

Cheshire East Council

Budget Engagement 2022 - 26



Your views matter



Purpose of our Budget Engagement

The Council must set a balanced budget each year, meaning we cannot spend more than our income. To help improve value for money we need to seek the views of residents and businesses about priorities for the year ahead. Your views and feedback as local people, businesses, organisations, councillors and staff are very important and will help us to understand the impact of any changes required to achieve a financially balanced position.

We are responsible for managing annual expenditure of around **£700million**. After taking account of all the income we receive for specific purposes, such as conditional grants for schools, we have an annual net revenue budget of approximately **£300million**. This must be funded from the local taxes paid by households and businesses, and some general government grants, and will cover the day-to-day running costs of our vital services. The net budget equates to approximately **£16** per week for every resident living in the borough.

As well as providing day-to-day services to support children and adults who need our help, or emptying the

bins and managing the highways, the Council also manages a range of capital projects. These projects include building new schools, new roads, information and digital technology and regenerating our town centres. The total value of projects being managed over the next four years alone, is almost **£400million**.

This document outlines the key financial issues that we need to tackle, including those that relate to the ongoing pandemic. It also includes our proposed response to these financial challenges and our plans for spending next year. Your views will be captured and will help inform councillors in making the decisions regarding the council's budget.

Giving your feedback

This PDF document is for information only – to let us know what you think about this budget engagement document please use one of the methods below. Please submit your feedback by 4th January 2022:

 [Complete an online survey here](#)

- Complete a paper survey, available at all Cheshire East libraries, and return it to Research and Consultation, Cheshire East Council, Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach, CW11 1HZ
- Email RandC@cheshireeast.gov.uk
- Write to Research and Consultation, Cheshire East Council, Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach, CW11 1HZ
- Tweet [#CheshireEast](https://twitter.com/CheshireEast) #CECBudget

- Comment on our budget consultation comments board at www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/BudgetEngagement

For any queries about this engagement, for example if you would like to receive this questionnaire in an alternative format, or submit your response in a different way, please call Customer Services 0300 123 5500 or email our Research and Consultation Team

RandC@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Your confidentiality is assured

Any personal information you supply will remain strictly confidential and will be used in line with the Data Protection Act 2018.

To find out more about how we use your information see our privacy policy at

www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/Privacy



Content

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- 2 | **Spending within resources**
- 3 | **Spending on our priorities for next year**
- 4 | **Summary position for 2022/23**
- 5 | **Open investment and savings proposals**
- 6 | **Fairer investment and savings proposals**
- 7 | **Greener investment and savings proposals**
- 8 | **Central budgets and funding activity**
- 9 | **Final budget consultation comments**

1 | Our corporate priorities

Our corporate plan sets out the vision and priorities over the next four years. Our vision is for a more **Open**, **Fair** and **Green** Cheshire East.



Open - We will provide strong community leadership and work transparently with our residents, businesses and partners to deliver our ambition in Cheshire East.

Fair - We aim to reduce inequalities, promote fairness and opportunity for all and support our most vulnerable residents

Green - We will lead our communities to protect and enhance our environment, tackle the climate emergency and drive sustainable development

- The vision is ambitious, long-term and includes actions that will help us towards achieving our priorities.

- Our ability to achieve them all will depend on the resources we have at our disposal. This means that our corporate plan and the budget are intrinsically linked.

- The plan also relies on the council demonstrating a set of values that support success.

Our Priorities

An open and enabling organisation

- Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making
- Listen, learn and respond to our residents, promoting opportunities for a two-way conversation
- Support a sustainable financial future for the council, through service development, improvement and transformation
- Look at opportunities to bring more income into the borough
- Support and develop our workforce to be confident, motivated, innovative, resilient and empowered
- Promote and develop the services of the council through regular communication and engagement with all residents

A council which empowers and cares about people

- Work together with residents and partners to support people and communities to be strong and resilient
- Reduce health inequalities across the borough
- Protect and support our communities and safeguard children, adults at risk and families from abuse, neglect and exploitation
- Be the best Corporate Parents to our children in care
- Support all children to have the best start in life
- Increase opportunities for all children and young adults with additional needs
- Ensure all children have a high quality, enjoyable education that enables them to achieve their full potential
- Reduce the reliance on long term care by improving services closer to home and providing more extra care facilities, including dementia services

A thriving and sustainable place

- A great place for people to live, work and visit
- Welcoming, safe and clean neighbourhoods
- Reduce impact on the environment
- Be a carbon neutral council by 2025
- A transport network that is safe and promotes active travel
- Thriving urban and rural economies with opportunities for all

Our Values



2 | Spending within resources

Cheshire East Council gets income from council tax, business rates, government grants and local fees and charges.

Since 1st April 2019 the council has not received any central government general-purpose revenue support grant (it was worth £55.9million to us in 2013/14). To maintain spending on vital services the council has therefore had to increase council tax and fees and charges.

We receive more money when new houses are built, and new residents begin to pay council tax. However, increasing population, and a population that is living longer with new needs, does increase overall costs of services. It is a difficult challenge to manage increases in demand as well as unavoidable costs such as inflation on the things we use and the wages we pay.

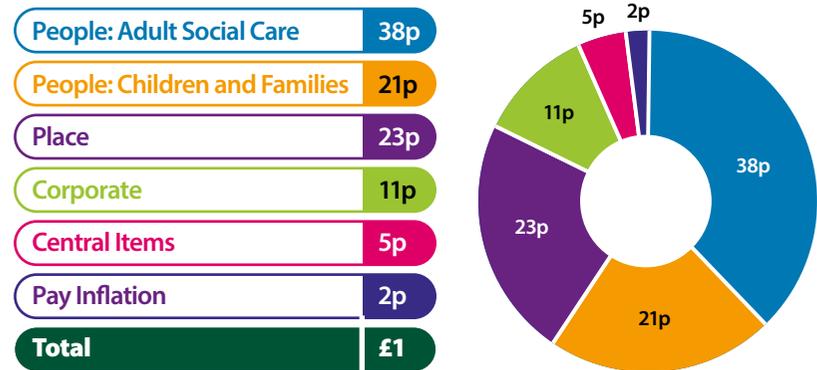
Almost 40% of the budget is spent on supporting older people in care homes or in the community, people with a physical or learning disability or mental ill health. About 20% is spent protecting our most vulnerable young people who need to come into the care of the local authority or ensuring our children with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) are supported to live full and active lives.

The council's finances are audited, with reports to central government and independent external auditors that provide an opinion on the quality of the council's arrangements. Services are also inspected by external bodies such as OFSTED, CQC and the Local Government Ombudsman. If there ever is a risk that a council is not going to achieve a balanced budget in-year or in the future, it must take immediate action.

When the council agreed its budget in February 2021, it was balanced for a four year period. This consultation again sets out a balanced position, but with several potential changes within that reflecting improved estimates and emerging information on costs and financial pressures.

How is £1 of your Council Tax spent?

