

Summons to attend meeting of Full Council



Date: Tuesday, 18 October 2022

Time: 5.00 pm

Venue: The Council Chamber - City Hall, College Green,
Bristol, BS1 5TR

To: All Members of Council

Issued by: Oliver Harrison, Democratic Services

City Hall, PO Box 3399, Bristol, BS1 9NE

Tel: 0117 3526162

E-mail: democratic.services@bristol.gov.uk

Date: Friday, 7 October 2022



Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions

(Pages 7 - 9)

2. Apologies for Absence

3. Declarations of Interest

To note any declarations of interest from the Councillors. They are asked to indicate the relevant agenda item, the nature of the interest and in particular whether it is a **disclosable pecuniary interest**.

Any declarations of interest made at the meeting which is not on the register of interests should be notified to the Monitoring Officer for inclusion.

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

To agree the minutes of the previous meeting as a correct record.

(Pages 10 - 25)

5. Lord Mayor's Business

To note any announcements from the Lord Mayor

6. Public Petitions, Statements and Questions

Public forum items can be about any matter the Council is responsible for or which directly affects the city. Submissions will be treated in order of receipt and **as many people shall be called upon as is possible within the time allowed within the meeting (normally 30 minutes)**.

Further rules can be found within our Council Procedure Rules within the Constitution.

Please note that the following deadlines apply to this meeting:

a. Public petitions and statements: Petitions and written statements must be received by **12 noon on Friday 14 October 2022** at latest. One written statement per member of the public is permitted.

b. Public questions: Written public questions must be received by **5pm**



on

Wednesday 12 October 2022 at latest. A maximum of 2 questions per member of the public is permitted. Questions should be addressed to the Mayor or relevant Cabinet Member.

Public forum items should be e-mailed to

democratic.services@bristol.gov.uk

7. Petitions Notified by Councillors

Please note: Up to 10 minutes is allowed for this item.

Petitions notified by Councillors can be about any matter the Council is responsible for or which directly affects the city. The deadline for the notification of petitions to this meeting is **12 noon on Monday 17 October 2022**.

8. Petition Debate - Enable group to address sewage pollution in the Avon

Recommendation

(Pages 26 - 27)

That Full Council debates the petition and refers it to the Mayor / relevant Cabinet member for a formal response.

9. Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report

Recommendation

(Pages 28 - 65)

That Council note the progress summarised in this annual report, on the delivery of Bristol's Corporate Parenting Strategy overseen by the Corporate Parenting Panel.

10. Appointment of Chief Executive

Recommendation

(Pages 66 - 69)

That Stephen Peacock be appointed to the role of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service with effect from 21 October 2022 until 30 June 2024.



11. Medium Term Financial Plan and Capital Strategy

Recommendation

(Pages 70 - 154)

To note

1. The economic outlook and projections within the 5-year MTFP
2. The Strategic planning approach

To approve

3. Medium Term Financial Plan for the period 2023/24 to 2027/28
4. The Reserve Policy
5. Capital Strategy for the period 2023/24 to 2032/33

12. Motions

Note:

Under the Council’s constitution, 30 minutes are available for the consideration of motions. In practice, this realistically means that there is usually only time for one, or possibly two motions to be considered.

(Pages 155 - 188)

With the agreement of the Lord Mayor, motion 1 below will be considered at this meeting, and motion 2 is likely to be considered, subject to time.

Details of other motions submitted, (which, due to time constraints, are very unlikely to be considered at this meeting) are also set out for information.

MOTIONS RECEIVED FOR FULL COUNCIL

Golden Motion (Conservative)

‘SEND’ SOCIAL MEDIA MONITORING

“This Council remains extremely disturbed over the confirmed actions of local government officers being engaged in the compiling or collating of social media posts belonging to private individuals.

These controversial retrievals, involving the cross-referencing of tweets, photos and Facebook entries made by two prominent SEND campaigners and leading members of the Bristol Parent Carer Forum (BPCF) was profoundly ill-conceived.

The selective monitoring of those who have been ‘rightly’ critical of the Authority’s SEND provision was also, arguably, contrary to the spirit of family law and associated statutory guidelines designed to foster confidence and promote the ‘co-production, collaboration and partnership working’ with those families who rely on these services.



Council believes that such data harvesting by officialdom is not an appropriate use of limited resources, has caused serious reputational damage and harmed particularly sensitive community relations. Moreover, Council is unhappy with this matter being concluded via an internal investigation i.e. effectively the bureaucracy marking its own homework.

In the interests of true transparency, the Mayor is called upon to agree to hold a genuinely independent inquiry, conducted by the LGA or similar appropriate body into all the facts, faults and failings surrounding this incident. The findings of that external body, together with any recommendations of best practice, must then be brought back to Full Council to determine the best way forward towards rebuilding recklessly broken relationships.”

Golden Motion to be moved by Councillor Geoff Gollop (Conservative)

Received 5 October 2022

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Silver Motion (Knowle Community Party)

Improved Communication for Ward Councillors

This council notes the result of the governance referendum. It also notes that over recent years more decisions, which sometimes have major local consequences, are being taken by the central administration or council officers without reference to local ward councillors.

This council calls for improved communication to ward councillors and the adoption of a default position that they should at least be informed and hopefully meaningfully consulted before action is taken that will affect their ward.

This will lead to better informed and more accepted decisions being made.

Proposed by Councillor Gary Hopkins (Knowle Community Party)

Received 21 September

Signed





Proper Officer
Friday, 7 October 2022



Public Information Sheet - Full Council

Public meetings include Cabinet, Full Council, regulatory meetings (where planning and licensing decisions are made) and scrutiny are held at City Hall.

Members of the press and public who plan to attend City Hall are advised that you may be asked to watch the meeting on a screen in another room should the numbers attending exceed the maximum occupancy of the meeting venue.

Fire Safety Information

In event of alarm please calmly leave by the nearest fire exit. The assembly point is by the side of the Cathedral.

COVID-19 Prevention Measures at City Hall (June 2022)

When attending a meeting at City Hall, the following COVID-19 prevention guidance is advised:

- promotion of good hand hygiene: washing and disinfecting hands frequently
- while face coverings are no longer mandatory, we will continue to recommend their use in venues and workplaces with limited ventilation or large groups of people.
- although legal restrictions have been removed, we should continue to be mindful of others as we navigate this next phase of the pandemic.

COVID-19 Safety Measures for Attendance at Council Meetings (June 2022)

We request that no one attends a Council Meeting if they:

- are required to self-isolate from another country
- are suffering from symptoms of COVID-19 or
- have tested positive for COVID-19

Public Forum – Full Council

You can find papers for all our meetings on our website at www.bristol.gov.uk.

Members of the public who live or own a business in Bristol may present a petition, make a written statement or ask a question at Full Council meetings. Please submit it to democratic.services@bristol.gov.uk.

Petitions, Statements and Questions must be about a matter the Council has responsibility for or which directly affects the city. For further information about procedure rules please refer to our Constitution <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/how-council-decisions-are-made/constitution>



Petitions from members of the public

- Petitions will be presented to the Council first.
- Petitions must include name, address and details for the wording of the petition.
- The person presenting a petition will be asked to read out the objectives of the petition with one minute allowed.
- A written reply will be provided to the lead petitioner within 10 working days of the Full Council meeting.

Statements

- Statements should be received no later than **12.00 noon two working days before the meeting**.
- There can be one statement per person and subject to overall time constraints, a maximum of one minute is allocated for presentation.
- Any statement submitted should be no longer than one side of A4 paper.
- For copyright reasons, we are unable to reproduce or publish newspaper or magazine articles that may be attached to statements.

Questions

- Questions should be received no later than **three clear working days before the meeting**.
- A maximum of two written questions per person can be submitted.
- At the meeting, a maximum of one supplementary question per question may be asked, arising directly out of the original question or reply.

By participating in public forum business, we will assume that you have consented to your name and the details of your submission being recorded and circulated to the Committee and published within the minutes. Your statement or question will also be made available to the public via publication on the Council's website and may be provided upon request in response to Freedom of Information Act requests in the future.

We will try to remove personal and identifiable information. However, because of time constraints we cannot guarantee this, and you may therefore wish to consider if your statement contains information that you would prefer not to be in the public domain. Committee information on the council's website may be searchable on the internet.

The information contained within public forum submissions are the views of those individuals and do not reflect the views of Bristol City Council.

Process during the meeting:

- The Lord Mayor will call each submission in turn. When you are invited to speak, please make sure that your presentation focuses on the key issues that you would like Members to consider. This will have the greatest impact.
- If there are a large number of submissions on one matter a representative may be requested to speak on the groups behalf.
- There will be no debate on statements or petitions.
- If you do not attend or speak at the meeting at which your public forum submission is being taken your statement will be noted by Members.
- As part of the drive to reduce single-use plastics in council-owned buildings, please bring your own water bottle in order to fill up from the water dispenser.



Other formats and languages and assistance for those with hearing impairment

You can get committee papers in other formats (e.g. large print, audio tape, braille etc) or in community languages by contacting the Democratic Services Officer. Please give as much notice as possible. We cannot guarantee re-formatting or translation of papers before the date of a particular meeting.

Committee rooms are fitted with induction loops to assist people with hearing impairment. If you require any assistance with this please speak to the Democratic Services Officer.

Arrangements for Full Council

The allocated public gallery for Full Council is available for members of the public to observe the Full Council meeting.

The Lord Mayor has determined:

- Attendees should please be quiet and not interrupt proceedings.
- Large bags will be left at reception.
- All loud hailers, banners, and placards must be left at the main entrance and will not be permitted to be brought into the building.
- The Council reserves the right to remove any person who disrupts the proceedings. In appropriate circumstances, the police may be called.

Under our security arrangements, all members of the public (and bags) will be searched. This applies to all members of the public attending the meeting in the interests of helping to ensure a safe meeting environment for all attending. Visitors' bags are liable to be searched prior to entry, and entry is conditional upon visitors consenting to be searched. Searches are carried out to ensure that no items which may interrupt proceedings are brought into the building. Small notices may be acceptable if they are not obstructive or offensive (no more than A4 size).

The privacy notice for Democratic Services can be viewed at www.bristol.gov.uk/about-our-website/privacy-and-processing-notice-for-resource-services



Bristol City Council Minutes of the Full Council

5 July 2022 at 6.00 pm



Members Present:-

Councillors: Mayor Marvin Rees, Lord Mayor Paula O'Rourke, Donald Alexander, Lesley Alexander, Jenny Bartle, Nicola Beech, Marley Bennett, Fabian Breckels, Andrew Brown, Jos Clark, Sarah Classick, Amirah Cole, Asher Craig, Chris Davies, Carla Denyer, Kye Dudd, Tony Dyer, Richard Eddy, Emma Edwards, Jude English, Lily Fitzgibbon, Martin Fodor, Lorraine Francis, John Geater, Geoff Gollop, Zoe Goodman, John Goulandris, Katy Grant, Fi Hance, Alex Hartley, Tom Hathway, Helen Holland, Gary Hopkins, Katja Hornchen, Jonathan Hucker, Philippa Hulme, Chris Jackson, Ellie King, Tim Kent, Heather Mack, Mohamed Makawi, Brenda Massey, Yassin Mohamud, Graham Morris, Barry Parsons, Ed Plowden, Kevin Quartley, Tom Renhard, Tim Rippington, James Scott, Sharon Scott, Steve Smith, Ani Stafford-Townsend, Lisa Stone, Christine Townsend, Andrew Varney, Mark Weston, David Wilcox and Tim Wye

1 Welcome and Introductions

The Lord Mayor welcomed all attendees to the meeting and issued the safety information.

2 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were heard from Councillors Bailes, Bradshaw, Cheney, Fitzjohn, Goggin, Michallat, Pearce, Poultney and Windows.

3 Declarations of Interest

None received.

4 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

On the motion of the Lord Mayor, seconded by Councillor Hance, it was

RESOLVED:



That the minutes of the previous meetings of Extraordinary Full Council and Annual Full Council held on 24 May 2022 be confirmed as correct record and signed by the Lord Mayor.

5 Lord Mayor's Business

There was none.

6 Public Petitions, Statements and Questions

Public Petitions:

There was one public petition received which was referred to the Mayor for his consideration and response.

PP01	Naomi Raybould	Sommerville Road
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Public Statements:

Full Council received and noted the following statements, which were also referred to the Mayor for his consideration / information.

PS01	Carolyn Magson	Make Bristol a Living Wage City
PS02	David Redgewell	Zero Emissions Transport West of England Committee & Joint Committee
PS03	Karen Self	Bristol celebrates Pride – Trans Rights Are Human Rights
PS04	Eileen Means	Cost of Living Crisis Golden Motion
PS05	Anna Melamed	Resident opposed to SILVER MOTION: TRANS RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS
PS06	(Ald) Anthony Negus	Creating a shared vision for Bristol
PS07	Harry Dring	Issues with upcoming "SILVER MOTION: TRANS RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS"
PS08	Laura J Welti – on Behalf of Bristol Disability Equality Forum	Cost of Living Crisis
PS09	Mark Hubbard – on Behalf of Voscur	Cost of Living Crisis
PS10	Stephen McNamara – Women's Voices Matter	Statement with regard to Full Council agenda item: SILVER MOTION: TRANS RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS



PS11	Wendy Stephenson	Statement with regard to Full Council agenda item: SILVER MOTION: TRANS RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS
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Within the time available, statements PS03, PS04, PS06, PS08, PS10 and PS11 were presented by individuals present at the meeting.

Public Questions:

Full Council noted that the following questions had been submitted:

PQ01	Stephanie French	Bristol Tree Replacement Standard
PQ02&03	Jessica Stewart	Clean Air Zone
PQ04	Karen Self	SEV Nil Cap
PQ05&06	Tom Bosanquet	St Lukes Road Crossing
PQ07	Mark Ashdown	Marksbury Road
PQ08 & PQ09	Anthony Negus	Mayoral Ways of Working
PQ10 & PQ11	David Redgewell	Accessible Railways
PQ12	Helen Faye	Marksbury Road
PQ13&PQ14	Suzanne Audrey	City's System of Governance

Within the time available, the Mayor responded verbally to questions PQ04, PQ 08, PQ09, PQ13 and PQ14 also responding to supplementary questions.

7 Petitions Notified by Councillors

None received.

8 Petition Debate - Residents Against the Mast in Redcatch Park

The Full Council considered a report of the Director – Legal and Democratic Services setting out details of a petition ‘Residents Against the Mast in Redcatch Park’. The petition had reached the 3,500 signature threshold to qualify for a Full Council debate.

Sian Ellis-Thomas, the petition organiser, was invited by the Lord Mayor to present the objectives of the petition.

The Full Council debated the petition.

Following the debate it was:

RESOLVED:



That the petition and the comments from the debate be noted and referred to the Mayor for response.

9 Mayoral Commission Update: Report from Youth Mayors / Youth Council on Manifesto for Year Ahead

Full Council considered a report from the Youth Council on their manifesto for the year ahead.

The members of the Youth Council were invited to present the report.

There was a debate and it was:

RESOLVED

That Full Council note the report.

10 Annual Report for the Equality and Inclusion Strategy

Full Council considered the Annual Report for the Equality and Inclusion Strategy.

Councillor Asher Craig moved the report and the recommendations therein.

