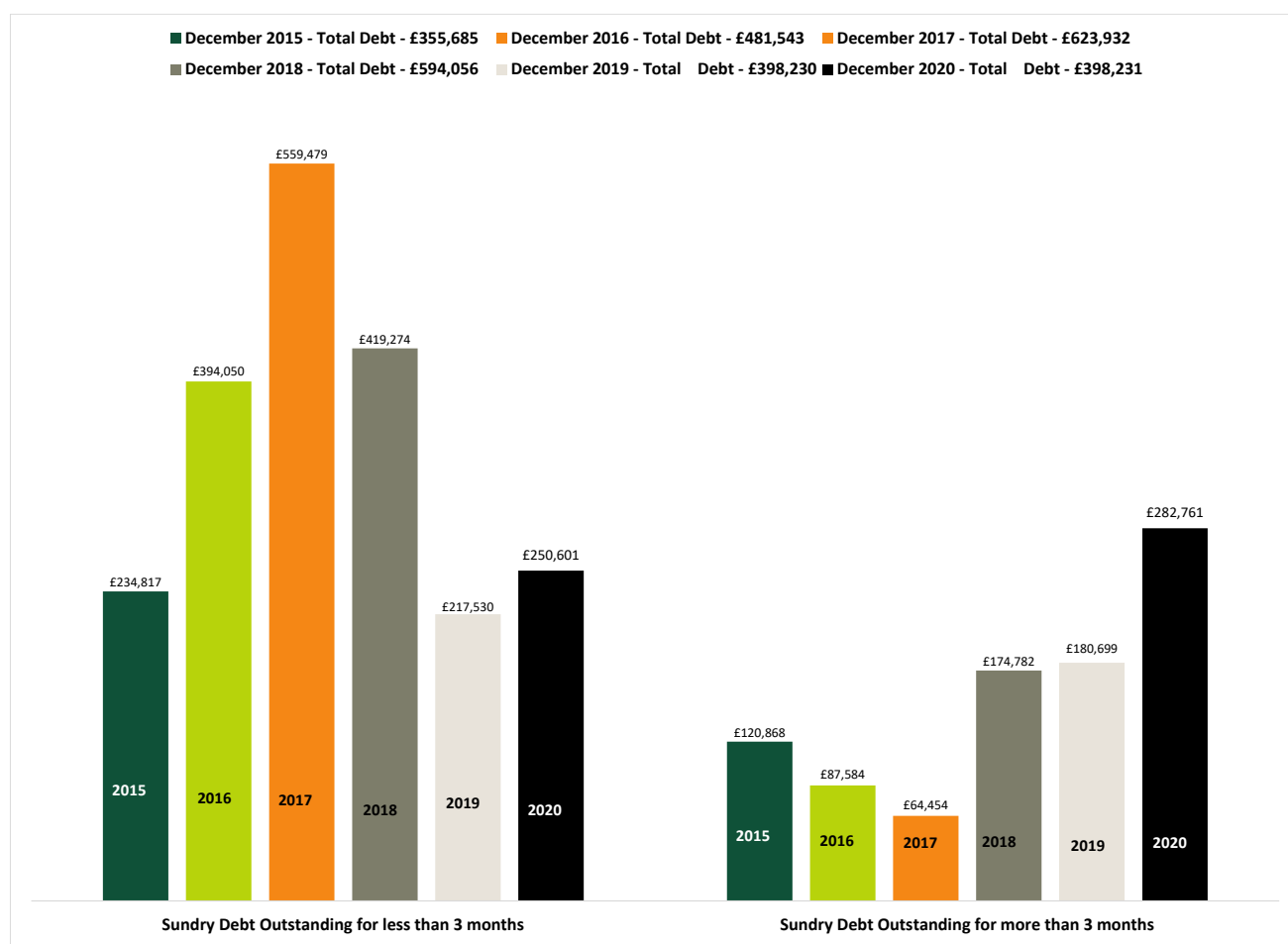
The COVID 19 pandemic has had an impact on Property and Sundry debt. The 2020-21 Quarter 3 overdue debt (more than 3 months old) has significantly increased (2018 £257k, 2019 £295k, 2020 £413K) This is mainly due to the suspension of Trade Waste DD during the latest lockdown and delay in payment for works at Weavers Wharf that are due to be settled.

Appendix 6 – Analysis of Outstanding Debt

Invoices overdue (older than 3 months)	Quarter 3 2018 £	Quarter 3 2019 £	Quarter 3 2020 £	Movement £
Sundry Invoice	174,800	180,700	282,800	102,100
Property Invoices	82,300	114,200	130,500	16,300
Total Invoices	257,100	294,900	413,300	118,400