In February 2021, Cheshire East Council agreed it would spend each £1 of its budget for the year April 2021 to March 2022 in the following areas:



2 | Spending within resources cont'd

Within budget so far

The good news is that this year, the council is again living within its means. The Financial Review 2021/22 is balanced to within 0.7% of the revised budget that was agreed for the year. In-year spending on Children's Services reflects the most significant ongoing financial pressure. This challenge was identified at the end of last year and is a significant factor in the changes to the financial plans looking ahead. Mitigating action across all services will continue during the final quarter of the year to try and achieve an overall balanced position without having to rely on reserves.

COVID-19 continues to have a local impact, with council spending (or lost income) of £10m in excess of what would normally be expected. Government grants and good financial control locally means the council is currently forecasting that the impact of COVID-19 should not reduce council reserves. Longer term effects of COVID-19 are still a factor in public sector finances and the council continues to work with government and our partners to support local people and businesses in an appropriate affordable way.

Council Tax and funding allocations

Since setting the financial strategy in February 2021 the council has experienced ongoing increases in the costs of caring for children, and although the budget was increased for 2021/22 it has not been sufficient. The council is also having to manage increasing costs from a nationally negotiated pay award and local decisions not to increase income targets in car

parking. There is further significant financial pressure on some care providers partly due to changes brought about by COVID-19 and increases to minimum wages. There continues to be ongoing growth in costs for adult social care and waste services due to an increasing population. These financial pressures are addressed within this consultation document through efficiencies and increasing income from council tax and government grants.

On 27th October, the Chancellor announced the Spending Review 2021 that will cover the next 3 years (2022/23 to 2024/25). Details of the actual funding allocations for each local authority will not be announced until the provisional settlement in December 2021 but broadly there is due to be an extra £1.6bn for local authorities in each of the next three years. This funding will help the council in managing the increasing costs of complex care, stabilisation of the care market and rising inflation as well as including funding to manage cyber threats.

Council tax thresholds will remain at similar levels to recent years, with the threshold for "core" council tax increases remaining at 1.99%. There is also an expectation from central government that some demand growth in adult social care will be funded by a further annual precept of 1%.

Final confirmation of the threshold limits will be in the provisional settlement in December but for the purpose of presenting these budget estimates we have **increased council tax in each year by 2.99%** in order to manage ongoing demand for services.

Government have also made announcements about the Social Care Levy, funded from increasing national insurance contributions. The levy will support the NHS and help keep down the overall care costs for individuals. At this stage the full financial implications on the council are not known. This consultation therefore assumes that any new income from the new levy will be matched by expenditure. We have therefore taken the approach of not including it within this consultation. As more information is shared, we will be able to publicise the impact on local people and organisations.

Use of Reserves

It is essential to balance resources against forecast spending levels, as the council continues to have relatively low levels of reserves. Reserves cannot therefore be used to regularly manage the risk of potential reductions in income or unachievable savings proposals. Therefore, the proposals contained within this document aim to address all key areas of risk and cover the planned and estimated increases in spending to keep up with demand. Reliance on reserves is kept to a minimum to manage in-year variations and specific spending.

3 | Spending on our priorities for next year (Summary)

We will continue to invest in our priorities, support our most vulnerable residents and meet the needs of a growing population. Detailed proposals to change the 2022/23 budget are included in Section 5. Proposals previously consulted on are also included at [Appendix A](#). The total of all these budget changes result in a net change to each Directorate as follows:

Service Area (+£ Net increase)	Spending Priorities
<p>+£2.9m in 2022/23 for Children’s Services (Services include Social Care for Children, Education and Prevention services)</p>	<p>Despite significant financial challenges, we plan to invest in children’s services. There will be increases in spending to meet the needs of the growing numbers of children in care, care leavers, education (including more school places) and early help. Social Care spending is proposed to increase by £4m, which is mitigated by lower travel costs and removing one-off transformation funding provided in 2021/22. There will also be investment in SEND services.</p>
<p>+£0.3m in 2022/23 for Adult Services (Services include Social Care for Adults, Public Health and Communities)</p>	<p>We plan to increase spending by £4m to meet the needs of the growing numbers of older people who often have complex care needs and younger adults who are living with very complex needs. However, we aim to transform care services where possible to mitigate some of the growing cost pressures and drive efficiencies in every aspect of the service to provide best value for money.</p>
<p>+£0.6m in 2022/23 for Place Services (Services include Highways, Waste, Environmental Management, Economic Development, Planning and Leisure)</p>	<p>As more houses are being built, we need to ensure we can increase the level of services such as waste collection to meet this demand. The financial strategy previously included additional potential income from car parking, but local decisions not to proceed with this approach mean income must be made up in other ways. These requirements will be offset by service reviews and efficiencies elsewhere within the Directorate.</p>
<p>+£0.4m in 2022/23 for Corporate Services (Services include Legal and Democratic Services, ICT, Finance, HR and Customer Services)</p>	<p>We continue to invest in modern technology and efficient ways of working. We have completely changed how we work since the pandemic and all staff who can work from home continue to do so for the majority of the time. This will help us to reduce our premises and mileage costs to allow us to invest in other parts of our support services.</p>
<p>+ Additional Budgets (Across all services to manage items such as pay inflation and the ongoing costs of the capital programme)</p>	<p>Pay inflation is set to increase the budget by £5.5m in 2022/23 as we also need to catch up from the unbudgeted, likely, nationally agreed pay increase from 2021/22. The costs of the capital programme which reflect the Council’s requirement to borrow money to fund significant infrastructure schemes will also increase by £4m for next year.</p>