There was a debate and it was:

RESOLVED

That Full Council note the report.

11 Motions

Following a short adjournment, it was then moved by the Lord Mayor that standing order CPR2.1(xi) be suspended to allow the meeting to go past the 30 minutes time limit for motions. Following a vote, it was agreed to proceed up until 9.00pm.

Motion 1 – Golden Motion: Cost of Living

Councillor Nicola Beech moved the following motion:

Full Council notes that:

- Inflation has hit a 40-year high of 9%, with the cost of staple foods rising by 13%
- Electricity prices are set to rise by 54%
- Rents in the South-West have increased by 18% since to 2020.

The combination of these factors, as well as factors such as the rising cost of petrol, which has now reached £2 a litre, has left people struggling to make ends meeting.



Women are disproportionately affected by the rise in the cost-of-living. Equally, research has found that people from racially diverse backgrounds are more likely to struggle paying bills, rent, or mortgages than people from white backgrounds, and disabled people will also be disproportionately affected by the increase in the cost-of-living. This shows the cost-of-living crisis could have a profound, negative affect on Bristol's efforts to create a more equal, fairer society.

The rising cost-of-living is exacerbated by continued cuts to benefits. The £34 billion cut from benefits spending by successive Governments has resulted in increased poverty - a figure that will likely increase due to inflation and real-terms benefits cuts.

The continued wage stagnation and rise in insecure working conditions, meaning inflation has a stronger impact on people's discretionary income. Between 1992 and 2008, real wages went up by 36%; for 2008 to 2024 a rise of just 2.4% is expected. Currently, 2.8% of all workers in the United Kingdom were on a zero-hours contract, compared with just 0.4% in the mid-2000s.

This has contributed to in an increase in the use of foodbanks, with some 15% of people using food banks are thought to be in employment, with reliance on foodbanks up at least 25% compared to pre-pandemic levels.

The Labour administration has implemented a number of measures to help mitigate the impact of the cost-of-living crisis. These include suspending the eviction of council tenants, maintaining the Council Tax Reduction Scheme rate at 100%, and introducing the No Cold Homes strategy, which puts the city on track to eliminating fuel poverty by 2028 – among many other things.

Full Council believes:

There is a cost-of-living crisis in the UK.

There is a rent crisis in the UK, which compounds the impact of the cost-of-living crisis for the 58,000 households in Bristol in private rented accommodation.

This cost-of-living crisis' effect on the worst-off has been exacerbated by a decade of austerity, first imposed by the Conservative / Liberal Democrat coalition, and continued by successive Conservative Governments.

The Government U-turn on Labour's demands for a windfall tax on energy firms is welcome, needed, and long overdue. However, further work is needed to help the worst-off during the cost-of-living crisis both in the immediate and it the long term, through work to eradicate poverty from the UK.

Full Council resolves to:



To develop a 'One City' regular system of partnership reporting to help track impact of the crisis at ward level to grow our evidence base for our needs analysis and so we can target our response accurately.

Work with community and voluntary organisations to develop our community response, building on what already exists and taking a social justice approach. Ideas include a network of welcoming space where people can spend time, have access to Wi-Fi, free activities and support

Work with council staff and VCSE organisations to roll out signposting training to ensure we maximise opportunities to inform and support residents in crisis and direct them towards services that can advise on saving money on heating bills, employment and skills and wellbeing support.

Support the development of a 'Pledge My Check' type scheme, where beneficiaries of the £400 relief grant who do not need the additional financial support can donate it to organisations that do and promote this scheme through the Council's social media and websites.

Work to expand the use of the Council's reuse shops, which provide people with cheap household items and supporting our circular economy principles.

Build on our work as a Living Wage City, by encouraging businesses throughout Bristol to end the use of zero-hour contracts and instead give employers secure, fairly paid employment.

Continue to protect the Council Tax Reduction Scheme in full, ensuring the people most affected by the cost-of-living crisis do not have to pay any Council Tax.

Continue to protect children's centres and nurseries as a priority when faced with real-terms Government funding cuts to Local Authorities.

Call on Party Group Leaders to lobby the Government to:

- Keep benefit payments in line with inflation, in a system similar to the state pension 'triple lock'.
- Continue provide free school meals during school holidays and for it to expand eligibility to include anyone in receipt of Universal Credit.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Ellie King

The Liberal Democrat Group had submitted an amendment for this motion prior to the meeting but it was subsequently withdrawn.

Councillor Mark Weston then moved the following amendment on behalf of the Conservative Group:

'That the motion be amended to read as follows:

Full Council notes that:



- Inflation has hit a 40-year high of 9%, with the cost of staple foods rising by 13%
- Electricity prices are set to rise by 54%
- Rents in the South West have increased by 18% since 2020.

The combination of these factors, as well as factors such as the rising cost of petrol, which has now reached £2 a litre, has left people struggling to make ends meeting.

Women are disproportionately affected by the rise in the cost-of-living. Equally, research has found that people from racially diverse backgrounds are more likely to struggle paying bills, rent, or mortgages than people from white backgrounds, and disabled people will also be disproportionately affected by the increase in the cost-of-living. This shows the cost-of-living crisis could have a profound, negative affect on Bristol's efforts to create a more equal, fairer society.

Full Council believes:

There is a cost-of-living crisis in the UK.

There is a rent crisis in the UK, which compounds the impact of the cost-of-living crisis for the 58,000 households in Bristol in private rented accommodation.

Full Council resolves to:

Invest the £900,000 that is being added to the Mayor's Office budget to the Local Crisis Prevention Fund to help those most in need.

To develop a 'One City' regular system of partnership reporting to help track impact of the crisis at ward level to grow our evidence base for our needs analysis and so we can target our response accurately.

Work with community and voluntary organisations to develop our community response, building on what already exists and taking a social justice approach. Ideas include a network of welcoming space where people can spend time, have access to Wi-Fi, free activities and support

Work with council staff and VCSE organisations to roll out signposting training to ensure we maximise opportunities to inform and support residents in crisis and direct them towards services that can advise on saving money on heating bills, employment and skills and wellbeing support.

Support the development of a 'Pledge My Check' type scheme, where beneficiaries of the £400 relief grant who do not need the additional financial support can donate it to organisations that do and promote this scheme through the Council's social media and websites.

Work to expand the use of the Council's reuse shops, which provide people with cheap household items and supporting our circular economy principles.



Build on our work as a Living Wage City, by encouraging businesses throughout Bristol to offer alternatives to use of zero-hour contracts where this is practical to do so and not contrary to employee preferences, and provide more people with access to secure, fairly paid employment.

Continue to protect the Council Tax Reduction Scheme in full, ensuring the people most affected by the cost-of-living crisis do not have to pay any Council Tax.

Continue to protect children's centres and nurseries as a priority.

The amendment was seconded by Councillor John Goulandris.

Following debate, upon being put to the vote, the amendment was LOST (19 For, 37 Against, 2 Abstentions).

There was a debate on the original motion. Following final remarks, upon being put to the vote, the original motion was CARRIED (44 For, 0 against, 14 abstentions) and it was

RESOLVED:

Full Council notes that:

- **Inflation has hit a 40-year high of 9%, with the cost of staple foods rising by 13%**
- **Electricity prices are set to rise by 54%**
- **Rents in the South-West have increased by 18% since to 2020.**

The combination of these factors, as well as factors such as the rising cost of petrol, which has now reached £2 a litre, has left people struggling to make ends meeting.

Women are disproportionately affected by the rise in the cost-of-living. Equally, research has found that people from racially diverse backgrounds are more likely to struggle paying bills, rent, or mortgages than people from white backgrounds, and disabled people will also be disproportionately affected by the increase in the cost-of-living. This shows the cost-of-living crisis could have a profound, negative affect on Bristol's efforts to create a more equal, fairer society.

The rising cost-of-living is exacerbated by continued cuts to benefits. The £34 billion cut from benefits spending by successive Governments has resulted in increased poverty - a figure that will likely increase due to inflation and real-terms benefits cuts.

The continued wage stagnation and rise in insecure working conditions, meaning inflation has a stronger impact on people's discretionary income. Between 1992 and 2008, real wages went up by 36%; for 2008 to 2024 a rise of just 2.4% is expected. Currently, 2.8% of all workers in the United Kingdom were on a zero-hours contract, compared with just 0.4% in the mid-2000s.



This has contributed to an increase in the use of foodbanks, with some 15% of people using food banks are thought to be in employment, with reliance on foodbanks up at least 25% compared to pre-pandemic levels.

The Labour administration has implemented a number of measures to help mitigate the impact of the cost-of-living crisis. These include suspending the eviction of council tenants, maintaining the Council Tax Reduction Scheme rate at 100%, and introducing the No Cold Homes strategy, which puts the city on track to eliminating fuel poverty by 2028 – among many other things.

Full Council believes:

There is a cost-of-living crisis in the UK.

There is a rent crisis in the UK, which compounds the impact of the cost-of-living crisis for the 58,000 households in Bristol in private rented accommodation.

This cost-of-living crisis' effect on the worst-off has been exacerbated by a decade of austerity, first imposed by the Conservative / Liberal Democrat coalition, and continued by successive Conservative Governments.

The Government U-turn on Labour's demands for a windfall tax on energy firms is welcome, needed, and long overdue. However, further work is needed to help the worst-off during the cost-of-living crisis both in the immediate and in the long term, through work to eradicate poverty from the UK.

Full Council resolves to:

To develop a 'One City' regular system of partnership reporting to help track impact of the crisis at ward level to grow our evidence base for our needs analysis and so we can target our response accurately.

Work with community and voluntary organisations to develop our community response, building on what already exists and taking a social justice approach. Ideas include a network of welcoming space where people can spend time, have access to Wi-Fi, free activities and support

Work with council staff and VCSE organisations to roll out signposting training to ensure we maximise opportunities to inform and support residents in crisis and direct them towards services that can advise on saving money on heating bills, employment and skills and wellbeing support.

Support the development of a 'Pledge My Check' type scheme, where beneficiaries of the £400 relief grant who do not need the additional financial support can donate it to organisations that do and promote this scheme through the Council's social media and websites.



Work to expand the use of the Council's reuse shops, which provide people with cheap household items and supporting our circular economy principles.

Build on our work as a Living Wage City, by encouraging businesses throughout Bristol to end the use of zero-hour contracts and instead give employers secure, fairly paid employment.

Continue to protect the Council Tax Reduction Scheme in full, ensuring the people most affected by the cost-of-living crisis do not have to pay any Council Tax.

Continue to protect children's centres and nurseries as a priority when faced with real-terms Government funding cuts to Local Authorities.

Call on Party Group Leaders to lobby the Government to:

- **Keep benefit payments in line with inflation, in a system similar to the state pension 'triple lock'.**
- **Continue provide free school meals during school holidays and for it to expand eligibility to include anyone in receipt of Universal Credit.**

Motion 2 – Silver Motion: Trans Rights are Human Rights

Councillor Andrew Brown moved the following altered motion:

This Council Notes:

- Figures obtained by VICE Worlds News using Freedom of Information Requests to all 45 UK Police Forces showed there were 6,363 reports of hate crimes based on sexual orientation in 2014-15, compared to 19,679 in 2020-21 (210% increase). For reports of transphobic hate crimes, there were 598 in 2014-15 and 2,588 in 2020-21 (332% increase).
- Stonewalls 'School Report' (2017) found:
 - 64% of trans pupils are bullied for being LGBT at school.
 - One in three trans pupils (33%) are not able to be known by their preferred name at school.
 - More than two in five trans young people (45 per cent) have attempted to take their own life.
- Stonewall's 2018 'LGBT in Britain Trans Report' found:
 - 41% of trans people and 31% of non-binary people have experienced a hate crime or incident because of their gender identity in the last 12 months.
 - 12% of trans employees have been physically attacked by colleagues or customers in the last year.
 - 36% of trans university students in higher education have experienced negative comments or behaviour from staff in the last year.
 - 44% of trans people avoid certain streets because they don't feel safe there as an LGBT person. 40% of trans people adjust the way they dress because they fear discrimination or harassment - this number increases significantly 52% of non-binary people.



- 41% of trans people said that healthcare staff lacked understanding of specific trans health needs when accessing general healthcare services in the last year.
- 42% of trans people who would like to undergo medical intervention as part of their transition, haven't done so yet, because they fear the consequences it might have on their family life.
- 62% of trans people who have undergone, or are currently undergoing, medical intervention for their transition are unsatisfied with the time it took to get an appointment.
- Trans Actual UK 'Trans Lives Survey 2021: Enduring the UK's hostile environment' found:
 - Everyday Transphobia – Housing, Employment, Family and Public Transport:
 - 85% of trans people who responded have experienced transphobia from family members, with 26% experiencing it 'frequently' and 13% 'every time'.
 - 85% of trans women reported being subjected to transphobic street harassment from strangers, with 71% of trans men and 73% of non-binary people saying the same.
 - 80% of non-binary people reported having experienced transphobia from colleagues compared to 73% of trans men and 73% of trans women saying the same.
 - 69% of Black people and people of colour (BPOC) respondents reported experiencing transphobia from their line manager at work.

Media Transphobia:

- 99% of trans people surveyed have experienced transphobia on social media, and 97% reported witnessing transphobia in digital and print media.
- 93% of participants reported that media transphobia had impacted their experiences of transphobia from strangers on the street.
- 85% said that transphobic rhetoric in the media has impacted how people in their family treat them, 81% said this was true of their colleagues, and 70% for friends.
- Over 70% of the individuals surveyed felt that media transphobia impacted their mental health to some extent, with nearly two-thirds reporting that it impacted them 'moderately' or 'very much'.
- Just Like Us Report 'Growing Up LGBT+' (2021) highlighted:
 - Transgender staff are the least likely to be out in school (8%).
 - LGBT+ pupils are three times more likely to have witnessed transphobic bullying in comparison to non-LGBT+ pupils (33% vs 10%).
 - 63% of LGBT+ pupils and 57% of non-LGBT+ pupils think a staff member would be supportive of a pupil coming out as transgender, in contrast to 81% of LGBT+ pupils and 80% of non-LGBT pupils think a staff member would be supportive of a pupil coming out as LGB.
 - 84% of young people would be supportive of a friend coming out as transgender.
- Galop's 'Hate Crime Report 2021' found Two-thirds (64%) of respondents had experienced anti-LGBT+ violence or abuse. Out of those who had experienced anti-LGBT+ violence and abuse:
 - 9 in 10 had experienced verbal abuse (92%).
 - 3 in 10 had been subject to physical violence (29%).
 - 2 in 10 had experienced sexual violence (17%).
- In the last 12 months, Stand Against Racism & Inequality (SARI), based in Bristol, has seen 40 referrals come from the LGBTQ+ community in Bristol alone, with concerns about the number of cases that are going unreported.
- The National LGBT Survey (2017), which had over 108,000 responses from people who identify as LGBTQ+ and live in the UK, showed:



- 5% of respondents said they had been offered conversion in an attempt to “cure” them of being lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) in their lifetime.
- 2% said they had undergone conversion therapy.
- 4% of transgender respondents said they had undergone conversion therapy, and 8% reported having been offered it.
- The proposed plan by the Government is to ban conversion therapy in relation to sexual orientation and not gender identity, despite previous promises. In addition, the proposed ban will not now include those over 18 who “consent” to it.
- The Gender Identity Clinic serving the South West (‘The Laurels’) is the worst in the country for waiting times for a 1st appointment.