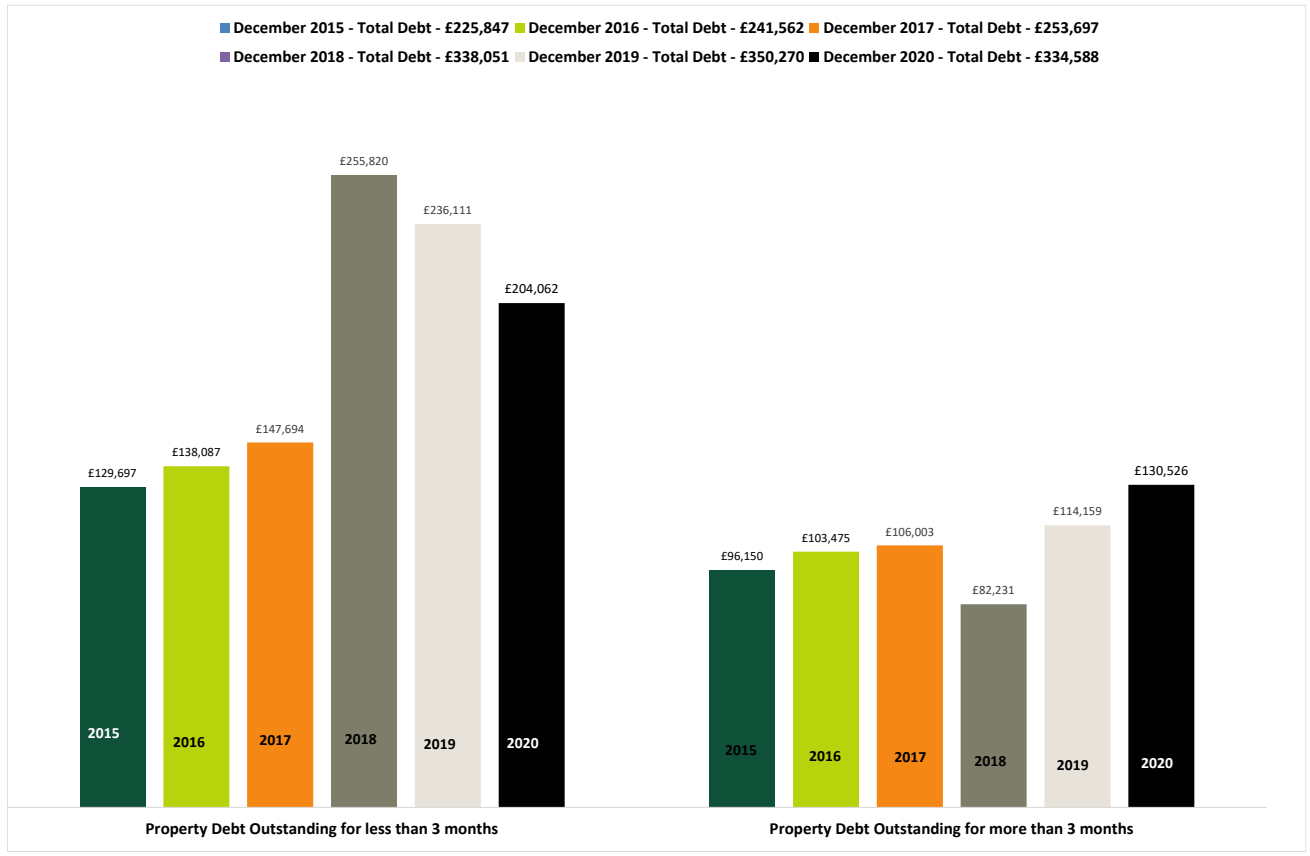
- 1.3. The overdue debts over 3 months old over previous years had remain low due to the introduction of a revised approach to the management of accounts in arrears. The pandemic saw the Council suspended the recovery of debt during the first 2 months of the pandemic. The increase in Sundry debt is primarily due to Markets and Trade Waste Sundry Debt.
- 1.4. The position relating to Sundry Debtor and Property Invoices are as follows:

Sundry Debtors



Appendix 6 – Analysis of Outstanding Debt

Property Invoices and Debt



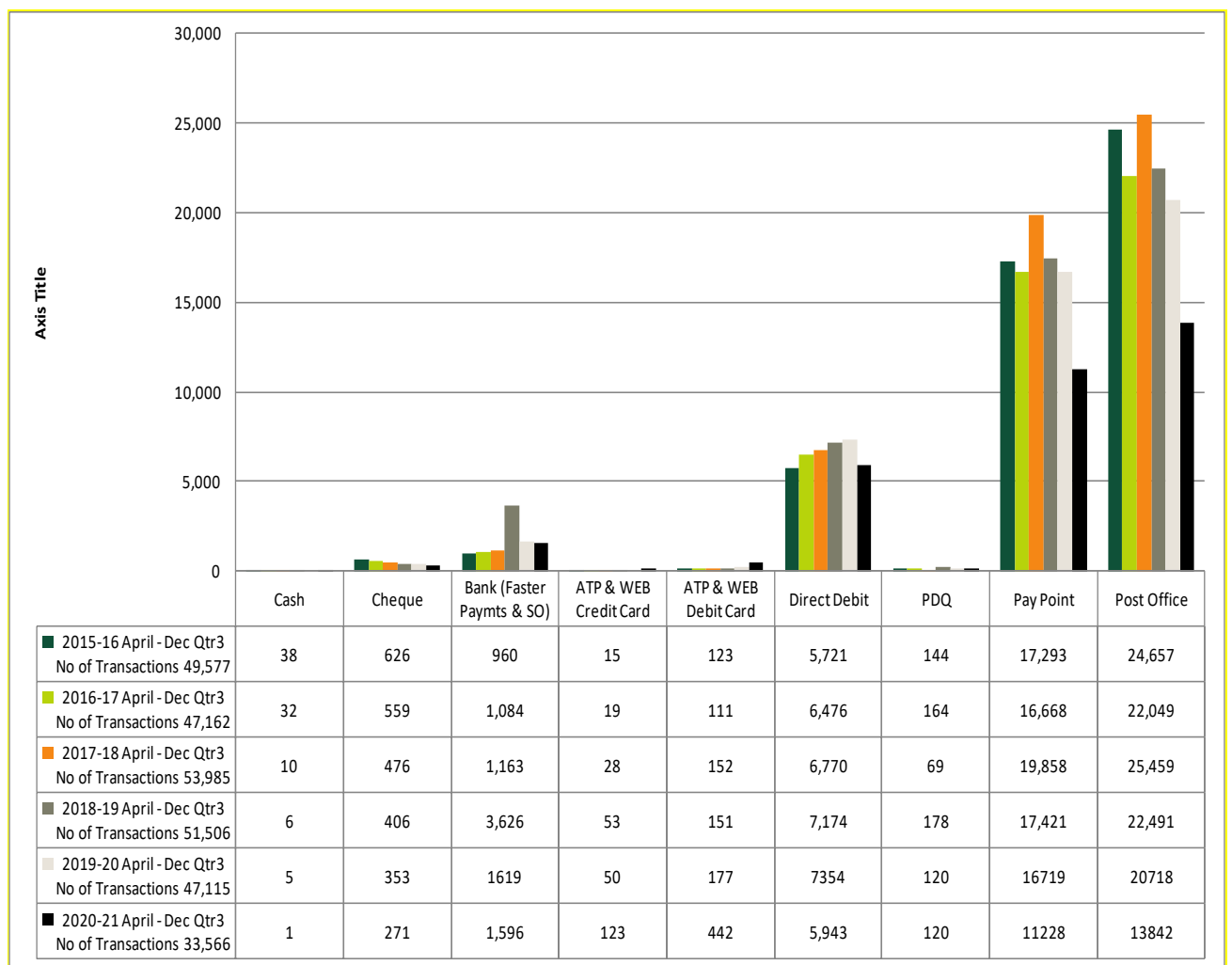
- 1.5. The Council actively promotes digital methods of payment, with the aim of reducing transaction volumes for cash and cheque and reducing payment processing/handling costs.
- 1.6. The chart below illustrates the success achieved in switching customers to digital channels in past financial years. In the first quarter of 2020, COVID -19 has had an impact on all methods of payment, especially for cash and payments made directly at our offices.
- 1.7. **Capital Portfolio Fund Debt (externally managed)**

The total debt outstanding at 31st December (including debt within payment terms) was £348k (Rent £215k, Other debt - service charge £72k, insurance etc.) £61k). The total overdue debt was £263k equivalent to 20% of the annual sums due.

Appendix 6 – Analysis of Outstanding Debt

	Within Terms (less than 30 days)	Overdue	Total
Buntsford Gate	0.00	2,509.53	2,509.53
Riverside	35,806.25	201,394.16	237,200.41
Stratford Court	46,182.02	45,545.34	91,727.36
Worcester Street/High Street	3,511.84	13,240.86	16,752.70
	85,500.11	262,689.89	348,190.00

Third Quarter (Q3) transaction numbers 2015-16 to 2020-21



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**CABINET**
23rd MARCH 2021**Review of Public Space Protection Orders**

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Helen Dyke
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Chief Executive
CONTACT OFFICER:	Rachel Symons Ext: 2923; Rachel.symons@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
APPENDICES: <i>The appendices to this report have been circulated electronically.</i>	Appendix 1: Summary of Responses for Dog Control Appendix 2: Summary of Responses for Alcohol restrictions Stourport-on-Severn Appendix 3: Summary of Responses for Alcohol restrictions Bewdley Appendix 4: Correspondence from The Kennel Club

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To invite members to consider whether the Council should make any changes to Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) following the review after a 6-month period of implementation and results of the consultation process.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is asked to:

- 2.1 **NOTE** that there is support for the alcohol orders in Bewdley and Stourport-on-Severn as set out in the consultation responses in Appendices 2 and 3 and that no changes are required;
- 2.2 **AMEND** the Dog Control PSPO to substitute 6 for 3 in the limit of dogs that one person may have under his or her control, in line with the consultation response and comments of the Kennel Club and other relevant dog walking organisations as evidenced in Appendices 1 and 4.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Cabinet decided at its meeting of 7 July 2020 to make a district-wide Dog Control PSPO and PSPOs restricting alcohol consumption in Bewdley and Stourport-on-Severn and committed to undertake a review within 6 months after the orders came into force in October 2020.
- 3.2 Following the decision to make the PSPOs, a Communications plan was put in place for each PSPO ahead of the implementation of the PSPOs in October 2020. For a

period of three months after the introduction of any new offences in the PSPOs, Council officers have used their discretion and adopt an informal/educational approach to the enforcement of those aspects of the legislation. This period has been used successfully to raise awareness of the PSPOs and has been received well by residents.