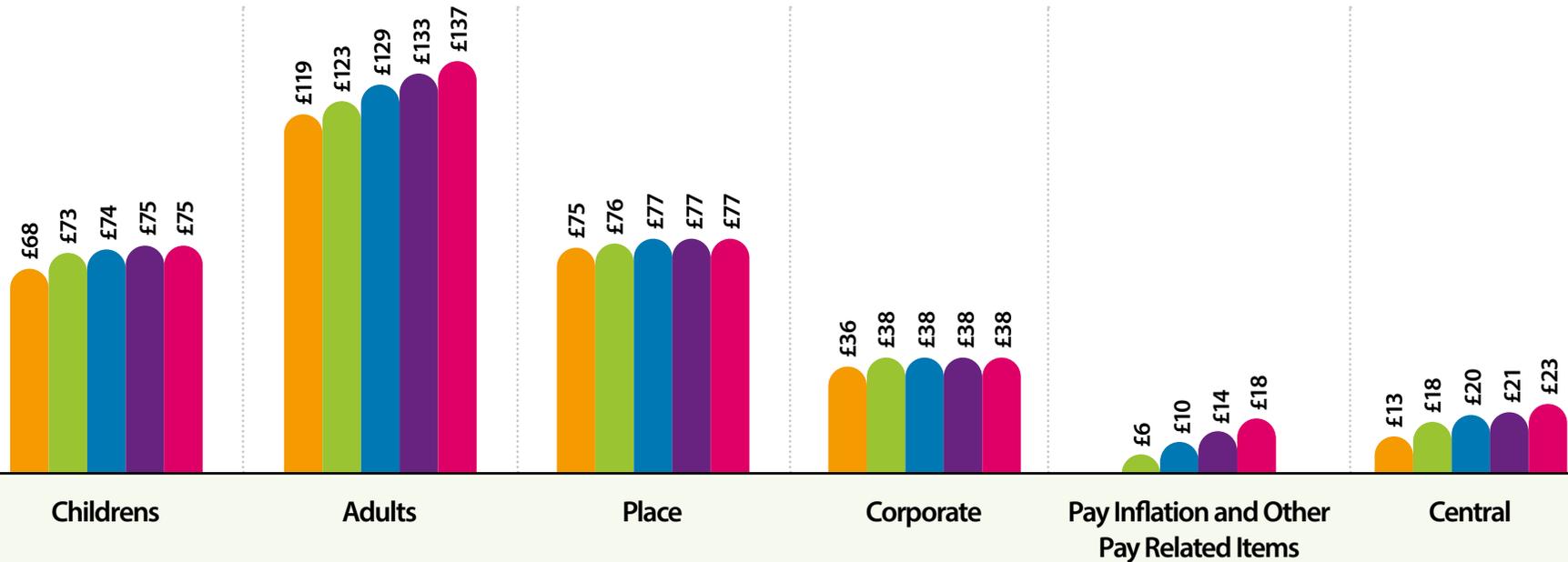
3 | Spending on our priorities for next year (Summary) cont'd

Revenue Budget (for day-to-day spending)

MTFS Budgets, by service area (£million)

This chart shows the proposed budget for each year up to 2025/26 for each of the directorates at Cheshire East, plus the planned budget increases required for pay inflation and central services.

There is planned increased investment overall in all areas over the medium term. The increase in budgets is growing at a faster rate in our people based services for Children and Adults.



● 2021/22 ● 2022/23 ● 2023/24 ● 2024/25 ● 2025/26

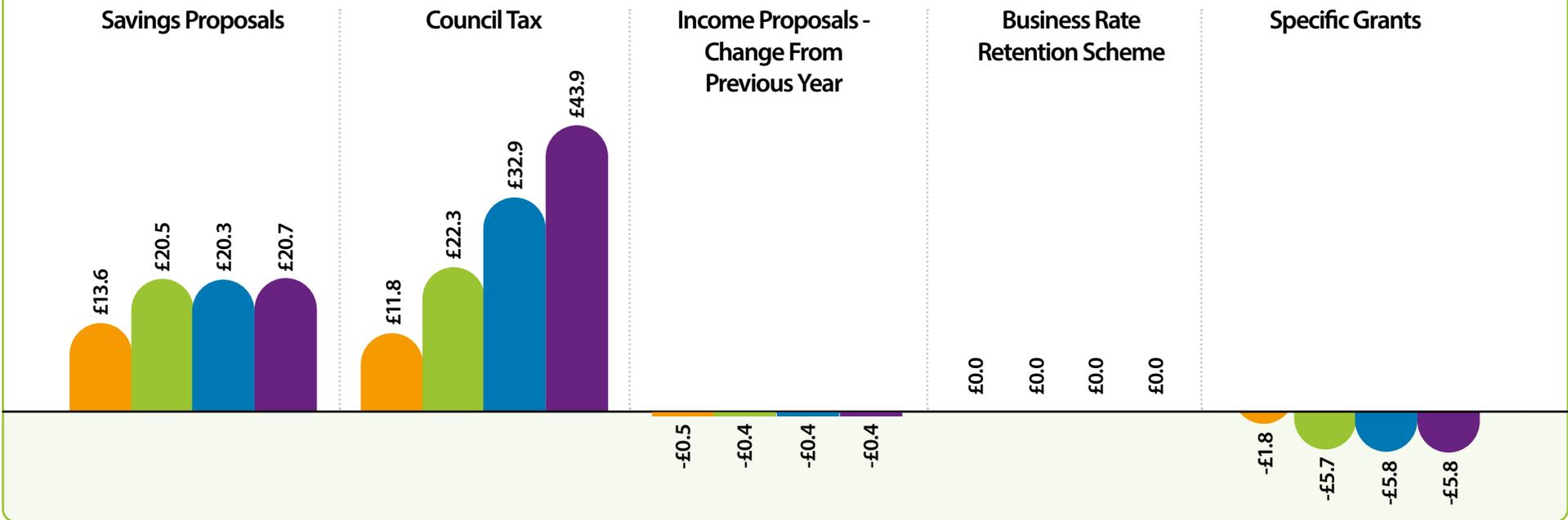
3 | Spending on our priorities for next year (Summary) cont'd

Funding, income and savings

Funding, income and savings proposals - cumulative change (£million)

This chart shows the change in funding, income and savings proposals over the medium term. Council tax is steadily increasing while business rates are forecast to plateau due to the uncertainties around the future of the Business Rates Retention Scheme. Specific grants available to support the general revenue budget continue to decline over the

medium term (although this remains a prudent estimate until firm allocations are released in December 2021). Some proposed car parking charge increases are no longer being implemented as planned (as shown by the negative income stream compared to current budget levels).



● 2021/22 ● 2022/23 ● 2023/24 ● 2024/25

3 | Spending on our priorities for next year (Summary)

cont'd

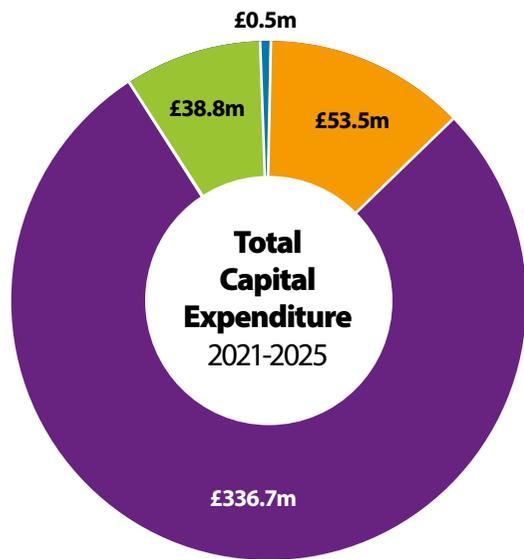
Capital Budget (for spending on projects)

These charts show the 2021-2025 Capital Programme expenditure for the council as well as how the programme is to be funded.