This Council Believes:

- Bristol is a city that believes in gender equality and solidarity.
- Bristol has a strong history of being a progressive city connected and strengthened by diverse communities that represent it and are embedded in core values of equality, acceptance and solidarity.
- A full ban on conversion therapy is crucial to protect the entire LGBTQIA+ community, including LGBTQIA+ youth. It must extend to clearly protecting relation to sexual orientation, gender identity, and people with intersex variations, including surgical conversion therapy on intersex youth. To ensure this legislation is effective, it must clearly extend to protecting all people with minority sexual orientations and gender identities and who are intersex. This includes clearly stating in the terminology it includes asexual, aromantic, intersex, non-binary, and genderqueer people as well as people with other minority sexual orientations and gender identities.
- A full ban should also include practices even where consent has, nominally, been granted, recognising the disproportionate power relationships that often exist between providers and recipients of conversion therapies.
- More work can be done by the council to ensure all local services are inclusive to trans and non-binary people.

This Council Resolves:

1. To recognise and affirm trans men are men, trans women are women, non-binary and genderqueer people's genders are valid, and trans rights are human rights.
2. Facilitate and strongly encourage all council staff and Councillors to attend training to learn about the challenges faced by trans people.
3. Fly the trans flag on the International Trans Day of Visibility (31st March), International Non-Binary People's Day (14th July) and Trans Day of Remembrance (20th November)
4. Write to the Secretary of State for Health and Adult Social Care to call for the government to:
 - Provide the funding and resources necessary to increase the capacity of and improve access to trans and non-binary healthcare, including expanding gender identity services and reducing waiting times.
 - Develop strategies to recruit more clinicians to become gender identity specialists across all relevant disciplines and train staff across the NHS on issues affecting trans and non-binary people.
 - Commit to effectively and regularly consulting trans and non-binary people and groups in the design and delivery of trans and non-binary healthcare.



5. To work with all four Bristol MPs to help coordinate joint cross-party initiatives within parliament to bring forward a full ban on conversion therapy that includes gender identity.
6. To continue supporting the improvement of services in Bristol to be fully accessible to trans and non-binary people, working with recognised trans-inclusive services and not taking advice from or awarding contracts to organisations that promote an anti-trans agenda or propaganda. This does not preclude the Council using, where appropriate, third-party providers that utilise appropriate exemptions under Equalities Law to provide single-sex services as "a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim."
7. Conduct an audit of Council services to ensure they are as accessible as possible to trans and non-binary people.
8. Look into what we can do as a Council as an employer to support further those who identify as trans and non-binary and to protect them from transphobic harassment within their roles.
9. To ensure there are accessible gender-neutral toilet facilities throughout the Council's property estate and to ensure there are menstrual care dispensers and sanitary bins in all toilets, regardless of gender, and to encourage best practices amongst its Community Toilet Scheme partners.
10. Encourage schools to follow expert legal guidance outlined by the Good Law Project. That it will consider publishing a 'Trans Inclusion Toolkit' for our schools (as available in Brighton). That it will act on any known instances of anti-trans literature or propaganda being sent into our schools.
11. To write to the Home Secretary calling for:
 - An action plan on tackling LGBTQIA+ Hate Crimes within the UK.
 - Prevented deportation of LGBTQIA+ refugees to Rwanda and a review into applications for LGBTQIA+ refugees claiming asylum status within the UK.

Councillor Jenny Bartle seconded the motion.

Following debate, upon being put to the vote, the altered motion was CARRIED (40 For, 12 against, 6 abstentions) it was

RESOLVED:

This Council Notes:

- **Figures obtained by VICE Worlds News using Freedom of Information Requests to all 45 UK Police Forces showed there were 6,363 reports of hate crimes based on sexual orientation in 2014-15, compared to 19,679 in 2020-21 (210% increase). For reports of transphobic hate crimes, there were 598 in 2014-15 and 2,588 in 2020-21 (332% increase).**
- **Stonewalls 'School Report' (2017) found:**
 - **64% of trans pupils are bullied for being LGBT at school.**
 - **One in three trans pupils (33%) are not able to be known by their preferred name at school.**
 - **More than two in five trans young people (45 per cent) have attempted to take their own life.**
- **Stonewall's 2018 'LGBT in Britain Trans Report' found:**
 - **41% of trans people and 31% of non-binary people have experienced a hate crime or incident because of their gender identity in the last 12 months.**
 - **12% of trans employees have been physically attacked by colleagues or customers in the last year.**



- 36% of trans university students in higher education have experienced negative comments or behaviour from staff in the last year.
- 44% of trans people avoid certain streets because they don't feel safe there as an LGBT person. 40% of trans people adjust the way they dress because they fear discrimination or harassment - this number increases significantly 52% of non-binary people.
- 41% of trans people said that healthcare staff lacked understanding of specific trans health needs when accessing general healthcare services in the last year.
- 42% of trans people who would like to undergo medical intervention as part of their transition, haven't done so yet, because they fear the consequences it might have on their family life.
- 62% of trans people who have undergone, or are currently undergoing, medical intervention for their transition are unsatisfied with the time it took to get an appointment.
- Trans Actual UK 'Trans Lives Survey 2021: Enduring the UK's hostile environment' found:
 - **Everyday Transphobia – Housing, Employment, Family and Public Transport:**
 - 85% of trans people who responded have experienced transphobia from family members, with 26% experiencing it 'frequently' and 13% 'every time'.
 - 85% of trans women reported being subjected to transphobic street harassment from strangers, with 71% of trans men and 73% of non-binary people saying the same.
 - 80% of non-binary people reported having experienced transphobia from colleagues compared to 73% of trans men and 73% of trans women saying the same.
 - 69% of Black people and people of colour (BPOC) respondents reported experiencing transphobia from their line manager at work.

Media Transphobia:

- 99% of trans people surveyed have experienced transphobia on social media, and 97% reported witnessing transphobia in digital and print media.
- 93% of participants reported that media transphobia had impacted their experiences of transphobia from strangers on the street.
- 85% said that transphobic rhetoric in the media has impacted how people in their family treat them, 81% said this was true of their colleagues, and 70% for friends.
- Over 70% of the individuals surveyed felt that media transphobia impacted their mental health to some extent, with nearly two-thirds reporting that it impacted them 'moderately' or 'very much'.
- Just Like Us Report 'Growing Up LGBT+' (2021) highlighted:
 - Transgender staff are the least likely to be out in school (8%).
 - LGBT+ pupils are three times more likely to have witnessed transphobic bullying in comparison to non-LGBT+ pupils (33% vs 10%).
 - 63% of LGBT+ pupils and 57% of non-LGBT+ pupils think a staff member would be supportive of a pupil coming out as transgender, in contrast to 81% of LGBT+ pupils and 80% of non-LGBT pupils think a staff member would be supportive of a pupil coming out as LGB.
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This Council Believes:

- Bristol is a city that believes in gender equality and solidarity.
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- A full ban should also include practices even where consent has, nominally, been granted, recognising the disproportionate power relationships that often exist between providers and recipients of conversion therapies.
- More work can be done by the council to ensure all local services are inclusive to trans and non-binary people.

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 - Develop strategies to recruit more clinicians to become gender identity specialists across all relevant disciplines and train staff across the NHS on issues affecting trans and non-binary people.
 - Commit to effectively and regularly consulting trans and non-binary people and groups in the design and delivery of trans and non-binary healthcare.
5. To work with all four Bristol MPs to help coordinate joint cross-party initiatives within parliament to bring forward a full ban on conversion therapy that includes gender identity.
 6. To continue supporting the improvement of services in Bristol to be fully accessible to trans and non-binary people, working with recognised trans-inclusive services and not taking advice from or awarding contracts to organisations that promote an anti-trans agenda or propaganda. This does not preclude the Council using, where appropriate, third-party providers that utilise appropriate exemptions under Equalities Law to provide single-sex services as "a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim."
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 8. Look into what we can do as a Council as an employer to support further those who identify as trans and non-binary and to protect them from transphobic harassment within their roles.
 9. To ensure there are accessible gender-neutral toilet facilities throughout the Council's property estate and to ensure there are menstrual care dispensers and sanitary bins in all toilets, regardless of gender, and to encourage best practices amongst its Community Toilet Scheme partners.
 10. Encourage schools to follow expert legal guidance outlined by the Good Law Project. That it will consider publishing a 'Trans Inclusion Toolkit' for our schools (as available in Brighton). That it will act on any known instances of anti-trans literature or propaganda being sent into our schools.
 11. To write to the Home Secretary calling for:
 - An action plan on tackling LGBTQIA+ Hate Crimes within the UK.
 - Prevented deportation of LGBTQIA+ refugees to Rwanda and a review into applications for LGBTQIA+ refugees claiming asylum status within the UK.

Meeting ended at 9.00 pm

CHAIR _____



Full Council

18 October 2022



Report of: Director Legal and Democratic Services

Title: Petition Debate – ‘Enable group to address sewage pollution in the Avon.’

Recommendation

That Full Council debates the petition and refers it to the Mayor / relevant Cabinet member for a formal response.

Summary

Under the Council’s petitions scheme, where a petition has 3,500 or more signatures from people who live, work or study in Bristol, the petition organiser can request a Full Council debate.

The Council has received a petition with the title ‘Enable group to address sewage pollution in the Avon’.

The petition organisers have requested that Full Council debates the petition.



Details of the petition

1. The wording of the petition is as follows:

Petition title / subject: **'Enable group to address sewage pollution in the Avon.'**

Petition wording:

We the undersigned demand Bristol City Council to support us in addressing the issue of sewage pollution in the River Avon and to amend the 2009 bye-law prohibiting swimming.

Last year, Wessex Water discharged raw sewage directly into the river 23,524 times for a total duration of 151,258 hours.

To address this, community group Conham Bathing has been preparing an application to Defra for Designated Bathing Water Status at Conham River Park (and Eastwood Farm Nature Reserve), a beautiful and historic bathing spot that has been enjoyed by locals for generations. With this status, the Environment Agency would monitor the levels of sewage pollution at the site and be responsible for implementing improvement measures if the water is found to be of persistently poor quality.

The group need the Council's permission to submit the application, as it is the landowner of the site. However, the Council has refused to support their efforts due to the Bristol City Docks Bye-Law 2009: Part V, sub-section 49, which prohibits swimming in the harbour, including the stretch of river at Conham River Park, despite this being some distance away.

We are now demanding the Council amend this bye-law, so we can work towards enhancing and protecting the water quality in this treasured nature reserve, not only for public health, but for the river and the wildlife it supports.

2. The petition has been organised by 'Conham Bathing' (Rebecca Blease)
3. The petition has secured 5257 signatures to date, 5184 from Bristol residents. Verified as of 15 August 2022.
4. The Full Council is asked to debate the petition.
5. Under the petition scheme, the petition organiser is permitted up to 5 minutes to present and speak to the petition. The petition scheme allows a further period of up to 15 minutes for discussion of the petition by councillors at the Full Council meeting.
6. The Full Council has agreed the following in relation to dealing with petitions with over 3500 signatures: The topic of the debate should be referred to the Mayor/Cabinet, or other relevant body with the petitioner's views and Full Council's views.

RECOMMENDATION

Following the debate, the Full Council is recommended to refer the petition to the Mayor, in order that the Mayor can consider his response, in liaison with the relevant Cabinet member.

Full Council

18 October 2022



Report of: Fiona Tudge Deputy Director of Children and Families

Title: Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report 2021/22

Ward: City Wide

Member Presenting Report: Cllr. Craig, Cabinet Member for Children's services, Education and Equalities, Deputy Mayor of Bristol.

Recommendation

That Council

Note the progress summarised in this annual report, on the delivery of Bristol's Corporate Parenting Strategy overseen by the Corporate Parenting Panel.

Summary

In January 2021 we refreshed the Bristol's Corporate Parenting Strategy [file \(bristol.gov.uk\)](https://www.bristol.gov.uk) and [Pledge](#). It sets out an ambitious agenda to achieve our aspirations of being the best corporate parent to our children and young people, in line with what our children and young people, and their families have told us. The report also sets out how we wish to engage City partners and stakeholders to support us in providing opportunities for our children and young people to reach their full potential and be part of their extended corporate parenting family.

The Corporate Parenting Strategy contains eight key priorities which underpin and outline how we intend to achieve our ambitions for our children in care and young people leaving care all of whom are children of our City.

This report summaries the key activity, progress, and future objectives of these 8 priority areas overseen by the Corporate Parenting Panel.



Policy

1. The Corporate Parenting Strategy is closely aligned with the Belonging Strategy 2021-24, in particular the objectives of ensuring all children and young people can thrive within the City. [Bristol's Belonging Strategy for Children and Young People - Vision Statement \(bristolonecity.com\)](https://www.bristolonecity.com)
2. Bristol City Council Corporate Parenting Strategy 2021-2023.

Consultation

3. **Internal**
Not applicable
4. **External**
Not applicable

Context

5. The Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report 2021 – 2022 summaries the progress of the Corporate Parenting Strategy overseen by the Corporate Parenting Panel.

Proposal

6. The Council note the progress, summarised in this annual report, on the delivery of Bristol's Corporate Parenting Strategy overseen by the Corporate Parenting Panel.
7. The Corporate Parenting Strategy sets out our 8 Key Priority Areas to support our children and young people reach their full potential both as children in care and young people leaving our care once turned 18. These key priority areas are: -
 - Trusted and Safe relationships
 - Education, Employment and Training
 - Opportunities Growing Up
 - Identity
 - Co-Production
 - Homes and Housing
 - Health and Support
 - Caring for those who Care
8. The Annual Corporate Parenting report provides a summary of the in-depth reports that have been submitted by Council Officers to the Corporate Parenting Panel covering the period 2021-2022. This includes a summary of the progress and priorities areas for children in care and young people leaving our care aligned to the 8 Corporate Parenting priorities. This includes the areas of physical and emotional health, fostering and sufficiency, our children's homes, children who are unaccompanied, adoption, education, children who are missing and at risk of extra familiar harm, the independent reviewing service, children with special needs and disabilities.

9. The report also provides a summary of the co-production activity undertaken with our children and young people and their views upon the services that they receive and how they would like to see these services develop in future.

10. Other Options Considered

Not applicable

Risk Assessment

11. Bristol City Council must set out how it plans to meet its statutory duties as a Corporate Parent, no alternative options were therefore considered.

Summary of Equalities Impact of the Proposed Decision

No Equality Impact assessments were undertaken as part of this report as this was not applicable.

Public Sector Equality Duties

- 8a) Before making a decision, section 149 Equality Act 2010 requires that each decision-maker considers the need to promote equality for persons with the following “protected characteristics”: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. Each decision-maker must, therefore, have due regard to the need to:
- i) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act 2010.
 - ii) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to --
 - remove or minimise disadvantage suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic;
 - take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of people who do not share it (in relation to disabled people, this includes, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities);
 - encourage persons who share a protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
 - iii) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to --
 - tackle prejudice; and
 - promote understanding.