- 3.3 An online consultation was launched for a period of 4 weeks, starting 6th January 2021 and ending on 3rd February 2021, in relation to all 3 PSPOs.
- 3.4 The Dog Control Survey gave residents the opportunity to have their say on rules to tackle dog fouling and a new measure introduced in October which limits people to walking a maximum of three dogs at any one time. People were also invited to comment on new restrictions which require owners to put their dogs on leads around Stackpool and Hurcott Pool.
- 3.5 Two separate surveys invited people to comment on street drinking restrictions in both Bewdley and Stourport Town Centres.
- 3.6 Results of all 3 consultations can be found in Appendices 1 to 3.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 Over 900 responses were received for the online dog control order survey and emails were also sent to the Enforcement Team. A clear majority agreed or agreed strongly with all aspects of the dog control order, with one exception. There was an overwhelming response to increase the number of dogs a person can have under his or her control. A variety of views were expressed but the clear majority (63% out of 910 responses) was in favour of setting the limit at six dogs instead of three. Organisations such as The Kennel Club and Professional Dog Walking Association have also been in touch and their recommendations in appendix 4 are also to increase the number from 3 to 6 dogs.
- 4.2 A total of 287 responses were received in relation to the alcohol restrictions; 116 for Stourport-on-Severn and 171 for Bewdley. The responses showed clear majority in support of the restrictions continuing. The detailed feedback received about where people have experienced anti-social behaviour connected with alcohol consumption will be shared with relevant council officers and partner agencies in targeting future patrols and enforcement activity.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The review has been undertaken using existing staff resources and this will also be the case in respect of the amendment to the dog control PSPO. Any additional signage will be funded from existing budgets and therefore there are no additional financial implications.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Local authorities have the power under Section 59 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 to make a PSPO if satisfied on reasonable grounds that two conditions are met. The first condition is that –

- a) activities carried on in a public place within the Authority's area have had a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality, or
- b) it is likely that activities will be carried on in a public place within that area and that they will have such an effect.

The second condition is that the effect, or likely effect, of the activities –

- a) is or is likely to be, of a persistent or continuing nature,
- b) is, or is likely to be, such as to make the activities unreasonable, and
- c) Justifies the restrictions imposed by the notice.

- 6.2 The public consultation as part of the review has demonstrated clear support for the PSPOs that came into force in October 2020, and support for making one amendment to the dog control PSPO.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 Equality impact assessments were prepared when the PSPOs were originally made in 2020 and an updated impact assessment is not considered necessary in respect of the one change that is recommended.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 The principal risk is considered to be not amending the dog control order in line with the results of the survey, as this would expose the Council to risk of legal challenge. This is mitigated by the recommendation to amend the order.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The review has demonstrated support for the PSPOs that came into force in October 2020 and that an amendment should be made to set the limit of six dogs that one person has under his or her control.

10. CONSULTEES

- 10.1 Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Community Protection, Councillor Helen Dyke
- 10.2 Corporate Leadership Team
- 10.3 Principal Solicitor
- 10.4 Head of Community and Environment Services
- 10.5 Countryside and Parks Manager
- 10.6 Senior Community and Environmental Protection Officer
- 10.7 Public, organisations and stakeholders via consultation process

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 Reports to Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2nd July 2020 and Cabinet on 7th July 2020.

Appendix 1

Dog Control Public Spaces Protection Order Summary of Responses February 2021

Summary

Wyre Forest District Council consulted on the extension of the district wide dog control Public Space Protection Order between 6th January 2021 and 3rd February 2021.

Responses were received from a range of stakeholders including individuals, local organisations, town and parish councils and representative bodies, results are collated below:

The consultation on the district wide Dog Control Order sought comments on continuing the following restrictions and conditions:

- Failure to pick up dog faeces when in control of dog
- Failure to carry a poop bag or other means to clean up after a dog
- Failure to keep a dog on a lead in a designated area (Kidderminster Cemetery and Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Gardens, Bewdley)
- Failure to place a dog on a lead when directed to do so
- Failure to exclude dogs from fenced off or enclosed children's playgrounds
- Walking more than 3 dogs at a time
- Failure to keep a dog on a lead in a designated area – Stackpool, Springfield Park and Hurcott Pool, Hurcott Woods

Council Officers' Response

The view of officers is that having analysed the consultation responses it remains appropriate that all existing restrictions and conditions should continue, with amendment to the restriction in relation to number of dogs walked by an individual. The consultation responses show clear support that the maximum number of dogs needs to be increased. The consultation results suggest that the number of dogs should be increased from 3 to 6.

Consultation Question 1

Do you live in Wyre Forest?

Consultation Responses

910 responses were received.

Within Wyre Forest	698 (76.7%)
Outside the District	212 (23.3%)

Consultation Question 2

Which of the following best describes your situation?

Consultation Responses

910 responses were received

Dog Owner	776 (85.27%)
Don't own but walk friend/families dog/s	18 (1.98%)
Previously owned dog	59 (6.48%)
Thinking of having a dog	16 (1.76%)
Never owned a dog	16 (1.7%)
Prefer not to say	10 (1.10%)
Other	15 (1.65%)

Consultation Question 3

To what extent do you agree/disagree that the council should continue to have the power to make sure a person in charge of a dog cleans up after it?