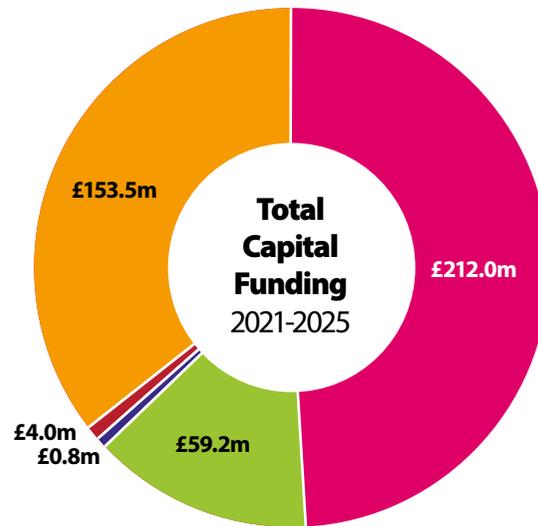
The Place Directorate, which is responsible for Highways and Regeneration projects, is responsible for almost 80% of the programme overall.

Over 60% of the programme is to be funded from external resources, such as government grants and contributions from developers.

Borrowing is mainly funded from the council's net budget.

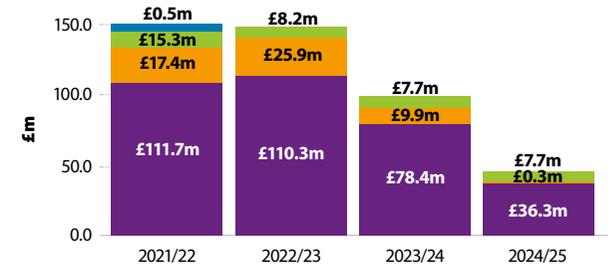


- Adults, Health and Integration
- Children's Services
- Place
- Corporate



- Government Grants
- Prudential Borrowing
- Revenue Contributions
- Capital Receipts
- External Contributions

Capital Expenditure
2021/22 to 2024/25



- Adults, Health and Integration
- Children's Services
- Place
- Corporate

4 | Summary position for 2022/23

We are consulting on our plans to increase spending each year across the range of council priorities. To fund the increasing cost of services the council expects to increase council tax in line with government inflation targets.

Estimated Net Budget				
	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m
Service Budgets	298.5	309.1	315.5	324.6
Proposed changes as follows:				
Open	+2.2	+2.2	+4.2	+4.1
Fair	+6.6	+3.7	+4.5	+4.4
Green	+1.8	+0.5	+0.4	-
Total Service Budgets	309.1	315.5	324.6	333.1
Total Central Budgets (Net of Reserves)	12.1	12.1	13.7	16.1
TOTAL Service + Central Budgets	321.2	327.6	338.3	349.2
Funded by				
Council Tax	-254.7	-265.1	-275.8	-286.7
Business Rate Retention Scheme	-49.1	-49.1	-49.1	-49.1
Revenue Support Grant	-	-	-	-
Specific Unringfenced Grants	-17.4	-13.4	-13.4	-13.4
TOTAL Funded by	-321.2	-327.6	-338.3	-349.2
Balanced Position	-	-	-	-



Your views matter

For options on how to complete this survey, including digitally or in paper format, please see 'Giving your feedback' on page 2.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the council spends money wisely?

- Strongly agree
- Tend to agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

5 | Open Investment and Savings Proposals

New or revised investment proposals

The following table presents the 'Open' investment proposals that are new or revised within this year's budget setting process – you can comment on any of these proposals in the following survey. Investments are areas where the council is proposing to increase spending.

Please note within the following tables positive numbers represent a budget growth, while negative numbers represent a budget saving.

	Open – Investment	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m
Listen. Learn	1) Improving Digital Customer Experience [New for 2022/23 Budget] This proposal directly supports the implementation of the agreed Customer Experience Strategy which will improve customer responsiveness and delivery.	0.110	-	-	-
	2) Pay inflation [Change to item 3 in 2021/22 Budget] This proposal includes incremental increases for eligible staff and nationally negotiated pay awards. Average increases are forecast at c.2.5%. This may not apply evenly across pay bands due to implications of the Living Wage. The proposals recognise the additional delayed impact of the 2021/22 pay negotiations that also affect the 2022/23 budget.	5.536	3.873	3.964	4.062
Financial Sustainability	3) National Insurance increase at 1.25% for social care funding [New for 2022/23 Budget] The planned introduction of a national Social Care Levy will increase national insurance contributions for all employers. As the council is part of the public sector, government will provide compensation for such payments. Although not confirmed these costs are currently mitigated in full through increased grant.	0.913	-	-	-
	4) Improved Debt Recovery and correcting budgeted court costs income targets to reflect actual levels [Change to item 16 in 2021/22 Budget] Improving debt collection will reduce income from court costs, which are already forecasting a budget shortfall. This is positive in many respects, although it does reflect an income deficit. The council will continue to innovate with debt collection improvements that recognise the circumstances of those in debt.	0.337	0.013	-0.024	-

5 | Open Investment and Savings Proposals cont'd

	Open – Investment	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m
Commercial Opportunities	5) Transactional Service Centre additional funding [New for 2022/23 Budget] Transactional Service is a shared service with Cheshire West and Chester. The TSC Team budget is again unbalanced due to a loss of income (primarily from schools opting out), additional costs of the new Unit4 governance and support team, and inflation costs to the base budgets.	0.238	-	-	-
	6) Vendor Management Phase 3 [New for 2022/23 Budget] Continuing improvements to the council procurement and contract management process have seen the rollout and adoption of a new system. The system, Atamis, is a cloud-based contract lifecycle management (CLM) solution across Cheshire East Council, by the Corporate Procurement Team.	0.175	-0.089	0.071	-
	7) Unified IT Communications [Change to item 44 in 2021/22 Budget] Additional funding required to modernise the communication systems including telephony and video conferencing, to further enable the Flexible and Mobile Working (FMW) strategy by enabling corporate calling from most devices in most locations and improve video calling between corporate locations.	0.110	0.009	0.017	-
Workforce	8) IT Security and Compliance [New for 2022/23 Budget] Cyber threats are increasing in both quantity and sophistication, with sources ranging from individuals, professional groups, and international actors. Additional investment would be needed from CEC to ensure the council continues to have an appropriate security and compliance posture, capability, and capacity across our ICT platforms.	0.097	0.006	0.006	-
	9) IT Procurements and Application Lifecycle Management [Change to items 45, 46, 47 in the 2021/22 Budget] Additional funding would be needed for the council's key line of ICT business systems from initial procurement, to implementation, maintenance and decommissioning. The benefits of robust Application Lifecycle Management (ALM) will be modern business systems that are secure, supportable and compliant.	0.075	0.075	0.078	-
	10) Information Assurance and Data Management Phase 3 [New for 2022/23 Budget] The Information Assurance and Data Management (IADM) programme phase 3, will deliver key projects that will underpin the safeguarding of information and enhance its use.	0.040	-	-	-
	Open – Investment	7.631	3.887	4.112	4.062

5 | Open Investment and Savings Proposals cont'd



Your views matter

For options on how to complete this survey, including digitally or in paper format, please see 'Giving your feedback' on page 2.

Do you support or oppose each of the new or revised investments under Open?