Legal and Resource Implications

Legal

Not applicable

Financial

(a) Revenue

Not applicable

(b) Capital

Not applicable

Land

Not applicable

Personnel

Not applicable

Appendices:

Bristol Corporate Parenting Strategy 2021-23

Note the following appendices embedded within the report:

Appendix 1 Corporate Parenting Priority Areas Progress Summary

Appendix 2 Corporate Parenting Panel Membership

Appendix 3 Key Corporate Parenting Documents

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Background Papers:

Bristol Corporate Parenting Strategy 2021-23

Bristol's belonging Strategy for Children and Young People 2021-24

April 21 – March 22

Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report



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1. Chair's Foreword

In September 2021 I was invited to take on the role of Lead Member for Children's Services from Councillor Helen Godwin. I feel tremendously privileged to hold this position and to be able to turn my attention fully to the task of building a Bristol where children and families can flourish. A key part of my role is to ensure we as a city are fulfilling our responsibility towards our children in care and care leavers as loving and caring parents, and to champion them at every opportunity.

We have continued to face challenges as an authority over the last year with the rise in numbers of children in care, sufficiency of homes for children and housing pressures for our young people but we have a strong and committed workforce and good collaborative arrangements with our key partners to work towards the best outcomes for our children in care and care leavers. In Bristol we care for almost 700 children, half of whom live with Bristol carers in a fostering arrangement. We would love to be able to offer many more of our children a home in their own city and are always looking out for more carers. Please visit www.bristol.gov.uk/foster to find out more.

Our vision is that Bristol's care-experienced children and young people receive the same standard of care as any good parent so as corporate parents we have high aspirations for our children and are strong advocates for them. We will do everything we can to ensure our children are set up for life, and for this to materialise it is vital that we all engage with our responsibility as corporate parents. The old adage "*It takes a village to raise a child*" was never more apt than for corporate parenting, where for children in care to grow up to live fulfilling and happy lives we need the whole city to play their part.

Over 2022-23 we are looking forward to making further progress in our ambitious outcomes set out in our Corporate Parenting Strategy. As a panel we are grateful for the support from our fellow councillors and we look forward to working with you more closely over the next year as committed corporate parents.

Councillor Asher Craig, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Equalities, Deputy Mayor of Bristol

2. Introduction

In January 2021 we refreshed Bristol's [Corporate Parenting Strategy 2021-2023](#) and [Pledge](#) to children in care and care leavers. Looking after and protecting children and young people is one of the most important jobs that we do as a city. The Corporate Parenting Strategy sits underneath the Belonging Strategy and is closely aligned with its objectives of ensuring all children and young people can thrive.

This strategy contains eight priorities and over 40 actions related to the way we care for our children and young people. It was produced in partnership with children and young people, and the priorities and actions were developed in response to their feedback (Appendix 1).

The [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#) enshrined in legislation a set of corporate parenting principles that all local authorities must adhere to and demonstrate as good corporate parents. These are:

- to act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of those children and young people;
- to encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings;
- to take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people;
- to help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners;
- to promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people;
- for those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work;
- to prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

As defined in the Children and Social Work Act 2017 as corporate parents **we must have the same regard for children in care and care leavers as we would for our own children**. We need everyone looking out for our most vulnerable children and young people, and every councillor has a role to play in embedding the corporate parenting principles and doing all they can to support children in care and care leavers to live meaningful and fulfilling lives. As councillors we have an important role in holding senior officers to account and ensuring children and young people's voices influence the service they receive.

We want Bristol to be a 'Care Aware' city that champions our children in care and our care leavers. We will take bold and innovative steps to ensure that the people who are privileged to parent our children have the right training, support, knowledge and skills that our children need and deserve.

3. Performance

Measure	Unit	Bristol 2020-21	Bristol 2021-22 (provisional)	LA Quartile	Statistical Neighbour 2020-21	England 2020-21
Rate of children looked after at 31 March per 10,000 children aged under 18 years	Rate	67	73	N/A	82	67
Started to be looked after % Age: 10 to 15	%	28	32	C	26	26
Started to be looked after % Age: 16 and over	%	19	29	B	20	19
Children in care with three or more placements during the year	%	8	7	A	10	11
Children in care in the same placement for at least 2 years,	%	73	76	A	70	70
% CiC in own provision (by the Local Authority)	%	60	53	A	48	48
% of children leaving care over the aged of 16 who remained looked after until the age of 18	%	85	88	A	80	81

Measure	Unit	Bristol 2020-21	Bristol 2021-22 (provisional)	LA Quartile	Statistical Neighbour 2020-21	England 2020-21
Children in care aged 10 and above convicted or subject to a final warning or reprimand	%	0	0	A	4	3
Children whose immunisations were up to date	%	95	92	A	86	88
Children who had their teeth checked by a dentist	%	54	53	D*	42	40
Children who had their annual health assessment	%	93	83	B	91	91
Children for whom an SDQ score was submitted	%	91	/	A	77	80
% Banded SDQ Score: Concern	%	32	/	B	43	39

Measure	Unit	Bristol 2020-21	Bristol 2021-22 (provisional)	LA Quartile	Statistical Neighbour 2020-21	England 2020-21
17 / 18 year olds - % in education, employment or training (EET)	%	74	68	A	63	65
17 / 18 year olds - % Accommodation considered suitable	%	91	82	A	89	91
% care leavers Local authority In touch with (19-21)	%	95	98	A	91	91
19 -21 year olds - % Total number in education, employment or training (EET)	%	65	63	A	46	52
19 -21 year olds - % Accommodation considered suitable	%	90	88	B	86	88

4. Corporate Parenting Panel Overview

The Corporate Parenting Panel is established as a panel of Full Council to ensure that the City Council effectively discharges its statutory duties as corporate parent for children in care and care leavers. The Panel will undertake its work by holding all parts of the City Council to account for the delivery of improved outcomes in every area of a child or young person's life, championing children in care and care leavers across the council. The Chair is Councillor Asher Craig, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Equalities. The group has representation from care-experienced children and young people and key stakeholders such as health and education.

Reporting process

The panel reviewed reports in the following areas over the course of 2021:

- September: Fostering; Special Educational Needs and Disabilities; Adoption; Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (Through Care); Independent Reviewing Service
- November: Thinking Allowed Specialist CAMHS; Children's Homes; Care Leavers in Higher Education;
- January: Sufficiency Progress Report; Children placed out of area; HOPE School Head's Report;
- March: Missing children; Extra-familial Harm; Safeguarding; Care Leaver Annual Report; Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (Education);

In addition to the above Finance and Performance reports are submitted for each panel.

5. Children in Care

At the conclusion of March 2022 Bristol City Council were the corporate parents to 695 children in care aged between 0-17. Of our 691 children 71 (roughly 10%) had a defined disability. In terms of Ethnicity, it is reported that 35% of our children are from a Black or Minority Ethnic Background and 65% identify as White British. It is predicted that our children in care population is likely to rise further, in part due to the Covid pandemic and the additional pressure this has placed on mental, physical health and economic well-being.

Our children predominately live in foster homes (76%) which includes kinship care with a family member or connected person. The remaining 24% of our children live in alternative home options such as residential care. Of our children living in foster care, 53% live in in-house provision. This is higher than the national average for England and that of our statistical neighbours.

With regards to location 60% of our children live in Bristol, and a further 17% live within a neighbouring authority. This is a slight decrease on last year where we were able to accommodate a bigger proportion of children and young people in our area (80%).

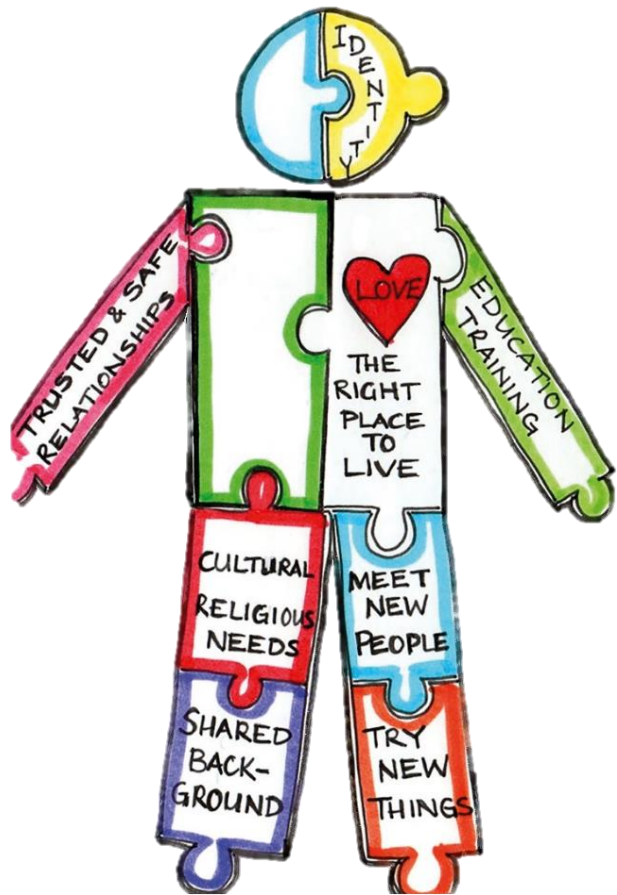


Most of our children in care are settled in homes and experience good stability; only 8% of our children experience three or more moves within their first year in care compared to the national average (10%) and our statistical neighbours (12%). Children cared for in a home continuously for two and a half years or more was reported at 73%. This is again above the national average and our statistical neighbours (70%). Although we show good performance in this area in comparison to others it is also a key area of improvement against a challenging landscape.

Bristol like many local authorities is experiencing a significant pressure and shortfall regarding the number of available homes for our children in all settings including in-house fostering, independent fostering and residential homes, as well as access to welfare secure provision for our most complex children. This has impacted upon our children in terms of our ability to place our children within our city boundary and can impair our ability to find the best matched home for the needs of that children or young person. Furthermore, it is placing a significant strain on the local authority budget position due to escalation in use of high cost independent residential and supported provision, where traditionally a child may have been placed within a foster family setting. It is acknowledged regionally and nationally that over the covid pandemic and post pandemic period sufficiency for both fostering and residential care is increasingly challenging, particularly for our older children and those with the most complex needs and presentation.

Of our children in care 61 were unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors. These children have entered our care after fleeing their country of origin and have arrived in the UK without a parent or carer to look after them. There is a detailed summary of our work with children who are unaccompanied further in the report.

All our children in care have an allocated Social Worker to oversee and progress their care plan which is independently overseen and reviewed by their allocated Independent Reviewing Officer. Children and young people often have entered care due to experiencing significant abuse and trauma in their childhood, meaning it was no longer physically or emotionally safe for them to remain living at home with their parents or care givers. Often this abuse encompasses one or several elements of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse and neglect. There may also be contextual safeguarding concerns meaning children and young people face significant risk outside their home and within their local community, such as criminal or sexual exploitation. Due to their experience of relational and developmental trauma our children in care are more likely to experience more significant emotional, mental and physical health issues in comparison to their peers. Children in care are also more vulnerable to sexual and criminal exploitation and alcohol and substance misuse.



It was reported 11% of our children in care experienced a missing episode in 2021-22¹. Our children in care also are more likely to struggle to achieve their full educational and economic potential, hopes and dreams as children and adults (care leavers) than their peers who are not in care. This means our children are likely to need a range of specialist services and intervention to ensure their needs are met, and that they can recover from and process the abuse and trauma they have experienced.

Our priority developmental areas for the coming year for our children in care are as follows:

- Further development of extra familial harm practice and processes for children at risk of missing and exploitation.
- Further development of our offer to unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and young people, including embedding a specialist team.
- Focus on school attendance, attainment and our education offer in collaboration with The HOPE.
- To increase our sufficiency and diversity of foster homes.
- In collaboration with Thinking Allowed and the Clinical Commissioning Group to continue to develop the emotional and mental health offer for our children in care.
- Further strengthen and embed our networking approach to ensure our children have lifelong support and links as children in our care and care leavers
- Review our offer for children in care in custody
- Review and develop our offer, training to staff and toolkit to ensure we are giving the right support to our children and young people in care exploring their sexuality and/or gender identity.
- Develop opportunities for children in care to regularly connect with each other through the children in care council and our activity offer
- Ensure all children in care have access to an annual health assessment and dental checks (there has been an impact on the availability of dental checks due to the Covid pandemic), and that these are accurately recorded for children.
- Assess and analyse our services and their capacity in response to the predicted rise in the number of children likely to enter our care.



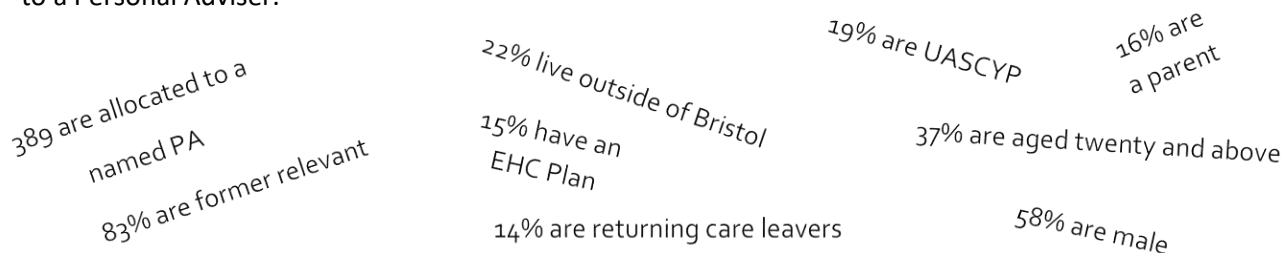
¹ Main reasons for going missing include child returning later than agreed time, going back to see family and friends, finding care too stressful or not liking their carers, and CCE/CSE factors.

6. Care Leavers

We offer a service to care leavers up to the age of 25. Care leavers have a named Personal Adviser up to the age of 21 and our young people can access our social events and return for support at any time up to 25. We make annual contact with our young people to remind them of this offer and how to get in touch.

Key statistics about our young people

We have 731 Bristol care leavers. Below is a breakdown of key facts about the young people open to a Personal Adviser.



Areas of strength over the last year:

Corporate Parenting Panel: Following the council elections in 2021 there has been significant change in councillor representation and a new lead member. We have introduced a Champion Model Approach to bolster support for key priorities within the strategy and a young person's corporate parenting shadow board to scrutinise our work and offer to young people.

Restructure of Through Care Service: In November 2021 the Through Care Service was restructured in response to the increased numbers of children in care and care leavers, a change in the context of the work and risk and increasing numbers of teenagers in our care. The service was restructured into three units to allow for continuation of the through care model.

Introduction of a monthly preparing for change panel: to track the transition plans for all 17 year-olds to ensure timely assessment of need and planning for these young people.

Southwest Regional offer for care leavers: Bristol is leading the development of a Southwest regional offer alongside 5 Local Authorities across the Southwest to lead a Care Leaver Recovery Project.

Our local offer to care leavers: As Corporate Parents we are committed to doing everything we can to make sure our care leavers are set up for life. We are committed to being effective, caring, and ambitious and our [Local Offer](#) refreshed in October 2021 sets out how we can support our young people to achieve their full potential.

Domestic abuse lead practitioner for care leavers – pilot project: This practitioner offers consultation, joint assessment, joint working, direct work to young people in abusive and controlling relationships, including the development of a group work offer leading to safety plans and safeguarding.