Consultation Responses

910 responses were received for this question

Strongly Agree	717(78.79%)
Agree	179 (19.67%)
Disagree	5 (0.55%)
Strongly Disagree	9 (0.99%)

Consultation Question 4

To what extent do you agree/disagree we should continue to have the power to make sure a person in charge of a dog cleans up after it on all public land? This includes nature reserves, agricultural land with rights of way and private land accessed by the public

Consultation Responses

910 responses were received for this question

Strongly Agree	649 (71.32%)
Agree	211 (23.19%)
Disagree	37 (4.07%)
Strongly Disagree	13 (1.43%)

Consultation Question 5

To what extent do you agree/disagree that it should continue to be an offence for a dog walker to walk their dog without something to pick up after it?

Consultation Responses

910 responses were received for this question.

Strongly Agree	396 (43.52%)
Agree	362 (39.78%)
Disagree	112 (12.31%)
Strongly Disagree	40 (4.4%)

Consultation Question 6

Currently dogs must be kept on a lead in Kidderminster Cemetery and Queen Elizabeth II Gardens in Bewdley. To what extent do you agree/disagree that dogs should continue to be kept on a lead in...

Consultation Responses

910 responses were received for this question.

Kidderminster Cemetery		Queen Elizabeth Jubilee, Bewdley	
Strongly Agree	493 (38.32%)	Strongly Agree	346 (38.52%)
Agree	340 (37.61%)	Agree	356 (39.42%)
Disagree	44 (4.87%)	Disagree	135 (14.95%)
Strongly Disagree	27 (2.99%)	Strongly Disagree	66 (7.31%)

Consultation Question 7

Most dogs love being off the lead and in many circumstances, so long as a dog is safe and under control, that is absolutely fine. However, if an officer thinks a dog is causing danger or serious nuisance to other people or their dogs, the owner will be asked to put it on a lead. To what extent do you agree/disagree that an officer should have the power to ask someone to put a dog on a lead?

Consultation Responses

910 responses were received for this question.

Strongly Agree	434 (47.49%)
Agree	410 (45.05%)
Disagree	43 (4.73%)
Strongly Disagree	23 (2.53%)

Consultation Question 8

Dogs are not allowed to enter children's play areas and splash pad areas, we introduced this for safety and hygiene purposes. To what extent do you agree/disagree that dogs should continue to be excluded from children's play areas and splash pad areas?

Consultation Responses

910 responses were received for this question.

Strongly Agree	603 (66.26%)
Agree	260 (28.57%)
Disagree	33 (3.63%)
Strongly Disagree	14 (1.54%)

Consultation Question 9

A limit to walking three dogs at a time was introduced in October 2020. This was following a consultation where 73% of respondents said this should be a maximum of three or fewer dogs. The Dogs Trust and Professional Dog Walking Association say the maximum should be four dogs, while the Kennel Club suggests a limit of six dogs for professional dog walkers.

Do you think there should continue to be a limit to walking three dogs at one time?

Consultation Responses

910 responses were received for this question.

Yes	4 (0.44%)
No	906 (99.56%)

Consultation Question 10

How many dogs do you think one person should be allowed to have under their control at a time?

Consultation Responses

910 responses were received for this question.

Up to 2	4 (0.44%)
Up to 4	229 (25.16%)
Up to 5	100 (10.99%)
Up to 6	577 (63.41%)

Consultation Question 11

There are businesses in the district that provide boarding kennels, home boarding or day care for dogs. To do this they must have an 'animal activities licence'. Many, if not all, of the people working in these businesses may be walking one or more dogs at one time. They may also have public liability insurance. How many dogs should someone who holds an 'animal activities licence' be able to walk at one time?

Consultation Responses

906 responses were received for this question.

Up to 4 as suggested by Dogs Trust and Professional Dog Walking Association	904 (100%)
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Consultation Question 12

There are businesses in the district that provide boarding kennels, home boarding or day care for dogs. To do this they must have an 'animal activities licence'. Many, if not all, of the people working in these businesses may be walking one or more dogs at one time. They may also have public liability insurance. How many dogs should someone who holds an 'animal activities licence' be able to walk at one time?

Consultation Responses

906 responses were received for this question.

Up to 2	4 (0.44%)
Up to 4 (Dogs Trust and Professional Walking Association)	207 (22.5%)
Up to 5	38 (4.19%)
Up to 6 (suggested by Kennel Club)	657 (72.52%)

Consultation Question 13

In October, following support in our previous dog control survey, we added new restrictions requiring dogs to be on a lead by Stackpool in Springfield Park and Hurcott Pool. We felt these restrictions were important as both pools are home to a variety of wild birds and wildlife. To what extent do you agree/disagree that dogs should continue to be kept on leads by...

Consultation Responses

900 comments were received for this question., 10 didn't comment.

Stackpool at Springfield Park		Hurcott Pool	
Strongly Agree	204 (22.7%)	Strongly Agree	189 (21.19%)
Agree	357 (39.76%)	Agree	317 (35.4%)
Disagree	234 (26.06%)	Disagree	259 (29.04%)
Strongly Disagree	103 (11.47%)	Strongly Disagree	127 (14.24%)

Consultation Question 14

If someone doesn't follow our current dog control rules we can fine them £100. The maximum fine we can give is £100. Do you think £100 is...

Consultation Responses

898 responses were received for this question, 12 skipped.