Investments are areas where the council is proposing to increase spending. Please tick one box only in each row:

	Support	Oppose	No opinion / Don't know
1 Improving Digital Customer Experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2 Pay inflation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3 National Insurance increase at 1.25% for social care funding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4 Improved Debt Recovery and correcting budgeted court costs income targets to reflect actual levels	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5 Transactional Service Centre additional funding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6 Vendor Management Phase 3	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7 Unified IT Communications	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8 IT Security and Compliance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9 IT Procurements and Application Lifecycle Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10 Information Assurance and Data Management Phase 3	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If you wish to comment on any of the new or revised investments under **Open** please do so below – Please clearly state which investment you are commenting on. Please write in below:

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5 | Open Investment and Savings Proposals cont'd

New or revised savings proposals

The following table presents the 'Open' savings proposals that are new or revised within this year's budget setting process – you can comment on any of these proposals in the following survey. Savings are areas where the council is proposing to decrease spending.

	Open – Savings	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m
Financial Sustainability	11) Removal of temporary implementation budget and investment to run the new Financial System [Change to Item 5 in the 2021/22 Budget] Implementation costs for the council core financial system can now be removed from the ongoing revenue budget. Inflation costs of the new system need to be reflected to ensure estimates are robust in respect of the whole life costs of the system.	-0.453	0.006	0.006	0.006
Workforce	12) Staff Travel and related savings [Change to item 14 in the 2021/22 Budget] Staff travel savings will be derived from changes to working practices since COVID-19, some of which will continue in the future. A review of other terms and conditions will be undertaken to ensure that the council is aligned with other Local Authorities in its application of terms and conditions.	-0.525	-	-	-
	Open – Total savings	-0.978	0.006	0.006	0.006
	Open – Net budget change	6.653	3.893	4.118	4.068

5 | Open Investment and Savings Proposals cont'd



Your views matter

For options on how to complete this survey, including digitally or in paper format, please see 'Giving your feedback' on page 2.

Do you support or oppose each of the new or revised savings under Open?

Savings are areas where the council is proposing to decrease spending. Please tick one box only in each row

	Support	Oppose	No opinion / Don't know
11 Removal of temporary implementation budget and investment to run the new Financial System	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12 Staff Travel and related savings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If you wish to comment on any of the new or revised savings under **Open** please do so below – Please clearly state which savings you are commenting on. Please write in below:

Previously agreed proposals

The following table presents the 'Open' investment and savings proposals agreed during last years' budget setting process that have not changed since then. Detail on these can be found in the [MTFS 2021-25](#).

	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m
Open – Previously approved MTFS proposals – February 2021				
See Appendix A (for further details see MTFS 2021-25)	-4.394	-1.656	0.076	-

6 | Fair Investment and Savings Proposals

New or revised investment proposals

The following table presents the 'Fair' investment proposals that are new or revised within this year's budget setting process – you can comment on any of these proposals in the following survey. Investments are areas where the council is proposing to increase spending.

Please note that within the following tables positive numbers represent a budget growth, whilst negative numbers represent a budget saving.

Fair – Investment		2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m
Reduce Reliance	13) Investment in Adult Social Care [Change to item 57 in the 2021/22 Budget] The Adult Social Care (Operations and Commissioning) and Public Health budgets remain under continued pressure across the country. The rising cost of social care in Cheshire East is driven by two main factors: increasing demand for services and the increasing costs of providing them. Unit costs are driven mainly by workforce costs and reflect current difficulties with the recruitment of staff. Demand for social care is related directly to the number of people who need personal care or support to help them live their lives.	4.000	3.500	4.000	4.000
	14) Care fee uplifts [New for 2022/23 Budget] Cheshire East Council has a duty under the Care Act 2014 to “promote the efficient and effective operation of a market in services for meeting care and support needs.” In delivering this obligation, councils must ensure the sustainability of the market and that there are sufficient high-quality services available to meet the care and support needs of adults in the area. This business case proposes a fee uplift for delivering care at home.	-	2.000	-	-
Safeguard Children	15) Investment in Cared for Children and Care Leavers and other pressures [Change to items 75, 77 in the 2021/22 Budget] Cheshire East Council has corporate parenting responsibility for over 500 cared for children and young people. The COVID-19 pandemic has increased demand and complexity across the spectrum of need. The pandemic has also impacted upon our ability to recruit new foster carers at the pace that we require and fully mobilise our block residential contract, resulting in a financial pressure. The impact of the pandemic remains visible nationally in relation to demand for statutory services and sufficiency challenges. Figures are under review and may be revised following further analysis of demand and pressures.	4.000	0.400	0.400	0.400

6 | Fair Investment and Savings Proposals cont'd

Fair – Investment		2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m
Safeguard Children	16) Increase capacity to support Statutory SEND service [New for 2022/23 Budget] Additional SEND service capacity required due to the growth in the number of children with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) and the need to comply with statutory timescales for annual reviews, ensure co-production and improve communications with families. Figures are under review and may be revised following further analysis of demand and pressures.	0.400	0.200	0.120	-
	17) Revenue costs for Crewe Youth Zone [New for 2022/23 Budget] Growth for running costs of Crewe Youth Zone for three years (to be funded through restructure of Early Help Budget).	-	-	-	0.400
	18) Safeguarding Children – legacy staffing pressure [New for 2022/23 Budget] In previous years children’s social care has increased its frontline capacity due to increased demand and particularly in relation to the need for agency placement. The service continues to experience high demand and is not in a position to offset legacy savings. This has been exacerbated by the impact of the pandemic where complexity across the spectrum of need has increased and frontline capacity is essential.	0.390	-	-	-
	19) Growth in Children & Families Commissioning Contracts [New for 2022/23 Budget] Growth to correct a legacy pressure in the Children and Families commissioning budget.	0.180	-	-	-
	20) Increase capacity to support Statutory Education Psychology Service [New for 2022/23 Budget] Growth in the number of children with Education Health and Care Plans requires additional Educational Psychology capacity to carry out statutory work. Figures are under review and may be revised following further analysis of demand and pressures.	0.125	0.063	-	-
Fair – Total investment		9.095	6.163	4.520	4.800

6 | Fair Investment and Savings Proposals cont'd



Your views matter

For options on how to complete this survey, including digitally or in paper format, please see 'Giving your feedback' on page 2.

Do you support or oppose each of the new or revised investments under Fair?

Investments are areas where the council is proposing to increase spending. Please tick one box only in each row.

	Support	Oppose	No opinion / Don't know
13 Investment in Adult Social Care	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14 Care fee uplifts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15 Investment in Cared for Children and Care Leavers and other pressures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16 Increase capacity to support Statutory SEND service	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17 Revenue costs for Crewe Youth Zone	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18 Safeguarding Children – legacy staffing pressure	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19 Growth in Children & Families Commissioning Contracts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20 Increase capacity to support Statutory Education Psychology Service	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If you wish to comment on any of the new or revised investments under **Fair** please do so below – Please clearly state which investment you are commenting on: Please write in below:

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6 | Fair Investment and Savings Proposals cont'd

New or revised savings proposals

The following table presents the 'Fair' savings proposals that are new or revised within this year's budget setting process – you can comment on any of these proposals in the following survey. Savings are areas where the council is proposing to decrease spending.