PASS Business apprentices: In June 2021 we welcomed 6 care experienced apprentices to join us in Permanency and Specialist Services to gain their Level 2 in Business Administration and Customer Service.

Launch of our quarterly care leaver newsletter: edited by our care experienced apprentices and engagement workers provides an opportunity for young people to share their stories and successes and for us to share news and opportunities for young people.

Extension of our social events and activities: has allowed our young people to come together to make friends and socialise. Our supper club now has more than 40 regular attendees.

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people's voices: Creative Youth Network in partnership with Bristol Refugee Rights have developed a Young Leaders group for young people from refugee or asylum background. Feedback will be used to inform in staff training, service development and the work of the shadow corporate parenting panel.



Pilot home for unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people: We are trialling a new pilot home for unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people so that we can carefully match young people to build on or create new friendships, networks, and communities.

Bristol has a wealth of education offers for young people and these can be accessed via the weekly Into Work meetings. Over 2021-22 we had 41 care leavers on higher education courses from Foundation to Masters level.

Areas for development:

- Our mental health offer for care leavers is under review and will incorporate recommendation outlined in Barnardo's 2021 report "A health offer for care experienced young people".
- Finalise the Bristol care leaver participation strategy with the help of a new senior personal adviser with a lead on participation.
- Widen our participation with our young people and launch a new participation forum.
- Complete a needs analysis of the NEET population for children in care and care leavers to see how we can encourage more young people into education, training and employment.

7. Health

Sirona Health and Care are commissioned by the Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board to deliver a health service to Children in Care which includes; undertaking initial in depth health assessments, reviewing these periodically dependent upon age of the child and offering help, support and advice to this cohort.

During 2021-22, provider and commissioning colleagues worked together closely and agreed that datasets should be reviewed and simplified. A refined set of performance metrics were agreed with support from the Business Intelligence team within Sirona, as provider, from April 2022. A system workshop is planned for Quarter 2 2022-23 to share and discuss with local authority colleagues.

In December 2021, Care Leavers, supported by Barnardo's, delivered a presentation to the Clinical Commissioning Group Governing Body. The powerful content emphasised the enduring corporate parenting responsibility to care leavers. Their experience of leaving care and barriers they encounter when attempting to navigate health resources, develop health relationships and understand their rights. They presented the outcome of their engagement work and the Care Leaver Health Manifesto for South Gloucestershire and Bristol. Executive Directors within the Integrated Care Board have since discussed this content, considerations for actions to be taken by the Integrated Care Board have been incorporated into system development co-delivered with partners.

During Quarter 4, 2021-22, two dedicated posts were recruited to in the Clinical Commissioning Group to support the delivery of our statutory duties for safeguarding and to support Children in Care; a Safeguarding Children in Care and Care Leaver Nurse to support the work of the Designated Nurse and a Designated Doctor who has a strategic leadership role similar to that of the Nurse. This additional capacity will enable the Integrated Care Board to facilitate several system workshops over the remaining quarters of 2022-23 to focus on the pathway, experiences and improved outcomes for Children in Care and Care Leavers.

8. Adoption

Nationally the proportion of children leaving our care who were adopted fell from 12% in 2019-20 to 10% in 2020-21.

In 2018-21 nationally there were 9940 adoptions and 3050 changes of plan; for every ten adoptions there were 3 changes of plan. Bristol had 12 adoptions but only one change of plan in 2021-22, fewer than would be predicted from the national picture.



In 2021-22 the number of Bristol's children placed for adoption has slightly increased (from 18 to 20) but is still below the level two to three years ago. This continues to reflect the national shift to the making of Special Guardianship Orders for those children whose long-term permanency needs cannot be met by their birth parents.

There has been a decrease in children who have a 'Should Be Placed' for adoption plan. There has been an increase in children matched to adopters and an overall decrease in the number of children who have secured an Adoption Order. That said, there were 20 children still placed for adoption on 31st March 2022 and waiting for the adoption application to be made or heard, and two children in early permanence placements. Overall, the total number of children still in the adoption process on 31st March 2022 is very similar to last year, with a larger proportion having been matched to adopters.

During 2021/2022 there were 23 children placed for adoption (including placements turning into adoptive placements known as Early Permanence) 12 children were adopted, and six are waiting to be formally adopted but with a Placement Order.

Only two children had a placement order issued more than 18 months ago, a third child has been in our care for more than 18 months, but the placement order was issued more recently.

The main challenge for our children whose plan is for adoption is recruitment of adopters for siblings, older children, children from ethnic minority families, and for children with complex health needs. This year, we have had four sets of siblings placed outside of our Adoption West Adopters using outside adoption agencies.

9. Fostering

This year has presented challenges in terms of recruitment and retention of in-house foster carers. We have seen increasing national and local issues in relation to placement sufficiency alongside a significant increase in children in care. To mitigate some of the challenges throughout the year we have worked on improving both our financial offer to carers and our support offer, with the aim that the changes we are making will help us remain competitive within a challenging market, attract potential new carers and to ensure we retain and value our existing carers who do an amazing job providing safe and loving homes for our children.

We successfully secured additional budget to enable us to significantly increase foster carer fees and after a positive consultation with carers, will implement the new fee structure in April 2022. The fostering service work closely with colleagues in the external communications team to keep a significant social media profile and ensure that we are reaching potential carers. Throughout the year we have worked hard at refreshing our branding and website in order to attract new carers and our new branding will go live to coincide with our increased fee offer and a significant social media campaign to attract as much interest as possible.

As well as attracting new carers we value our current carers and want to ensure we retain them. To help achieve this we have increased capacity within our fostering support service which will enable reduced caseloads, improved support to carers and improved timeliness in relation to our statutory

requirements. Foster carer wellbeing has been a priority throughout the year and we worked with BFCA (Bristol Foster Carer Association) and BTSS (Bristol Therapeutic Support Service) to pilot wellbeing activities in support groups. We have developed a full programme of wellbeing activities which will offer opportunities throughout the coming year for foster carers to take time out and feel appreciated.

Whilst this has been a challenging year for recruitment we successfully approved 29 foster carers which compares well to pre-covid levels and is close to our target of 30 carers per year.

At the end of March 2022 there were 695 Bristol children in care in a variety of homes, a significant increase from 643 in March 2021. Of these children 338 were placed with in-house foster carers.

Our kinship and Special Guardianship teams have continued to respond quickly to support children to remain in the care of their wider family or connected people where this is the right plan. Throughout the year they have completed 250 viability assessments and approved 42 connected carers under Regulation 24, enabling temporary approval as a foster carer whilst a full assessment is completed.

We have continued our specialist parent and child fostering scheme and were able to offer five short-term homes across the year. This scheme enables a baby to remain with their parent and in their local area whilst assessments are completed. We plan to continue to grow and develop this scheme over the next year.

A real strength of the service is a hugely committed and skilled staff team who have helped to progress improvements across the service throughout the year. This was evidenced at our safeguarding assurance visit in November *'The SAV Team found a group of highly committed, passionate staff who talked proudly about their service and were optimistic about the future. Everyone spoken to spoke of their enthusiasm and recognition of the positive journey the service is on. There was a sense of being in "touching distance" of brilliance. There is a noticeable focus on children and the child being at the centre of decision making.'*

Bristol Therapeutic Support Service (BTSS) provides support for foster carers, special guardians, and the children they look after, with the aim of improving stability. We offer short term support typically over three to four months. The support usually includes allocating a Therapeutic Support Practitioner to support the carer, and a Skills Coach might be allocated to support the child. As every situation is different, we are able to be creative and adjust what we offer based on what's needed. A foster carer who recently completed support from BTSS said: *"I feel more confident about how I talk to R, and I approach situations more calmly"*.

BTSS are also involved in training for carers including the Reflective Fostering Programme, a ten week course which aims to improve the carer-child relationship and promote the child's emotional and behavioural well-being. Each session has a specific focus e.g. impact of trauma, and the sessions are a mix of education, group work, some role play and lots of time for discussion and sharing experiences. We have had good feedback so far from the carers that have taken part in this programme.



BTSS also offer wellbeing and self-care sessions for Foster Carers. 'Time for Me' for carers include painting and art sessions, yoga and mindfulness, head massage, mindfulness walks, fire making and BBQ's.

We have monthly support groups for foster carers that the Therapeutic Support Practitioners facilitate alongside a Supervising Social Worker. There is also a monthly online Topic Support Group that is co-facilitated with a Foster Carer. Subjects are common themes that are experienced by foster carers, such as: - Grief and Loss, Lying and Stealing, Separation Anxiety, Managing feelings and behaviours after family time etc.

In the Autumn, BTSS and fostering will be running a positive parenting course for foster carers and special guardians of adolescents which aims to improve positive family relationships and improve child behaviour. Carers attend eight group sessions where they learn effective methods for communicating with and disciplining their teenager. The programme involves reviewing DVD clips of parenting and ways of communicating followed by group discussion and thinking about plans for the week ahead. There are also activity days for the birth children of foster carers, running every school holiday.

10. Children's Homes

Throughout the year, we have continued the process of reprofiling and developing the service, to deliver our core aim of improving experiences and outcomes for the children and young people in our care. This process has involved continuing to change the physical environments, whilst implementing the 'Bristol Model' to offer nurturing care that is well planned and delivered by staff teams who are given a high level of support, offered relevant and up to date training to enable and ensure homely nurturing homes. This reflects our vision for our children and young people offering an excellent quality of care in accordance with the Children's Homes Regulations and Quality Standards 2015. Noticeable improvements include a reduction in the number of children going missing, positive relationships with children in the home and high occupancy rate.

A new three-bedroom home was opened during winter 2021, replacing a five-bedroom home that closed during the same period, after the team and the children moved into the newly purchased and renovated house. This is the third new home we have opened, as two two-bedroom children's homes were opened in January 2020 and May 2020 (following the closure of a five-bedroom home in 2018). In order to continue to open small homes, there is a plan to close the three remaining larger homes.

Across the city there are now six children's homes that are all Ofsted registered to provide care for children/ young people between the ages of eight and 17 years, (although only five are currently open). As of 31st March 2022 there are 14 children living in Bristol children's homes; Maple Tree has been redecorated whilst temporarily closed. Our most recent Ofsted ratings across the children's homes over the past year are as follows:

Home	Ofsted Rating 2021- 2022
Frome House	GOOD
Blaise House	GOOD
Witch Hazel Road	GOOD
Silbury House	Improved effectiveness
Cherry Blossom	Awaiting first inspection

Our plans and priorities for 2022-2023:

- New children's home to be open in Summer 2022 in South Bristol
- Recruiting teams for Maple Tree and new Children's Home
- Review current staffing structures (ongoing Management of Change program)
- Identify and match children into new home

11. Commissioning Service

Bristol City Council's Commissioning Service is responsible for the commissioning of all homes for children that require fostering, residential children's homes, parent and child and externally supported accommodation. In regard to commissioning fostering and residential placements, Bristol belong to the South-Central Framework which is a collaboration of 19 local authorities. Southampton are the lead local authority for the framework and the framework provides a comprehensive list of approved providers that offer residential care across the country and in Wales. Since joining the framework Bristol have been able to work closer with other local authorities to ensure that children are being matched appropriately and that the residential homes are of good quality.

When it comes to commissioning parent and child and externally-supported accommodation for children in care, Bristol manages its own framework which enables greater negotiation on costs whilst ensuring quality services that are value for money.

Sourcing placements for children in care is a significant challenge for Bristol, as it is for all local authorities, with increased numbers of children presenting with complex behaviours and a lack of available services nationally to meet those needs. When placements are identified that are a match for the child we often incur increased fees due to the bespoke packages of care required to meet the complex needs of the child. Bristol is part of a collaboration with other local authorities to try and influence the introduction of legislation to regulate profits and introduce caps on placement fee prices as well as encouraging providers to join the South-Central framework.

The priorities set within the [Children's Sufficiency Strategy](#) are to develop and increase sufficiency of both fostering and children's homes in the Bristol area including a potential specialist CAMHS mental health home. There is also a transformational project across the whole of children's social care to address the challenges across children's placements and placement sufficiency.

12. Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children

Bristol continues to care for and support children and young people seeking asylum. Bristol has done so since the early 1990s when children and young people travelled to the UK escaping conflict in Bosnia, Serbia and Croatia. Since that time, children and young people have presented with increasing frequency and from a variety of countries, escaping conflicts in Afghanistan, the Middle East and Africa. Currently the largest group of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are children from Afghanistan.

There are three groups of unaccompanied children seeking asylum who arrive in the city:

- Those who present spontaneously.

- Those accepted through the National Transfer Scheme (NTS). Due to high number of children seeking asylum in Kent a revised NTS is in operation which places a duty on the local authorities around the country to accommodate children from Kent.
- Those accepted from Europe and camps in Northern France or elsewhere (often referred to as 'Dubs' children).

Upon arrival in Bristol an initial interview is carried out by Bristol's Asylum Team; if required an age assessment will also be undertaken. Children assessed as being younger than 18 years of age, become children in care, under Section 20 of Children Act 1989 and are provided with accommodation and care.

Current Snapshot

Bristol has seen an increase in the numbers of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children we care for in recent months:

- 61 children in care (March 2022) compared to 51 children in care in August 2021 and 46 children in June 2020
- This is 11% of the total child in care population and an increase from 8% in August 2021 (cf. our statistical neighbours – 5%, or England average – 5%)
- Care leavers who arrived as unaccompanied children make up 19% of Bristol's care leaver population.

It is not expected that the war in Ukraine will lead to an increase in unaccompanied asylum-seeking children from the Ukraine because the Home Office visa sponsorship scheme is aimed at resettling families.

Successes

The Virtual Practice Group for children and young people seeking asylum meets monthly and has strengthened the links between Through Care with The HOPE virtual school, fostering and The ARC (Asylum and Refugee Clinic, specialist CAMHS provision), as well as our voluntary partners.

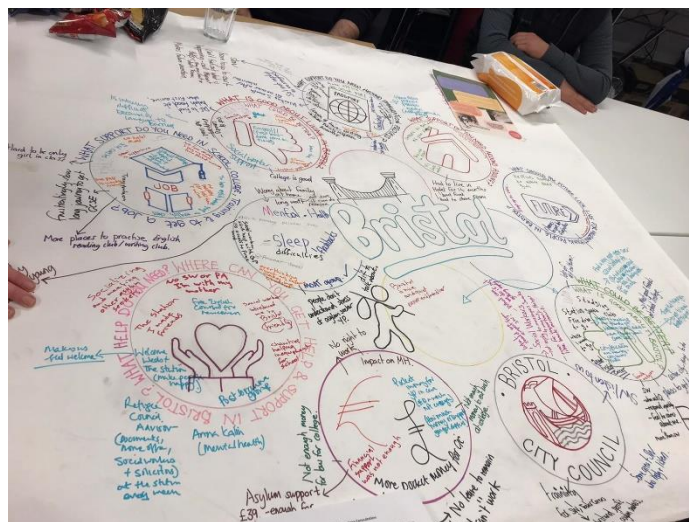
Welcome pack for all new arrivals is near to completion including process maps for all aspects of the care and asylum processes.