Too Much	203 (22.61%)
About Right	695 (77.39%)

Formal Written responses

In addition to the survey, formal written responses were received from individuals outside of the online consultation and from canine organisations, including The Kennel Club, The Dogs Trust and Professional Dog Walking Association. Individuals made contact who walk dogs as their profession. From these formal written responses there

is support for the restrictions at Stackpool and Hurcott Pool but overall support to revise the number of dogs currently set at 3, and to be guided by recommendations from canine organisations that feel 6 is a suitable number of dogs for an individual to responsibly walk.

Appendix 2

Restriction of Alcohol in Stourport-on-Severn Public Spaces Protection Order Summary of Responses February 2021

Summary

Wyre Forest District Council consulted on the Public Spaces Protection Order to restrict alcohol consumption in Stourport-on-Severn for a four week period between 6th January 2021 and 3rd February 2021.

116 responses to the online consultation were received. 69.57% of those respondents live within Stourport-on-Severn, 28.7% live within Wyre Forest District but not Stourport-on-Severn and 1.74% live outside of the District. Responses were received from a range of stakeholders including individuals, local organisations, town and parish councils and representative bodies.

The consultation on the Alcohol Restriction Order for Stourport-on-Severn sought comments on the following restrictions and conditions:

- To provide the power for authorised officers of the Council, Police Officer or Police Community Support Officer to require a person drinking alcohol in public to surrender their alcohol (or anything which is reasonably believed to be alcohol).
- Failure to comply with the requirements of the PSPO by drinking alcohol in a public place will be an offence and people may result in a £100 fixed penalty notice.

Council Officers' Response

The view of officers is that having analysed the consultation responses it remains appropriate that all existing restrictions and conditions should be continued. The proposed boundary of the PSPO is regarded as appropriate and is supported through the review of the evidence. Education, community engagement and signage will be essential to the effective operation of the PSPO.

Other Matters

The majority of comments were relevant to the remit of the PSPO. There were some comments that fall outside of the remit of the PSPO, for example issues that would be outside of the proposed PSPO boundary or were comments on organisations. These will be shared with the relevant council officers and partner agencies.

Consultation Question 1

The PSPO is in place to stop people continuing to drink alcohol when asked to stop by an officer. They are able to do this in the area shown on the map. Do you agree with this?

Consultation Responses

116 responses were received for this question

Yes	109 (93.7%)
No	7 (6.03%)

Consultation Question 2

The PSPO requires a person to hand over alcohol at the request of an officer. They are able to do this in the area shown on the map. Do you agree with this?.

Consultation Responses

116 responses were received for this question

Yes	107 (92.24%)
No	9 (7.76%)

Consultation Question Q3

What impact do you think the PSPO will have on people living/working/visiting the town?

Consultation Responses

116 responses were received for this question

	Positive	Negative	No Impact
Living in the town	95 (81.9%)	4 (3.45%)	17 (14.66%)
Working in the town	89 (76.72%)	3 (2.59%)	24 (20.69%)
Visiting the town	89 (77.39%)	19 (16.52%)	19 (16.52%)

Consultation Question 4

In the past 12 months have you been affected by alcohol related anti-social behaviour in Stourport-on-Severn? Further detail of locations have been provided and so this information will be dealt with as explained under 'other matters'

Consultation Responses

116 responses were received for this question

Yes	24 (20.69%)
No	92 (79.31%)

Formal Written Responses

In addition to the survey, a formal written response was received from West Mercia Police who agreed with all of the proposals.

Appendix 3

Restriction of Alcohol in Bewdley Public Spaces Protection Order Summary of Responses February 2021

Summary

Wyre Forest District Council consulted on the Public Spaces Protection Order to restrict alcohol consumption in Bewdley as part of the PSPO review for a four-week period between 6th January 2021 and 3rd February 2021.

171 responses to the online consultation were received. Responses were received from a range of stakeholders including individuals, local organisations, town and parish councils and representative bodies.

The consultation on the Alcohol Restriction Order for Bewdley sought views on the following restrictions and conditions:

- To provide the power for authorised officers of the Council, Police Officer or Police Community Support Officer to require a person drinking alcohol in public to surrender their alcohol (or anything which is reasonably believed to be alcohol).
- Failure to comply with the requirements of the PSPO by drinking alcohol in a public place will be an offence and people may result in a £100 fixed penalty notice.

Council Officers' Response

The view of officers is that having analysed the consultation responses it remains appropriate that all existing restrictions and conditions should be continued. The proposed boundary of the PSPO is regarded as appropriate and is supported through the review of the evidence.

Education, community engagement and signage will be essential to the effective operation of the PSPO.

Other Matters

The majority of comments were relevant to the remit of the PSPO. There were some comments that fall outside of the remit of the PSPO or the proposed boundary, for example as litter, drug dealing/misuse and public disorder related matters. These will be shared with the relevant council officers and partner agencies.

In the survey, some comments were made in relation to Anti-Social Behaviour within the town, particularly in relation to groups of young people. These issues will be raised with key partners, including West Mercia Police at Safer Wyre Forest Tasking Group

Consultation Question 1

The PSPO is in place to stop people continuing to drink alcohol when asked by an officer. They are able to do this in the area shown on the map. Do you agree with this?

Consultation Responses

171 responses were received for this question.

Yes	160 (93.57%)
No	11 (6.43%)

Consultation Question 2

To require a person to hand over alcohol at the request of an authorised officer in the area shown on the map.

Consultation Responses

173 responses were received for this question.