Fair – Savings		2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m
Safeguard Children	21) A redesign of Early Help Services into a Locality model [Change to items 10, 11, 50, 72 in 2021/22 Budget] We will redesign Early Help Services to a Locality Model. This will support us to achieve better outcomes for children as it will enable services to be strongly connected to communities which will support strong joint partnership working and information sharing. The redesign will result in a reduction in the budget for Early Help Services, but this will be offset by funding from external grants, including the Supporting Families Grant.	-0.424	-	-	-
	22) Restructure Early Help Budget to fund Crewe Youth Zone [New for 2022/23 Budget] Restructure of Early Help Budget to fund Crewe Youth Zone for three years.	-	-	-	-0.400
Fair – Total savings		-0.424	-	-	-0.400
Fair – Net budget change		8.671	6.163	4.520	4.400

6 | Fair Investment and Savings Proposals cont'd



Your views matter

For options on how to complete this survey, including digitally or in paper format, please see 'Giving your feedback' on page 2.

Do you support or oppose each of the new or revised savings under Fair?

Savings are areas where the council is proposing to decrease spending. Please tick one box only in each row.

Support

Oppose

No opinion / Don't know

21 | A redesign of Early Help Services into a Locality model

22 | Restructure Early Help Budget to fund Crewe Youth Zone

If you wish to comment on any of the new or revised savings under Fair please do so below – Please clearly state which savings you are commenting on: Please write in below:

Previously agreed proposals

The following table presents the 'Fair' investment and savings proposals agreed during last years' budget setting process that have not changed since then. Details on these can be found in the [MTFS 2021-25](#).

	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m
Fair – Previously approved MTFS proposals				
See Appendix A (for further details see MTFS 2021-25)	-2.100	-2.450	-	-

7 | Green Investment and Savings Proposals

New or revised investment proposals

The following table presents the 'Green' investment proposals that are new or revised within this year's budget setting process – you can comment on any of these proposals in the following survey. Investments are areas where the council is proposing to increase spending.

Please note that within the following tables positive numbers represent a budget growth, whilst negative numbers represent a budget saving.

	Green – Investment	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m
Transport	23) Parking service – postponement of review of charges [Change to item 88 in 2021/22 Budget] This business case updates a prior year's proposal to align parking operational arrangements with corporate priority outcomes through changes to the borough's car parking provision. Following a decision at the Highways Committee in September 2021, these proposals will not be taken forward at this time.	0.504	-	-	-
	24) Local Supported Buses [Change to item 89 in 2021/22 Budget] The planned efficiency savings are no longer considered to be achievable at this time following market testing of options and taking into account the bus sectors prolonged recovery from the pandemic.	0.008	-0.012	-	-
	25) School Transport [Change to item NEW in 2021/22 Budget] Review of current school transport budget requirements as a result of an increase in eligible children, in particular those with SEND, and rising costs of school transport provision. Figures are under review and may be revised following further analysis of demand and pressures.	0.150	-0.050	-0.150	-
	Green – Total investment	0.662	-0.062	-0.150	-

7 | Green Investment and Savings Proposals cont'd



Your views matter

For options on how to complete this survey, including digitally or in paper format, please see 'Giving your feedback' on page 2.

Do you support or oppose each of the new or revised investments under Green?

Investments are areas where the council is proposing to increase spending. Please tick one box only in each row.

	Support	Oppose	No opinion / Don't know
23 Parking service – postponement of review of charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24 Local Supported Buses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
25 School Transport	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If you wish to comment on any of the new or revised investments under **Green** please do so below – Please clearly state which investment you are commenting on: Please write in below:

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7 | Green Investment and Savings Proposals cont'd

New or revised savings proposals

There are no new or revised Green savings proposals being put forward this year.

Previously agreed proposals

The following table presents the 'Green' investment and savings proposals agreed during last years' budget setting process that have not changed since then. Detail on these can be found in the [MTFS 2021-25](#).

	Green – Previously approved MTFS proposals	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m
	See Appendix A (for further details see MTFS 2021-25)	1.158	0.524	0.536	-

7 | Green Investment and Savings Proposals cont'd

Assessing the carbon impact of proposals

As part of our Environment Strategy, the council has committed to its operations becoming carbon neutral by 2025 and to influencing carbon reduction across the borough.



We are also proposing that as part of our Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), we assess the estimated 'net carbon impact' of all new saving and investment proposals that are put forward, to understand how they will contribute to carbon reduction, or the extent of any work we will need to do to compensate for any additional carbon.



Your views matter

For options on how to complete this survey, including digitally or in paper format, please see 'Giving your feedback' on page 2.

Generally speaking, do you support or oppose the introduction of "net carbon impact" assessments for all new saving and investment proposals that are put forward?

Please tick one box only

Support

Oppose

No opinion / Don't know

Support Oppose No opinion / Don't know

If you wish to you can comment on the introduction of "net carbon neutral" assessments for proposals below – this could include comments on anything you would like to see the council do to help combat climate change and reduce emissions. Please write in below:

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8 | Central budgets and funding activity

To ensure openness and transparency the council identifies the use of reserves and other impacts of the council's balance sheet. It considers how these affect the overall requirement to raise council tax to fund local services in a sustainable way.

General reserves were increased by £1.2million at the end of 2020/21 which was achieved ahead of planned targeted increases as a result of a more favourable outturn in April 2021. This takes the level of general reserves to £11.5million to reflect the increasing size of the budget and the associated risks from managing demand led services. However, at the same time, built up reserves from COVID-19 Grants, capital spending and the collection fund will be used to manage the impact of COVID-19 and ongoing costs of borrowing to fund infrastructure costs.

Costs of capital financing will still increase significantly over the medium term though (costing £21million over four years).

The previous strategy for year-on-year increases to contributions to the pensions fund has created a more sustainable position and contributions do not need to continue increasing which will continue to save money over the MTFS (saving £4million over four years).

Council tax provides the most significant funding source for local services and cumulative increase over the MTFS as a result of increased homes and proposed 2.99% annual increases, which will be significant (providing £110million over four years).

Overall, unringfenced grant funding continues to reduce over the medium term despite Spending Review announcements that local government is due to receive an extra £4.8billion over the next three years. There is widespread uncertainty around the allocation methods and the future of the New Homes Bonus Grant and business rates, so at this stage the council is not factoring-in these additional grants.

If the government settlement provides additional funding compared to the forecasts in this document it will help the council improve funding for local priorities and create additional flexibility to respond to the consultation responses.

Investment proposals

The following table presents the 'central budgets and funding activity' investment proposals that are within this year's budget setting process – you can comment on any of these proposals in the following survey. Investments are areas where the council is proposing to increase spending.