Engaging with our partners in the voluntary sector including Bristol Refugee Rights and Creative Youth Network's Welcome Wednesday group and the Young Leaders project to ensure the voices of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are heard.

The unaccompanied asylum-seeking children Qlik data app is completed which will support practice with an improved data set relating to the needs of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

Challenges

It is likely that the number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in care will continue to grow. It is an ongoing challenge to plan services to meet that need when the actual numbers are unknown. Services including health, education and social care need to be responsive to meet this increased demand.



Young people who are relevant or qualifying care leavers whose asylum claims have not been successful will become ARE (Appeal Rights Exhausted) and we will need to develop our offer of support to this group of young people in line with national and local policy in context of Bristol as a [City of Sanctuary](#).

We are working towards the creation of a specialist team within Through Care to deliver a more consistent service and better outcomes for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children as well as:

- Deliver basic training to all social workers, personal advisors in partnership with Bristol Refugee Rights and the Young Leaders group on issues specific to unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.
- Building links with the wider diverse communities in Bristol around the safety of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, including befriending and integration opportunities.

Building on the Welcome Packs develop a group work programme to offer to all new arrivals and establish our community of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

13. Thinking Allowed Specialist CAMHS team

Thinking Allowed (TA) is a specialist branch of the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) that provides clinical services for Bristol's children in care and those children who have been adopted and are referred by Adoption West. During the period April 2020 to April 2021 the Covid pandemic had a significant impact on the mental health and wellbeing of Bristol's children, young people, carers, other professionals and general service delivery. The main issues and service developments for Thinking Allowed for this period are as follows. Referral rates to Thinking Allowed remained similar to previous years (189) with 86% accepted for an initial assessment and the remainder having a telephone discussion with the social worker and signposting and advice. Thinking Allowed has seen an increase in the complexity and severity of the difficulties that children and young people are experiencing. There has been an increase in placement breakdowns, more children in care presenting at A&E, more children risk assessed as Red, more children placed out of area with complex presentations. This means caseloads have increased by 22% and in the second half of the reporting period waiting times started to increase but remained within the specified timeframe of first appointments within eight weeks. New methods to provide services were used including online meetings, socially distanced working practices and the use of other mediums (text, phone). This enabled some young people to benefit from interventions that would not have used face to face services. Thinking Allowed's priorities for this period were responding to referrals, providing initial assessments, face to face work with children and work with carers and the network.

- Some of the staff for the Asylum and Refugee Clinic staffing have been moved back into the Locality CAMHS teams where children from refugee families will be seen if they meet the criteria. Young people who arrived in the UK seeking asylum are still provided with services through ARC.
- During this period, all young people were rated according to immediate risk (Red, Amber, Green – RAG) and those rated Red were seen face to face if they did not like or manage virtual meetings (with Covid secure measures in place). Treatment for other children was paused, moved online or took place through their carers.

- Carers' strengths and vulnerabilities were RAG rated and appointments were offered in line with this assessment using virtual platforms.
- AWP established an out of hours crisis line where children and families can phone in and speak to CAMHS staff. They are given advice and strategies to manage the immediate difficulties they are facing and if it is necessary assessment by the on call clinician or psychiatrist can be arranged. This system has worked well, diverted children from attending hospital and continues.

Priorities for next year:

- Responding to children and young people with urgent mental health difficulties
- Limit further increase in waiting times
- Review the areas of work that TA offers to inform a clear service specification

14. Missing Children and Extra-Familial Harm

In 2018-2021 there was a sustained year-on-year reduction in the number of children in care who were reported missing to the police as a result of the targeted interventions undertaken such as work with carers to reduce the inappropriate reporting of children who were known to not be at risk but had come in late. However, despite this significant improvement those children in care who do go missing are going missing more frequently in 2020 and 2021 to previous years. This relates to an increased number of children in care due to criminal exploitation and county lines.

Missing return conversations is an area requiring improvement in the service. In this year missing return conversations are only recorded as having been offered in 83% of episodes. Despite the reduction in the percentage of times that children have been offered a missing return conversation, acceptance of return home conversations when offered has been maintained with children accepting missing return conversations on 289 occasions (54% of offered).

The increase in the proportion of children in care who are male and are Black, Mixed Race, Asian or Arab who were reported missing from care seen in 2020 was sustained in 2021 with 32% of missing children being from these ethnic demographics and 35.3% in 2020, compared to 28.3% in 2019.

Peer friendships remains the biggest influence on missing highlighting the importance of understanding friendship networks and offering opportunities for pro-social friendships.

There are currently 92 children in care and 113 care leavers open to the service who have been identified as being victims of or at risk of child sexual or child criminal exploitation at some time in their life. This means that a significant proportion of our children in care (13.5%) and care leaver population (15%) have been affected by exploitation and/or trafficking.

62% of our children in care who have been harmed through exploitation have come into our care as adolescents. Of the 92 children in care identified as being harmed by exploitation or trafficking, 85 are known to Operation Topaz the specialist police team working to disrupt perpetrators of sexual exploitation.

Our response:

- Increased capacity for missing return conversations
- A new Independent Child Trafficking Guardianship service in Bristol
- Safer Options launched conflict resolution training to staff and young people
- Safer Options have increased their mentoring and 1:1 support offer for young people affected by county lines
- Safer Options established a mediation and restorative justice early intervention service in the team specifically for children in care to assist placement stability and avoid disproportionate engagement with the police for children in care.
- Avon and Somerset Constabulary have expanded the specialist police team Operation Topaz which is now working on prosecuting and disrupting perpetrators of both sexual and criminal exploitation.
- A regional trauma-informed training package has been rolled out coordinated through Safer Options and the VRU.

Areas for development:

- We plan to introduce Operation Innerste with the police to safeguard unaccompanied children who are likely to go missing
- New peer mental health service starting later this year for young people affected by violence and exploitation

15. The HOPE Virtual School

A new senior leadership post was created focusing on post-16 support for this academic year. The HOPE are now collecting progress information throughout the year for children in care and care leavers in further education. We are working with social care to develop means of sharing this effectively and informing actions that support our young people to remain in employment, education and training and achieve the best outcomes. We have also appointed a dedicated advocate whose role it is to provide advice and guidance for children with a history of being in care.

We have trained around 90 colleagues at City of Bristol College on the subject of 'Children in Care and Care Leavers: Understanding Attachment and Trauma'. We are working closely with the provider to support their work in being trauma-informed and also offering our training to other post-16 settings.

We have developed regular meetings with colleagues in the Youth Offending Team, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Team, Social Care and the Post 16 Participation Team to work collaboratively to increase rates of young people involved in education, employment or training through identifying engagement opportunities.

This year two of our Year 11 Children in Care have been offered a funded post-16 place at private settings (Bristol Grammar School and Colstons). Both students were identified and supported by their HOPE Advocates throughout the process.

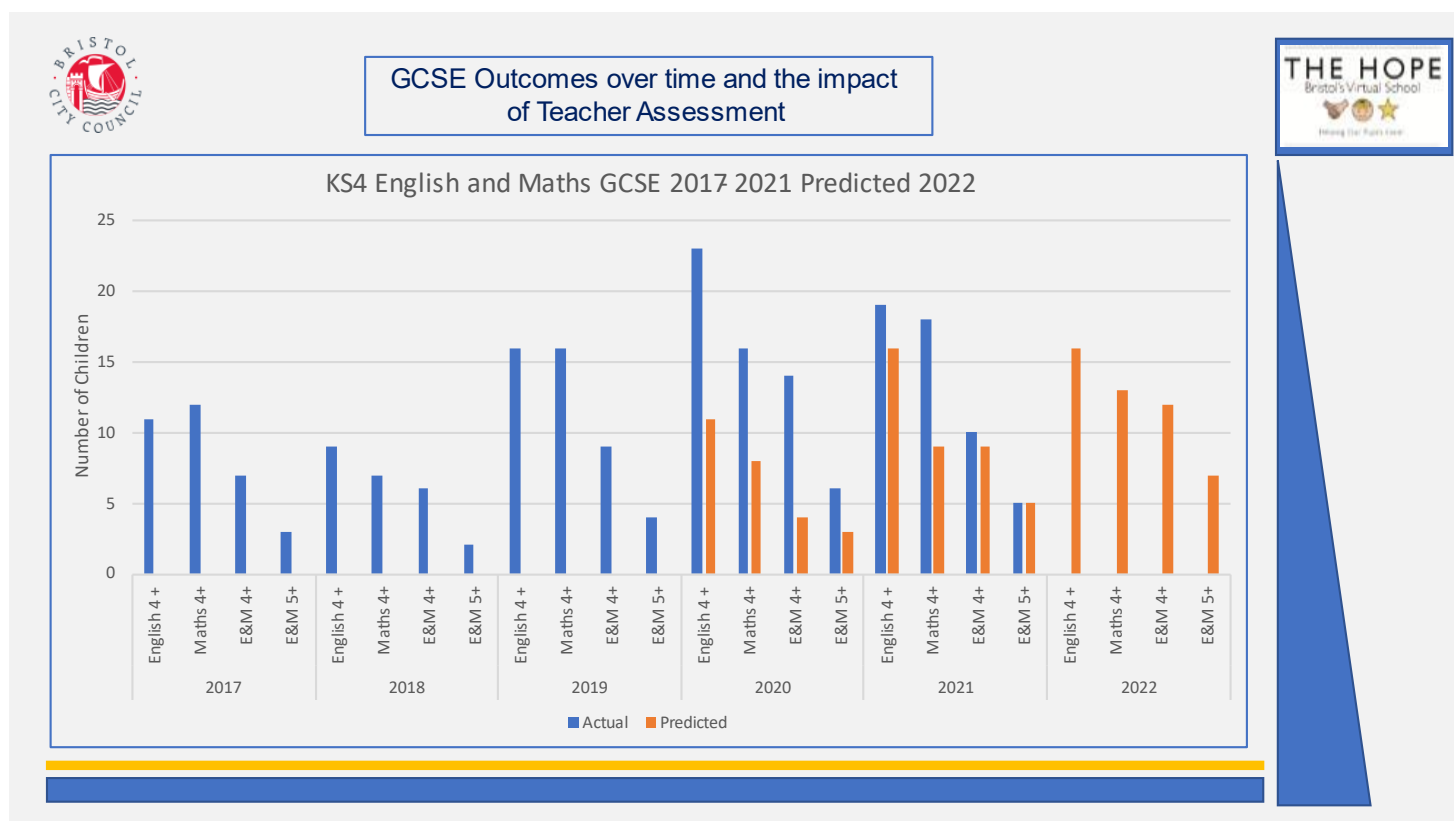
Improvements in the quality of Personal Education Planning (PEP) from Early Years Foundation stage (EYFS) to post-16 and complex special educational needs with 96% of PEPs now assessed as good or better. Over this period 91.3% of Children in Care attend schools which are at least good.

We have provided several educational schemes to enhance and enrich the education offer our children including The Letterbox Club. This involves sending children in N2, Y1, Y3, Y5 and Y7 parcels of books and math games once a month for six months (May-Oct). Run by Book Trust but facilitated by The HOPE, the scheme ensures children in care receive these parcels. We also support entry to the Mary Palmer Poetry Prize Competition and facilitate the Bristol Career Coach Career Coach which is a five-year coaching programme for children in care - a collaboration between the Cabot Learning Federation, Hope Virtual School and Bristol WORKS. The programme matches volunteer coaches with young people, aged 13 or 14 who are in the care of the Local Authority, with inspirational local professionals based on their interests and preferred ways of learning. In March 2022 we welcomed our fifth cohort of new Career Coaches, and we now have 36 successful children and coaching relationships in place across the city. We look forward to offering this opportunity to more children as the project develops.

Development work has started on introducing an EPeP system, this is currently going through procurement for roll out for Term 2 or 3.

We had 33 young people seeking asylum arrive since the start of the academic year; Year 7 – one, Year 9 – two, Year 10 – five, Year 11 – eight, Year 12 – 16, Year 13 – one.

The pandemic had limited testing in schools over the last two years, but the 2021 GCSE result predictions and actual results were in line with each other and show an upward trend since 2017 in Children in Care achieving Maths and English GCSE at a level 4 or higher (see graph).



Challenges for 2022/23

Gathering accurate and reliable attendance data continues to be a challenge due to issues with schools' input and the systems we use. However, we are working hard with BCC colleagues to improve this and are developing a plan for next academic year where we have an increased collaborative focus on improving attendance for children in care.

With the rise in numbers of unaccompanied young people seeking asylum in care we have a key issue with the availability of post-16 ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) courses that will provide an education. This leads to young people either being unable to access education, having no local provision or only being able to access a part-time offer.

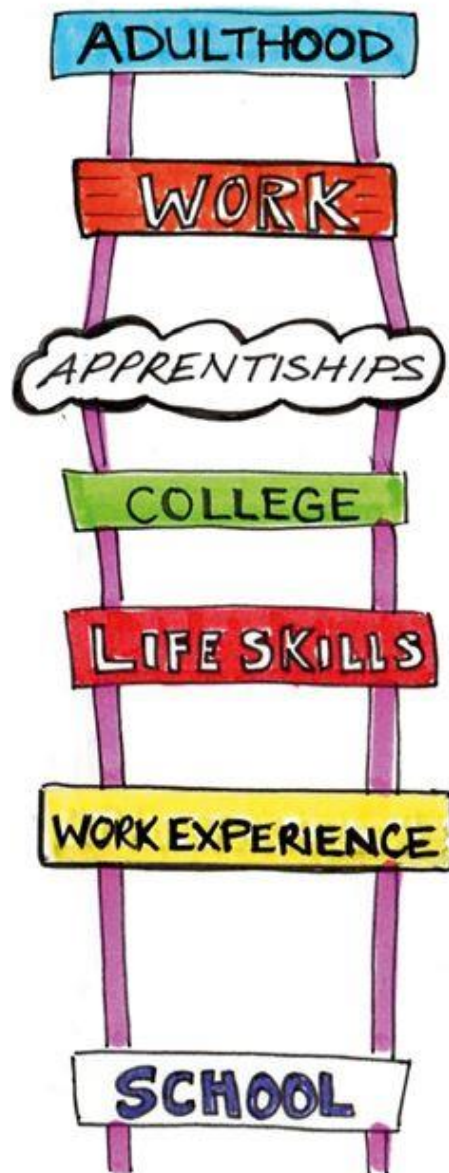
We currently do not have a means of collecting attendance information for the vast majority of our children in care and care leavers in further education. We will be looking to develop this to enable us to further act in promoting engagement and education.

16. Independent Reviewing Service

All children in care have an allocated Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) whose primary focus is to quality assure the care planning and review process for the child and to ensure that their wishes and feelings are given full consideration. The role is an important one as it should enable the local authority to achieve improved outcomes for children. An annual report is written by the IRO manager and presented at Corporate Parenting Panel.

The annual report for 2021/2022 highlighted the following strengths:

- IROs found creative ways of involving children in their reviews during the pandemic using virtual sessions, played games and used WhatsApp and Zoom.
- IROs talked about life story work and words and pictures at all reviews. They talked about how it is important for children in care to know about why they can't live with their family and why decisions have been made. IROs made sure that children had life story work when Special Guardianship Orders have been made.
- IROs always made attempts to speak to/make contact with parents, even those who don't have a lot of involvement in their child's life. They are mindful that they are still their parents and that they need to try every review. Using virtual meetings helped some families attend.
- Within our team meetings we made regular time for discussions around anti-racist and anti-oppressive practice.