Yes	157 (90.75%)
No	16 (9.25%)

Consultation Question Q3

What impact do you think the PSPO will have on people living/working/visiting the town?

Consultation Responses

170 responses were received for this question.

	Positive	Negative	No Impact
Living in the town	144 (84.71%)	5 (2.94%)	21 (12.35%)
Working in the town	139 (81.76%)	4 (2.35%)	17 (15.88%)
Visiting the town	132 (77.65%)	11 (6.47%)	27 (15.88%)

Consultation Question 4

In the past 12 months have you been affected by alcohol related anti-social behaviour in Bewdley?

Consultation Responses

171 responses were received for this question.

Yes	40 (23.39%)
No	131 (76.61%)



The Kennel Club
Clarges Street
London
W1J 8AB

Wyre Forest District Council
Wyre Forest House
Finepoint Way
Kidderminster
Worcestershire
DY11 7WF

21 January 2021

Dear Councillor,

Wyre Forest Public Spaces Protection Order – Maximum number of dogs per walker

As the largest organisation in the UK devoted to dog health, welfare, and training, The Kennel Club's main objective is to ensure that dogs live healthy, happy lives with responsible owners. As part of our external affairs activities, we run KC Dog which was established to monitor and keep dog owners up to date about relevant issues, including Public Spaces Protection Orders.

Following our letter to you last year, dated 27 August 2020, we wanted to raise our concerns again and provide our view on the proposed maximum number of dogs per person provision within the PSPO.

The Kennel Club is not aware of any robust evidence that it is not possible to walk six dogs in a manner that maintains the interest of both the dogs being walked and other site users. This position is supported by insurance companies, who widely insure commercial dog walkers to walk six dogs for modest annual premiums – under £100p.a. A single incident resulting in either a claim for veterinary care or injury to a third party would easily exceed such a premium. The clear implication is that serious incidents involving commercial dog walkers walking up to six dogs are rare.

Guidance from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the Welsh Government's joint Practitioner's Manual for dealing with irresponsible dog ownership refers to a maximum limit of six dogs per person as a guiding principle. A lower limit on the number of dogs a commercial dog walker can walk will reduce the income generate per walk. It is inevitable that the dog walker would then seek to recoup this revenue loss, either by increasing their prices and/or by cutting corners. A reduction from six to three dogs per walk would require dog walkers to double their fee to dog owners in order to maintain existing revenue levels. Consequently, this could result in dog owners being unable to continue paying for their dogs to be walked as often or at all. Alternatively, this could also result in dogs being walked for a shorter distance or dogs being left in vehicles so that the dog walker does not meet the maximum limit, which gives rise to a number of serious animal welfare concerns. Additionally, dogs that do not receive sufficient exercise may develop behavioural problems.

The Kennel Club believes that the maximum number of dogs a person can walk in a controlled manner depends on a number of factors relating to the dog walker, the dogs being walked, the location that the walk is taking place, the time of day, and so on. As such, we suggest that



defined outcomes are used instead to influence people walking multiple dogs, whether domestically or commercially, which could include requiring dogs to always be under control, not running up to people uninvited, or on lead in specified areas. In situations where numerical limits are deemed necessary, we would endorse the position of both the insurance companies and the guidance provided by Defra and the Welsh Government that a maximum of six dogs, in most circumstances, would be a reasonable number to adopt.

Should you wish to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to get in touch by emailing edward.hayes@thekennelclub.org.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Edward Hayes
Head of Public Affairs
The Kennel Club

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Cabinet
Tuesday 23rd March 2021**

**Recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Thursday 4th March 2021**

Review of Public Space Protection Orders and Results of the Consultation Process

The Committee considered a report from the Community Services Manager to decide whether the Council should make any changes to Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) following the review after a 6-month period of implementation and results of the consultation process.

Having heard the public participation in relation to the Dog Control PSPO, a full discussion ensued. The Committee acknowledged that the number of dogs that one person may have under their control was a very emotive issue; however, there was a clear steer from the consultation results in favour of increasing the numbers.

The majority of the Committee agreed that the current limit was too prescriptive, and having had regard to the evidence from the Kennel Club and the guidance from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), members agreed that the number should be increased from 3 to 6.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommend to Cabinet:

That no changes are made to the alcohol orders in Bewdley and Stourport-on-Severn but that the Dog Control PSPO should be amended to substitute 6 for 3 in relation to the limit of dogs that one person may have under his or her control, in line with the consultation response.

Background papers:

See the report on page 11 of the pdf at this link:

http://www.wyreforest.gov.uk/council/docs/doc56437_20210304_o_and_s_agenda.pdf

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
23rd March 2021

Green Homes Grant – Local Authority Delivery Scheme Phase 2

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	Cllr Nicky Martin, Cabinet Member for Housing, Health, Wellbeing and Democratic services
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity & Place.
CONTACT OFFICER:	Kate Bailey, Head of Strategic Growth 01562 732560
APPENDICES:	N/A

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to recommend amending the Capital Programme to enable the distribution of the Green Homes Grant, Local Authority Delivery Scheme Phase 2.