Please note within the following tables positive numbers represent a budget growth or reduction in funding, whilst negative numbers represent a budget saving or increased income.

8 | Central budgets and funding activity cont'd

Central budgets and funding activity – Investment / reduction in income		2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m
Financial Sustainability	26) Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Councils are required to charge a minimum amount to their revenue account each year, to finance the cost of capital expenditure. This ensures that the revenue costs of repaying debt are spread over the life of the asset. The budget for MRP is included in the capital financing budget along with interest charges, offset by income received on investments. MRP will rise significantly over the period of the MTFS due to the number of major schemes in the capital programme that are to be funded by borrowing. These include: Highways Improvements; Crewe and Macclesfield Town Centre regeneration schemes; Congleton Leisure Centre; Poynton Relief Road and investment in the council's assets and ICT infrastructure.	4.000	1.000	1.000	-
	27) Changes to unringfenced specific grant estimates Unringfenced grant funding estimates continue to reduce over the medium term despite Spending Review announcements that local government is due to receive an extra £4.8billion over the next three years. Prudent estimates have been factored in at this stage due to uncertainties around allocation methods and the future of the New Homes Bonus Grant.	1.755	3.969	0.046	-
Central budgets and funding activity – Total investment / reduction in income		5.755	4.969	1.046	-



Your views matter

For options on how to complete this survey, including digitally or in paper format, please see 'Giving your feedback' on page 2.

Do you support or oppose each of the new or revised investments under 'central budgets and funding activity'?

Investments are areas where the council is proposing to increase spending. Please tick one box only in each row

	Support	Oppose	No opinion / Don't know
26 Minimum Revenue Provision	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
27 Change to unringfenced specific grants estimates	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If you wish to comment on any of the new or revised investments under 'central budgets and funding activity' please do so below – Please clearly state which investment you are commenting on: Please write in below

8 | Central budgets and funding activity cont'd

Savings proposals

The following table presents the central budgets and funding activity savings proposals that are within this year's budget setting process – you can comment on any of these proposals in the following survey. Savings are areas where the council is proposing to decrease spending.

Central budgets and funding activity – Investment / reduction in income		2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m
Financial Sustainability	28) Council tax Each new home brings additional council tax revenue as well as a New Homes Bonus and Community Infrastructure Levy (if applicable). But homes also create additional costs, such as education, waste collection and highways. The council ensures that any subsidy from its general funding sources is carefully examined to achieve maximum value to ensure council tax increases for residents are kept to an overall minimum.	-4.527	-2.807	-2.728	-2.639
	Percentage increases in the base council tax charge brings in additional income to help fund demand growth in vital service areas but has to be considered against the impact on Cheshire East residents (1.99%). Extra adult social care precepts are ringfenced specifically to fund demand led growth in this area (1.00%).	-7.306	-7.622	-7.952	-8.293
	29) Business Rates Retention Scheme New commercial developments can result in additional income being retained to fund local services as well as benefiting local economic wellbeing. This supports the Council's approach to invest in economic growth through unlocking development land and supporting inward investment. Since the baseline funding level for business rates retention was set back in 2013/14, there have been many policy changes around reliefs for different business types. With each policy change, all local authorities are compensated for their share of business rates foregone. Up to and including 2018/19, these compensation grants have been set aside to help smooth changes in business rates that can arise when businesses are revalued or move out of the area. From 2019/20, some of the compensation grants being received are being used to fund the revenue budget. There are no changes forecast to the budget over the medium term due to uncertainties around the future of the Business Rates Retention Scheme.	-	-	-	-

8 | Central budgets and funding activity cont'd

Savings proposals

The following table presents the central budgets and funding activity savings proposals that are within this year's budget setting process – you can comment on any of these proposals in the following survey. Savings are areas where the council is proposing to decrease spending.

Central budgets and funding activity – Investment / reduction in income		2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m
Financial Sustainability	30) Central Pension adjustment For 2020/21 and 2021/22, the past service deficit element of the draw from service budgets is clawing back more than is required to be paid over to the Pensions Service. This is due to the fact the service pension oncost rate was calculated then the rate required by Pensions was reduced. This will result in three years' worth of over recoupment from service budgets from 2020/21 to 2022/23 (if budgets remain at current levels). This is creating a surplus in the central pension budget which is available to support the wider revenue budget.	-2.500	2.100	-	-
	31) Bad Debt Provision – change in provision Outstanding debt is reviewed on a quarterly basis and the bad debt provision is adjusted to reflect the current position. The provision generally increases during the year and this proposal provides an annual budget for a low level of increase to the provision during the year. There is also a plan to reduce adult social care debt by £800,000 by 2023/24.	0.200	-0.800	0.600	-
	32) Use of Earmarked Reserves Some of the proposals within this budget will be funded from specific earmarked reserves set aside to cover planned expenditure, or conversely, money is being put aside to cover future planned projects. Over the medium term, money that has been set aside to cover COVID-19 related shortfalls is being released to help smooth the transition back to normal activity levels. The council continues to have relatively low levels of reserves therefore they cannot be used to regularly manage the risk of potential reductions in income or unachievable savings proposals. Reliance on reserves is kept to a minimum.	-2.270	-2.252	-0.066	2.465
Central budgets and funding activity – Total savings / increases income		-16.403	-11.381	-10.146	-8.467

8 | Central budgets and funding activity cont'd



Your views matter

For options on how to complete this survey, including digitally or in paper format, please see 'Giving your feedback' on page 2.

Do you support or oppose each of the new or revised savings under 'central budgets and funding activity'?

Savings are areas where the council is proposing to decrease spending. Please tick one box only in each row.

	Support	Oppose	No opinion / Don't know
28 Council tax	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
29 Business rates	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
30 Central Pension adjustment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
31 Bad Debt Provision – change in provision	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
32 Use of Earmarked Reserves	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If you wish to comment on any of the new or revised savings under 'central budgets and funding activity' please do so below – Please clearly state which saving you are commenting on: Please write in below

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9 | Final budget engagement comments

For options on how to complete this survey, including digitally or in paper format, please see 'Giving your feedback' on page 2.

If you would like to comment on any other aspect of this budget engagement, please write in below:

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Your views matter

On a scale of 0 to 10 how do you rate this budget engagement overall, where 0 is "not good at all", and 10 is "very good"? Please tick one box only:

- 1 Not good at all
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 Average
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10 Very Good

How could we improve the way we conduct budget engagements? Please write in below

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10 | About you



For options on how to complete this survey, including digitally or in paper format, please see 'Giving your feedback' on page 2.

It would help us to check that we are providing services fairly if you would answer the questions below.

Information you give will be used to see if there are any differences in views for different groups of people, and to check if services are being delivered in a fair and accessible way. You do not need to answer any of the following questions if you do not wish to.

Which of the following best describes how you are you responding to this consultation.