- Children’s participation in their reviews improved and by the end of the reporting period was above target at just over 96%.
- There was also evidence of successful group challenge of the sufficiency strategy for placement options for 16 and 17-year-olds who had been recently criminally or sexually exploited.

The service also identified the following priorities for future work:

- To reduce the number of children each IRO supports and make sure that children, families and professionals receive their reports soon after their reviews
- To ensure that children and young people know their story and why they are in care
- To involve parents in reviews whenever possible and regularly review decisions around involvement of parents, wider family and other Important people. We will make sure that we involve dads.
- We will find the best way for each child or young person to give their views and feedback
- To ensure children and young people in care in Bristol are getting the right support and IROs are communicating with children and young people in the best way they can about gender identity and sexuality
- To ensure that everyone is thinking about the future of children and young people in care in Bristol and thinking about their permanence plans

The following are the areas that the IRO service have identified as priorities for improvement for children in care in Bristol. We will be working alongside the Local Authority with challenge and support to make improvements for children in these areas:

- That there are enough good quality homes for children to live in, particularly teenagers who are experiencing harm and exploitation in their communities.
- That the matching and placement planning process is improved - particularly in our Children’s Homes – so that children have the best chances of having their needs met and thriving.
- That children who might have care and support needs receive a Care Act Assessment before they turn 17 so there is a lot of time to plan what support they are going to receive when they are an adult.
- That the local authority has effective plans to support social workers to stay in their jobs after the pandemic to reduce change for children and ensure their important relationships are prioritised.
- That life story work is completed with and for children in care, and that this regularly monitored and assured at a senior level.
- That when safe enough, reunification is considered and work is done to support children returning to their families.

- That there is a clear plan for supporting children in care to recover from the impact of COVID-19 pandemic in relation to their emotional wellbeing, family networks and educational outcomes.
- That where appropriate, kinship and foster carers are supported to become SGO carers with the resource to enable them to continue to care for children and meet their needs.

17. Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Children in our care with special education needs and/or a disability are supported by a range of professionals, and we aim to ensure that all the plans of support are linked up, as this means children and young people know who is doing what to help them achieve their full academic potential.

Since 1st September 2021 we have had a social care hub for all social care contributions to the needs assessments and plans for Education Health Care Plans. The social worker allocated to children in care will write and attend reviews, but will have additional support if they need it from the hub to ensure all our children have the best available provision. For children aged 14 or over we have the 'pathway 2 independence' team who bridge the gap between children and adult services and check that the allocated social worker is making the right referral to adult care where appropriate.

The hub is working closely with the education SEN team, and we are working together, with the HOPE, to ensure the EHCP and the PEP linking up, and are clear, so everyone knows what they should be doing and how and when.



Our FLORA team (Family, Local Offer, Resources, and Advice) offer advice to foster carers, parent carers, and professionals. They specialise in the support children with additional needs may have before they enter any statutory processes like an EHCP. They support special education needs coordinators to think about support plans and get support at the earliest point to support a child, and their carers.

The HOPE works closely in partnership with a range of colleagues including social care and SEND supporting and developing practice to ensure setting and placement stability, and appropriateness. Personal Education Plans are monitored and moderated to ensure a consistency of practice, and that the 'core offer' is distinguished from the Pupil Premium spend, and both are supporting progress. At PEP (Personal Education Plan) meetings progress and attendance are reviewed and challenged and the young person's voice is heard and included within actions.

Special educational needs and disability issues are reviewed at each personal education plan meeting and guidance is offered regarding the graduated response offered by the setting and if additional funding or support is required. The HOPE supports schools to use the Bristol SEND Support Plan where necessary and to use this to make applications for additional high needs funding or EHCNA (Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment). The HOPE's SEND register enables accurate information sharing from School Support Top-up and EHCP.

18. Participation and Co-production

Participation, voice and influence are central to the strategic vision for services in Bristol. Co-construction and participation are at the heart of Bristol's Children's Charter, Belonging Strategy, Corporate Parenting Strategy and the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership Strategic Plan. Our vision is to ensure that Bristol's children and young people are listened to and involved in the decisions that affect their lives. Our services actively engage children and young people and use their views and experiences to inform plans and improve outcomes for both individuals and services. We have systems in place to support participation work and our workforce have the skills and knowledge needed to ensure that views of children and young people are heard and make a difference.

Reconstruct have facilitated our Children in Care Council since it began and report regularly to the Corporate Parenting Panel. They have supported children to lead campaigns and projects, as well as provided space for care-experienced children to come together. They are well known amongst the children and social workers.



They have permanent representation on the Youth Council and meet regularly with the Youth Mayors and other participation workers in the city to ensure children in care are well represented in participative processes.

Children and young people participate in the Corporate Parenting Panel twilight sessions to update members on projects they've been working on and to raise awareness of issues faced by children in care and care leavers. The Corporate Parenting Manager meets with the participation workers monthly and visits the participation groups regularly to respond to feedback and embed co-production opportunities.

We have developed a young people's shadow Corporate Parenting Panel in order to allow more meaningful opportunities for care-experienced young people to influence decision-making, as well as helping hold the local authority to account with the delivery of their corporate parenting strategy. This is based on a best-practice example from another Local Authority in order to move forward from a more tokenistic engagement of young people on the Corporate Parenting Panel.

Barnardo's run a health project for young people with lived experience of using health services to inform development of health services. The group is well represented by care leavers and they have produced a care leaver health report² which has been taken up by the Corporate Parenting Panel.

We have strong links with our specialist youth provision Welcome Wednesday which caters for unaccompanied asylum seekers aged 13-19. The group recently created a report after consulting with the wider local cohort of asylum-seeking young people which they shared at our Corporate Parenting Panel in March 2022. The panel will continue to review how we as a city continue to improve our support to unaccompanied young people arriving in our city.

Building on our Care Ambassadors, we have a further 3 care-experienced apprentices supporting us with projects and participation across the service.

Over the next year we will be working on embedding changes in service delivery based on feedback from children and young people including our activities and support offer for young people seeking

² This report was produced by young people with lived experience of the care system and health and well-being services. Please see appendix for report in full.

asylum. We continue to explore ways and opportunities for care-experienced children to contribute to the work of the panel and to ensure all our service design and delivery has its roots in the wishes and experiences of the children and young people we care for.

19. Conclusion

This year has not been without its challenges as we have looked to recover from a disruptive period whilst maintaining stable and loving homes for children, support for our staff and carers, and continuing to strive for the goals we set ourselves in the Corporate Parenting Strategy. The panel have overseen the work from the operational staff to maintain accountability and to offer support. We have seen significant work within the fostering teams to recruit and retain a range of loving carers, investment into children's homes to provide stable and supportive environments, new and innovative practice in the Through Care teams in order to best meet the needs of our children and young people and a relentless drive for improvement within disabled children's services, education and our Quality Assurance teams.

We are committed to Bristol being a city that provides the very best for the children and young people in its care. We will continue to have high aspirations for our children and to work in partnership with them to ensure the same standard of care as any good parent would.

There is plenty of work that remains to be done and it is imperative that we have the full support of all our elected members in order to make this vision a reality. We particularly ask that you champion and support foster carers and care leavers living in your ward, including encouraging residents to consider applying to become foster carers. Please also consider supporting The EPIC Charity which offers grants to care-experienced young people in Bristol to have access to hobbies, opportunities and a chance to make positive memories. Please see the appendix for how to sign up to become a monthly supporter.

Next year we will be addressing the challenges set out below, as well as those raised in the report. As we look to the last 18 months of the current Corporate Parenting Strategy we will be monitoring and review its progress before its renewal in 2024. We are looking forward to the LGA (Local Government Association) Peer Review Challenge later this year as we aspire to grow in effectiveness as a panel.

20. Appendices

a. Appendix 1: How have we been doing?

Key Priority	What's been working well	Challenges that remain?
<p>Trusted and Safe Relationships: Children and young people feel loved, connected and safe</p>	<p>Network Building is firmly embedded at every layer of the service and evidenced in guidelines, plans, supervisions, and audits.</p> <p>Extension of our social events and activities has allowed our young people to come together to make friends and socialise. We have a suite of social and activity events across the year for children and young people to join, including a big focus on celebrating Care Leavers Week in October. Our monthly supper club now has more than 40 regular attendees.</p> <p>The Safer Choices and Routes projects have strengthened the work to safeguard and protect children and young people from exploitation, including increased mentoring and 1:1 support offers for young people affected by county lines.</p> <p>We have established a mediation and restorative justice early intervention service in the team specifically for children in care to assist placement stability and avoid disproportionate engagement with the police for children in care.</p> <p>Care Leaver Champions are established in the locality areas and within children's centres.</p> <p>Domestic Abuse lead practitioner for care leavers offers consultation, joint assessment, joint-working, direct work to young people including development of a group work offer leading to safety plans and safeguarding.</p>	<p>Broaden the reach and range of events so there's something for everyone.</p> <p>Develop the Youth Housing pathway to ensure availability of appropriate accommodation</p> <p>Review our offer for children in care in custody</p> <p>Further strengthen and embed our networking approach to ensure our children have lifelong support and links as children in our care and care leavers</p>

Key Priority	<i>What's been working well</i>	<i>Challenges that remain</i>
<p>Education, Training and Employment: Hold high aspirations and close the attainment gap for children in care. Increase the proportion of care leavers in education, training and employment.</p>	<p>Attendance and achievement results show continued year on year improvement despite the disruption throughout Covid.</p> <p>Training and support offered to school staff has led to 98% of Pupil Education Plans monitored as being good or outstanding with children's voices routinely captured within reports.</p> <p>There has been a reduction in the number of days lost to exclusion.</p> <p>Relationships and Belonging Guidance has been produced and shared with Designated Teachers</p> <p>The HOPE's SEND register enables accurate information sharing from School Support Top Up and EHCP</p>	<p>Lack of sufficiency of ESOL places for our post 16 young people.</p> <p>Access to a broad range of ring-fenced opportunities for care leavers across the city.</p> <p>Further embed the culture of trauma-informed practice embedded across all Bristol Education Settings that supports learning for care-experienced children and young people</p> <p>More children are able to access quality alternative learning provision within Bristol</p> <p>Develop the HOPE offer for care leavers in further and higher education to enable us to further act in promoting engagement and education</p>

Key Priority	<i>What's been working well</i>	<i>Challenges that remain</i>
<p>Opportunities Growing Up: Being in care is an enriching experience that equips children for a successful life.</p>	<p>Introduction of a monthly preparing for change panel to track the transition plans for all 17 year-olds to ensure timely assessment of need and planning</p> <p>EPIC is a registered charity and now in a position to begin to offer small grants to care-experienced young people in Bristol.</p> <p>Our partners in the voluntary sector and asylum-seeking young people are core partners in the development of our service to unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.</p> <p>The care leaver regional offer work is firmly underway with the first big event completed early June, and final sign off in September 2022.</p> <p>All children and young people in care and care leavers have access to a tablet or laptop.</p> <p>Launch of our quarterly care leaver newsletter edited by our care experienced apprentices and engagement workers provides an opportunity for young people to share their stories and successes and for us to share news and opportunities for young people.</p>	<p>Development of mentoring or befriending projects beyond the Independent Visiting Scheme</p> <p>EPIC needs to secure regular financial support and grow its profile in order to reach the cohort of care experienced young people in Bristol</p> <p>Build on the regional offer work to continue to engage our key partners across the city in order to provide the best possible opportunities for care leavers</p>
Key priority	<i>What's been working well</i>	<i>Challenges that remain</i>
<p>Identity: Children and young people have a strong sense of self, and an understanding of their care story.</p>	<p>Foster carers and staff in children's homes are supported to celebrate and nurture children's identities in new and innovative ways including care plans, starter packs and mandatory training. Designated teachers in schools receive training on working with children in care.</p> <p>Cultural Intelligence training is being rolled out to staff across the service</p> <p>Participation pathways created to ensure young people with asylum background can share feedback</p> <p>Life story work guidelines are being developed with children and young people</p>	<p>Ensure children and young people's identities can be celebrated and nurtured at every level of their care</p> <p>Agree care experience as a locally protected characteristic</p> <p>Review and develop our staff training offer, policies and guidance to ensure we are giving the right support to our children and young people exploring their sexuality and/or gender identity.</p> <p>Co-produce the specialist service with asylum-experienced young people</p>

Key Priority	<i>What's been working well</i>	<i>Challenges that remain</i>
<p>Co-production: Children and young people are at the heart of service design, delivery and evaluation</p>	<p>Range of opportunities for children and young people to participate in service planning, share feedback, take part in interview panels and deliver training.</p> <p>Surveys, consultations and participation in the Independent Review of Children's Social Care</p> <p>Care Leaver Forum, Young Leaders Group and Children in Care Council have contributed to the work of the panel, shared campaigns and influenced service design and delivery.</p> <p>New Corporate Parenting Shadow Board established</p> <p>Apprenticeship opportunities for care-experienced young people created within the service.</p>	<p>Embed young people's involvement with recruitment, training and quality assurance</p> <p>Include young people in foster carer assessment processes</p> <p>Co-produce a strategy and practice framework for working in partnership with children in care, care leavers and their families.</p> <p>Safely reduce the number of meetings and appointments for children that make them feel different.</p>

Key Priority	What's been working well	Challenges that remain
<p>Homes and Housing: Children and young people will live somewhere where they feel a sense of safety and belonging and are loved</p>	<p>Re-profiling of children's homes completed including acquisition of new home (Cherry Blossom). Children's Homes Improvement Plan is completed, the work is now firmly embedded and children's homes inspections report significant improvement. The Bristol Model is being rolled out to foster carers and children's homes.</p> <p>Increased capacity and resourcing within the fostering and kinship care teams has resulted in reduced caseloads, improved support to carers and improved timeliness in relation to our statutory requirements.</p>	<p>Increase sufficiency of foster homes and recruit a more diverse group of foster carers to reflect the identities of children we care for.</p> <p>Develop a bespoke home for disabled children to allow more children to access specialist provision within Bristol.</p> <p>Ensure a range of high-quality housing options for care leavers to meet their needs, including bespoke homes for young people with more complex needs.</p> <p>Provide timely and flexible move-on accommodation for care leavers who are ready for independent living.</p> <p>Address the challenges across children's placements and placement sufficiency via the transformational project</p> <p>Trial a new pilot home for unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people so that we can carefully match in order to build new friendships, networks, and communities.</p>