2. RECOMMENDATION

Subject to Council agreeing the Cabinet's recommendation in paragraph 2.1(e) of the Capital Strategy (22 December 2020), the Cabinet is asked to agree that:

- 2.1 There is an amendment to the Capital Programme to include expenditure of £525,000 to provide Green Homes Grants Phase 2 fully matched by the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) funding.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Government Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) has, in addition to the Green Homes Grant Phase 1 scheme already being undertaken, introduced a Phase 2. This Phase 2 has up to £525,000 allocated for the Wyre Forest District area. Phase 1 of the initiative was reported to and agreed by Cabinet in November 2020.
- 3.2 The eligibility criteria have a relatively narrow focus to improve energy efficiency in owner-occupied and social housing properties that have a poor energy efficiency rating of D,E, F or G, where off mains gas and the household income is less than £30k. Eligible works include modernising heating and insulation with up to £10k per property.
- 3.3 This Phase 2 is different to the Phase 1 pilot project in that there are more complex criteria for the individual, property and works that are eligible. For example, solar electric panels are not eligible and certain works must be undertaken as 'primary

measures' before other 'secondary measures' can be undertaken. Phase 2 can now be used for social housing as well as owner-occupiers. All Phase 2 grants must have a specific property report undertaken first and the works overseen by an expert in property energy efficiency. These factors will result in significant potential staffing costs. The scheme provides for a local authority fee to cover these costs, the Wyre Forest allocation being £47,250 (which includes an initial 10% of the overall proposal for mobilisation costs) and a further £2,750 for stock modelling or analysis if required.

- 3.4 The Private Sector Housing team working with Act on Energy, the Energy Advice Agency can deliver the grants through a process of identifying likely eligible properties and directly marketing the opportunity to them. Officers will also engage with the local social housing providers to explore potential for delivering grants to their properties.
- 3.5 The scheme runs until the end of March 2022 but it is anticipated that expenditure should be undertaken by October 2021.
- 3.6 At the meeting of Cabinet on 22nd December, as part of the report setting out the Council's Capital Strategy 2021-2031, the Cabinet recommended to Council that where the Council received external funding for grant works such as the Green Homes Grant, which fully funded such proposals, delegation would be granted to Cabinet to make such amendments to the Capital Programme to ensure the uninterrupted delivery of initiatives. The precise wording of the recommendation was:

"Delegation of authority to Cabinet to make amendments to the Capital Programme in instances where the Council receives external capital grants and the full amount of the grants to be distributed is met from the external funding source."

- 3.7 As a result of an administrative oversight, this recommendation was not included in the agenda for the Council meeting on 24 February and has not yet been formally considered by Council. This will now happen in the next Council meeting in May. The receipt of the Phase 2 grant illustrates perfectly why the delegation is required in order to allow timely adjustments to the Capital Programme where the grant is received on an "in and out" basis with no funding being provided from the Council's own resources.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The Green Home Grants are capital and therefore needs to be included in the Council's Capital Programme. The delay in Council's agreement to the delegation in respect of the capital programme will not have any practical effect as the timetable for accepting the grant and submitting a proposal to the Midland Energy Hub (see paragraph 8.1) makes it unlikely that expenditure would be incurred before 12 May.
- 4.2 The exact number of applications that will be received and the amount of grant eligible in each case is difficult to predict.
- 4.3 The scheme will aim to complete all grants by end of September 2021, although it is hoped that more time will be allowed as the timescale for delivery is very tight.

- 4.4 The Council will need to work with neighbouring councils, Act on Energy and local social housing providers to maximise uptake and use of the funds.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The grant available for Wyre Forest is £525k. Only those monies received through the grant will be spent. There will be no further financial contribution forthcoming from the Council. The Council will claim 100% of the costs of these grants back from BEIS so this scheme will be fully funded.
- 5.2 There will be a small revenue contribution towards costs included as part of the Green Homes Grant programme from BEIS of £47k and it is proposed that the Council utilises some of this funding to finance the Energy Advice agency, Act on Energy, to deliver some work in relation to this grant.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The eligibility for the grants has been determined by BEIS. A Memorandum of Understanding between BEIS and the Council will be signed to enable the Council to claim the grant.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 An Equalities Impact Screening Assessment has been undertaken and this indicates there are no adverse effects of this decision on any groups with protected characteristics, so a full EIA is not required.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 The Private Sector Housing team will need to accept their allocated funding by signing the award letter by 15th April and then submit a proposal by 24th May (at the latest) that will need to be approved by the Midland Energy Hub. The team will then be responsible for ensuring the Council meets the eligibility for the scheme, including the spend, to be able to claim the grant and so the data will need to be captured, monitored and reported back to the Midlands Energy Hub to be in compliance with the grant conditions.
- 8.2 The conditions of the grant include having appropriate governance arrangements, including a requirement that the work undertaken by contractors delivering the energy efficiency measures must be certified to PAS 2030:2019 and must comply, and be able to evidence compliance, with both PAS2035:2019 and PAS2030:2019.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 BEIS has made available funding for Green Homes Grants to assist residents with improving the thermal comfort of their homes, The Council will sign a memorandum of Understanding with BEIS to access this funding to be able to offer grants in accordance with the criteria.

- 9.2 The report seeks Cabinet approval – subject to Council agreement of the recommendation of 22 December 2020 - to amend the Capital Programme. It is proposed to include an additional provision up to £525k into the programme for 2021/22 to meet the costs of the grants and this funding will then be recovered from BEIS.

10. CONSULTEES

- 10.1 CLT

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 Not applicable