(Please write in the space below):

- On behalf of a group, organisation or club
- On behalf of a local business
- As an individual (e.g. local resident)
- As a Cheshire East Council employee
- As an elected Cheshire East Ward Councillor, or Town/Parish Councillor
- Other (Please write in the space below):

If you are responding on behalf of a group, organisation, club, business, Town / Parish Council, or a Ward please state the name and postcode below if you wish to (you do not need to complete the rest of the 'About you' section).

(Please write in the space below):

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What is your home postcode?

We ask this so we can be sure we have obtained a range of views from across the borough.

(Please write in the space below):

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What is your gender identity? Please tick one box only:

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say
- Prefer to self-describe (Please write in the space below):

What age group do you belong to?

Please tick one box only:

- 16-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-74
- 75-84
- 85 and over
- Prefer not to say

10 | About you cont'd



Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?

This includes problems related to old age.

Please tick one box only:

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

What is your ethnic origin?

Please tick one box only

- White British / English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / Irish
 - Any other White background
 - Mixed: White and Black Caribbean / African / Asian
 - Asian / Asian British
 - Black African / Caribbean / Black British
 - Prefer not to say
 - Prefer to self-describe (Please write in the space below):
-

Which of the following best describes your religious belief / faith?

Please tick one box only:

- Buddhist
 - Christian
 - Hindu
 - Jewish
 - Muslim
 - Sikh
 - None
 - Prefer not to say
 - Prefer to self-describe (Please write in the space below):
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Do you look after, or give any help or support to, anyone because they have long-term physical or mental health conditions or illnesses, or problems related to old age?

Please tick one box only:

- No
- Yes, 9 hours a week or less
- Yes, 10 to 19 hours a week
- Yes, 20 to 34 hours a week
- Yes, 35 to 49 hours a week
- Yes, 50 or more hours a week

Appendix A - MTFS approved February 2021

Open

Fair

Green

The following proposals were consulted on in developing the 2021/22 budget. Most are not proposed for amendment in 2022/23, but where changes are being proposed they are marked as 'Revised' and are included in the tables in the main part of this document. Please note the reference number in the tables below refers to last year's budget reference numbers.

Ref No	Detailed list of proposed budget changes – service budgets - Open	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m
[NEW]	CSC Transformation and OFSTED Response	-1.500	-	-
3	Pay inflationary increase	Revised [see proposal number 2]		
5	Core Financial System	Revised [see proposal number 11]		
6	Mitigation of reduction in the Dedicated Schools Grant (Corporate Services)	0.042	0.033	0.027
7	Mitigation of the year-on-year reduction in the Dedicated Schools Grant (ICT)	0.065	0.089	0.109
9	Continuing Healthcare Reviews	-1.000	-0.500	-
10	Prevention and Early Help Service – Reduction in the cost of Prevention Services	Revised [see proposal number 21]		
11	Reduce the numbers of Business Support Staff in line with the repurposing of Children and Family Centres	Revised [see proposal number 21]		
12	Reduce Base budget assigned to Community Grants	-0.100	-	-
13	Efficiency savings and Restructures within Corporate Services	-0.350	-	-
14	Review Staff Terms and Conditions	Revised [see proposal number 12]		
15	Shared services review	-	-0.200	-
16	Improved Debt Recovery and correcting budgeted court costs income targets to reflect actual levels	Revised [see proposal number 4]		
21	Review of corporate subscriptions	-0.015	-	-
24	Improving customer experience – Highways correspondence		Removed	
25	Transfer of Congleton Visitor Information Centre	-0.020	-0.010	-0.020
26	Regulatory Services and Environmental Health ICT procurement	-0.009	-	-
27	CCTV migration to wireless networks	-0.085	-	-

Appendix A - MTFS approved February 2021

Open

Fair

Green

Ref No	Detailed list of proposed budget changes – service budgets - Open	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m
29	Orbitas income and management fee	0.021	-	-
31	Everybody Sport and Recreation Annual Management Fee	-0.042	-0.041	-0.040
34	Brighter Futures Together Programme Customer Experience	-0.133	-0.081	-
37	Establish an Education Psychologist traded service to enable a proactive early support and intervention offer	-0.025	-0.075	-
38	Establish a traded service for non-statutory elements of Attendance Service	-0.035	-0.035	-
39	Review of governance of ASDVs and seeking increased opportunities for savings/ commercial opportunities	-0.225	-0.100	-
42	Strategic Leisure Review	-0.250	-	-
43	Infrastructure Investment Programme	0.127	0.224	-
44	Unified Communications	Revised [see proposal number 7]		
45	People Directorate - ICT Procurements	Revised [see proposal number 9]		
46	Place Directorate - ICT Procurements	Revised [see proposal number 9]		
47	Corporate Directorate - ICT Procurements	Revised [see proposal number 9]		
48	Productivity and Efficiency in Adult Social Care	-0.500	-0.500	-
49	Estates Transformation - Office Accommodation	-0.100	-0.460	-
50	Prevention and Early Help Service – Locality working and changes to the management structure of the Family Service	Revised [see proposal number 21]		
51	Neighbourhood Estate Review	-0.260	-	-
Total service budget change (February 2021)		-4.394	-1.656	0.076

Appendix A - MTFS approved February 2021

Open

Fair

Green

Ref No	Detailed list of proposed budget changes – service budgets - Fair	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m
57	Investment in Adult Social Care	Revised [see proposal number 13]		
61	Direction of travel for the Communities Team to focus more on the Intervention and Prevention Agenda to make cost savings, growth and future cost avoidance	-0.500	-0.750	-
63	Day Opportunities, Redesign, Strategy and Savings	-0.070	-0.150	-
64	Mental Health Services Review	-0.500	-	-
67	Electronic Call Monitoring Reclamation	-0.030	-	-
72	Move to Integrated Early Help Locality Service model	Revised [see proposal number 21]		
73	Learning Disabilities Future Service Development and Review	-1.000	-1.250	-
75	Reduction in cost of external placements for cared for children	Replaced [see proposal number 15]		
76	Development and Partnerships Service	-	-0.300	-
77	Investment in Cared for Children and Care Leavers	Revised [see proposal number 15]		
Total service budget change (February 2021)		-2.100	-2.450	0.000

Appendix A - MTFS approved February 2021

Open

Fair

Green

Ref No	Detailed list of proposed budget changes – service budgets - Green	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m
80	Tatton Park	-0.006	-0.028	-0.046
81	Asset / Service Transfer	-0.030	-0.020	-
84	Waste Contract Inflation and Tonnage Growth	0.644	0.657	0.613
85	Environment Strategy and Carbon Neutrality	0.020	-0.081	-
86	Tree Risk Management	0.500	-	-
87	Carbon Reduction - Replacement of existing illuminated signs and bollards with LED units	0.030	-0.004	-0.031
88	Parking Strategy	Replaced [see proposal number 23]		
89	Local Supported Buses	Replaced [see proposal number 24]		
[NEW]	Review of Children and Families Transport Policies and delivery arrangements	Replaced [see proposal number 25]		
Total service budget change (February 2021)		1.158	0.524	0.536