Key Priority	What's been working well	Challenges that remain
<p>Health and Support: Improve health and well-being by ensuring high quality health services and information are provided to children, young people and carers.</p>	<p>Training programme developed and rolled out to carers and Children's Homes staff</p> <p>Adolescent Support Programme is operational</p> <p>A campaign around access to health services has been co-produced with care leavers and Barnardo's</p> <p>A social care hub has been developed to support social workers to contribute to plans and needs assessments for Education and Health Care Plans.</p> <p>The new Pathway 2 Independence team bridge the gap between children's and adult services for young people who may go on to need care from adult services.</p>	<p>Provide timely, accessible, relationship-based and trauma-informed health and wellbeing services</p> <p>In collaboration with thinking allowed and the CCG continue to develop the emotional and mental health offer for our children in care</p> <p>Ensure all children in care have access to an annual health assessment and Dental checks (there has been an impact on the availability of dental checks due to the Covid pandemic) and that these are accurately recorded for children.</p>
Key Priority	What's been working well	Challenges that remain
<p>Caring for those who care: children and young people are nurtured by carers and workers who are well-resourced, valued and supported</p>	<p>Bristol has introduced a competitive financial and support package for carers, including a new Special Guardianship Offer, leading to improved stability for children.</p> <p>Foster Carer Wellbeing offer has been set up and is well-established. There is a full programme of activities throughout the year to ensure carers are offered time and space to feel supported and appreciated. Recent celebrations took place at the Fostering Fun Day and the annual Foster Carer Celebration.</p> <p>Increased team capacity has led to improved support for carers</p>	<p>Children, young people, families and staff have shared space within the city for events, workspace and shared activities.</p> <p>Explore "light touch" model for eligible children to reduce number of professionals involved and promote a more normalised family life experience.</p>

b. Appendix 2: Corporate Parenting Panel membership

Corporate Parenting Panel Membership:

Elected members:

CLlr Asher Craig (Chair)
CLlr John Goulandris
CLlr Brenda Massey
CLlr Christine Townsend
CLlr Sarah Classick
CLlr Don Alexander
CLlr Phillipa Hulme
CLlr Heather Mack

Officer Membership:

Sarah Parker, Interim Director Children's Services
Fiona Tudge, Deputy Director Children's Services
James Beardall, Head of Service, Permanency and Specialist Services and Safer Communities
Tara Parsons, Service Manager Fostering
Amanda Braund, Service Manager, Through Care
Emma Lloyd, Head of HOPE Virtual School
Liz Small, Corporate Parenting Manager
Angela Stephen, Designated Nurse, Bristol, North Somerset and South Glos Clinical Commissioning Group

Partners:

Dr Jon Symonds, University of Bristol
Bristol Foster Carer Association
Brian Price, Alderman
Jackie Norman, Alderman
Reconstruct
Barnardo's

c. Appendix 3: links to key documents

[Corporate Parenting Strategy and Pledge 2021-2023](#)

[Bristol Belonging Strategy 2021-2024](#)

www.bristol.gov.uk/foster

[A health offer for care-experienced young people](#)



Have you considered fostering?

There's no typical foster family – just as there's no typical child.

You don't need to be married, own your house, or have specific qualifications to be a foster carer. We welcome people of any ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion.

If you can provide a safe and welcoming home, have compassion, kindness, and a sense of humour, you have what it takes.

In return for your time and care, you'll receive:

1. a weekly allowance per child plus weekly payment
2. dedicated support and regular contact with other foster carers
3. free access to Bristol City Council gyms and other citywide discounts

“We've been fostering on and off for ten years now because we've got a spare bedroom and wanted to give a child a home who can't live with their own family. We've got a lot to offer, and we've absolutely loved it.”

Children in Bristol urgently need foster homes.
By fostering with us, you help children stay close to their friends and family. We believe every child deserves a safe and welcoming home to help them reach their full potential.

Fostering Bristol

Want to know more or have an informal chat with our team?
Visit: www.bristol.gov.uk/foster
Call: 0117 353 4200
email: fostering@bristol.gov.uk
@BCCFostering
BristolFostering

Fostering Bristol

Sign up to the EPIC charity:



HOW TO SIGN UP TO THE EPIC CHARITY – BRISTOL

1. Go to 'Give As You Earn' on The Source
2. Click on the link to the Council's page on the CAF website
3. Follow the instructions, and when prompted for the charity name type in 'The Epic Charity – Bristol'



ANY QUESTIONS?
Email michael.starr@bristol.gov.uk or liz.small@bristol.gov.uk



Full Council

18 October 2022

Report of: Selection Committee

Title: Appointment of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service

Ward: Not applicable

Councillor Presenting Report: Councillor Craig Cheney (Chair of Selection Committee)

Recommendation

That Stephen Peacock be appointed to the role of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service with effect from 21 October 2022 until 30 June 2024.

Summary

The report seeks the agreement of the Full Council to appoint the candidate nominated by the Selection Committee as Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service.

The significant issues in the report are:

- The Council's Constitution requires that the Full Council approves the appointment of the Head of Paid Service before an offer is made to the nominated candidate.
- The pay for the role is set by the Selection Committee within the range specified in the Pay Policy Statement.
- The terms and conditions for the role are set by the Human Resources Committee.



Policy

1. The Selection Committee is responsible for recommending the appointment of the Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service to the Full Council.
2. The pay of the Chief Executive and Chief Officers is set annually by the Full Council through the Pay Policy Statement.
3. The terms and conditions of the Chief Executive and Chief Officers are set by the Human Resources Committee.

Consultation

4. **Internal**
The “Executive Objections Procedure” (Annex 1 to the Officer Employment Rules within the Council’s Constitution) has been followed.
5. **External**
Not applicable.

Context

6. The current Chief Executive will be leaving Bristol City Council for another role in October 2022. An internal recruitment process took place to appoint a Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service to cover the remaining period of the Mayoral administration and preparation for the new Committee system.
7. The Selection Committee met and interviewed shortlisted candidates on 1 September 2022. The decision of the Committee is to recommend Stephen Peacock for the role of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service.
8. Stephen Peacock is currently employed by the Council on a permanent basis as Executive Director: Growth and Regeneration. He will undertake the role of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service with effect from 21 October 2022 until 30 June 2024.
9. The Selection Committee agreed the salary to be offered for this role in accordance with the pay range set out in the Council’s Pay Policy Statement 22/23, subject to approval of this appointment by the Full Council.

Proposal

10. That Stephen Peacock be appointed to the roles of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service with effect from 21 October 2022 for a period up to 30 June 2024.

Other Options Considered

11. None.

Risk Assessment

12. None.

Public Sector Equality Duties

- 13a)** Before making a decision, section 149 Equality Act 2010 requires that each decision-maker considers the need to promote equality for persons with the following “protected characteristics”: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. Each decision-maker must, therefore, have due regard to the need to:
- i) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act 2010.
 - ii) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to --
 - remove or minimise disadvantage suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic;
 - take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of people who do not share it (in relation to disabled people, this includes, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities);
 - encourage persons who share a protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
 - iii) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to –
 - tackle prejudice; and
 - promote understanding.
- 13b)** An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken in relation to this proposal because it concerns an individual.

Legal and Resource Implications

14. Legal

“In accordance with Part II of the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001, the Council’s Constitution requires that the appointment of the Head of Paid Service must be agreed by Full Council before an offer of appointment is made.”

Advice provided by Husinara Jones (Lawyer), 1 September 2022

15. Financial

(a) Revenue

“Budget for the position exists within the council and remuneration has been approved through the Selection Committee so no further financial comment.”

(b) Capital

“None.”

Advice provided by Olubunmi Kupoluyi (Finance Business Partner), 2 September 2022

16. Land

Not applicable.

17. Personnel

“The Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service vacancy was advertised internally. It is offered with effect from 21 October for a period up to 30 June 2024. The arrangements can be ended earlier, or extended as appropriate. All Selection Committee members have received recruitment and selection training. Advice and quality assurance was received from the Local Government Association. The six-member Selection Committee decided unanimously to recommend the selected candidate as the Council’s Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service on the terms and conditions agreed by the Human Resources Committee.”

Advice provided by James Brereton (Head of Human Resources), 1 September 2022

Appendices:

None.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Background Papers:

None.

Full Council

18 October 2022



Report of: Denise Murray, Director of Finance & S151 Officer

Title: Medium Term Financial Plan and Capital Strategy

Ward: Citywide

Member Presenting Report: Councillor Craig Cheney (Deputy Mayor, Cabinet Member with responsibility for City Economy, Finance & Performance)

Recommendation

To note

1. The economic outlook and projections within the 5-year MTFP
2. The Strategic planning approach

To approve

3. Medium Term Financial Plan for the period 2023/24 to 2027/28
4. The Reserve Policy
5. Capital Strategy for the period 2023/24 to 2032/33

Summary

The MTFP and Capital Strategy are rolling plans which cover the period 2023/24 to 2027/28 and 2023/24 to 2032/33 respectively. They provide the financial framework within which revenue and capital budgets for the Council will be developed and put forward to Full Council for approval as part of the annual budget setting process. The financial planning assumptions included will be kept under constant review given the increased level of uncertainty in the financial and economic climate.

The significant issues in the report are:

This Medium Term Financial Plan identifies a cumulative peak funding gap of £37.5 million during the 2023/24–2027/28 period. This gap is to be closed through targets for both short term and longer-term interventions which will require budget savings to be delivered to ensure a medium term financially balanced position. The report also sets out principles for a robust reserves policy to ensure resilience over this period. The Capital Strategy is an overarching document which sets the policy framework for the development, management and monitoring of the Council's capital investment. The requirement to have an annual Capital Strategy approved by Council became mandatory in 2019/20 as part of the update to the Prudential Code. The Medium Term Financial Plan and the Capital Strategy have been produced in compliance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy Financial Management code for Local Authorities.

Issues to note:

The MTFP forecasts a 'base case' peak funding gap across the 2023/24-2027/28 timeframe of £37.5million. This funding gap needs to be viewed in the context of being post pandemic with the additional cost of living impact and demand pressures. The forecast is extremely sensitive to inflation and core funding and by revising the forecast according to best and worst case for these factors the projected position could vary to between £14 million - £87.6 million

It should also be noted that the MTFP does not assume any impact for Adult Social Care reforms.

It will be necessary to continue to monitor and evaluate key assumptions which have been applied to this base case MTFP.

Policy

1. The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and Capital Strategy are key parts of the Council's financial planning process. They set out the Council's strategic approach to the management of its finances and provide a framework within which delivery of the Council's priorities will be progressed. An annual refresh is undertaken to ensure they remain relevant and accurate.

Consultation**2. Internal**

The Medium Term Financial Plan and Capital Strategy are discussed and challenged by a Task and Finish Group of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

3. External

Not applicable

Context

4. The Medium Term Financial Plan and Capital Strategy are set out in Appendices A1&A2

Proposal

5. The Medium Term Financial Plan and Capital Strategy are set out in Appendices A1&A2

Other Options Considered

6. Throughout the process, various data was analysed and reviewed in developing the resourcing principles and capital strategy. This is a complex process with many iterations and possibilities too numerous to present as discrete options. This report presents the final overall strategy and sensitivity scenarios.

Risk Assessment

7. Consideration of the economic context and financial risk to the Council is considered in detail in the MTFP.

Summary of Equalities Impact of the Proposed Decision

We have not identified any significant equality impact from the Medium Term Financial Plan and Capital Strategy at this stage. This is because any future individual proposals will be subject to their own separate Equality Impact Assessment/consultation if required at the relevant time; and because decision makers will have the ability to make changes to the individual spending plans following consultation (where necessary) and detailed evaluation of the impact of proposals.

Legal and Resource Implications

Legal

The Medium term financial plan complies with the CIPFA Financial management code, and associated legislation and guidance. The code requires authorities to have a rolling multi-year medium-term financial plan consistent with sustainable service plans.

The Code is evidence of compliance with statutory and professional frameworks. The aim of the plan is to give clear and understandable information to decision makers in a public context on the actions that are needed to ensure long-term financial sustainability and provides the framework against which the Council's annual budget should be formulated and set.

The Capital strategy complies with the CIPFA Prudential code. Local authorities are required by regulation to have regard to the Prudential Code when carrying out their duties. The code requires the Authorities to produce a Capital Strategy. The strategy should cover capital expenditure, investments and liabilities and the treasury management. The objectives of the Prudential Code are to ensure that the capital investment plans of local authorities are affordable, prudent and sustainable. It should enable procedures and risk appetite to be fully understood by all elected Members and allow Members to understand how stewardship, value for money, prudence, sustainability and affordability will be secured.

(Legal advice provided by Nancy Rollason - Head of Legal Service)

Financial

(a) Revenue

The financial implications are set out in the report.

(b) Capital

The financial implications are set out in the report.

(Financial advice provided by Jemma Prince – Finance Business Partner for Planning)

Land

Not applicable

Personnel

A range of controls are either in place or available to assist in recovering the Council's financial position. Recruitment controls are in place and savings arising from vacancies held will be collected from service budgets. Permanent deletion of vacancies will be considered by Executive Directors. A scheme to reduce the number of managerial roles across the organisation is underway. Further measures to reduce staffing levels are under consideration. All actions will be subject to consultation/notification requirements once the implications of the budget gap are known and compulsory redundancies will be avoided wherever possible.

(Personnel advice provided by James Brereton – Head of Human Resources)

Appendices:

A1 – Medium Term Financial Plan

A2 – Capital Strategy

A3 – Equality Impact Assessment

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Background Papers: None

Bristol City Council
Medium Term Financial Plan
2023/24 – 2027/28

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) is a key part of Bristol City Council's (the Council) policy and budget framework and financial planning process. It is a rolling 5-year plan which is currently covering the period 2023/24 to 2027/28. The purpose of the MTFP is to provide a strategic framework to meet corporate priorities, taking a forward-looking approach to the management of the Council's financial resources and achieving sustainability over the medium term. It closely aligns with other key aspects of the financial planning process, including the Council's Capital Strategy.
- 1.2. As a living document it is subject to annual review and revision and builds on the mid-year financial outlook. It needs to be responsive to changing national factors, local priorities and conditions, and take account of emerging pressures, risks and opportunities to the Council's financial position. It provides a forecast outlook and identifies any potential gap in the budget requirement, aids robust and methodical planning, seeks to protect the financial health of the Council, considers the appropriate level of reserves that the Council holds to mitigate current and longer-term risks and ensures sustainable services, so that financial resilience can be achieved.
- 1.3. It is important to understand that the MTFP does not constitute a formal budget. It provides the financial parameters within which budget and service planning should take place, to ensure the Council sets a balanced budget. In accordance with Section 31A(11) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the final decisions on the overall Budget and Council Tax level are for full Council and following the appropriate consultation and considerations, must be made by Council before 11 March 2023.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. The MTFP underpins the Council's financial planning process and outlines the potential 'funding gap' which is the difference between the funding the Council expects to receive, and the estimated cost of delivering agreed services for the period 2023/24 to 2027/28. The funding gap is generally as a result of funding failing to keep pace with demand, inflation and other financial pressures. One of the main objectives of the MTFP is to plan for the delivery of services within an uncertain external environment and to ensure the achievement of value for money.
- 2.2. Local Government has played a key role in the delivery of local services during the period of the pandemic and supporting citizens and businesses during this cost of living crisis. However, we are not immune to these pressures and the Council is facing a challenging financial outlook. The pressures of disruption in global supply chains, labour shortage, high inflation levels, coupled with an ever-increasing demand for core services, is presenting a challenge across the whole local government sector.
- 2.3. Under the government's three-year Spending Review, announced last October, the funding plans for local authorities in 2023/24 are 'cash flat' – meaning no rises are planned. Unless government increases funding allocations for local authorities in line with inflation, services will face further real terms cuts.
- 2.4. Based upon the available information and assuming government support is not forthcoming, the Council's budget gap is set to grow. **The General Fund base case forecast** financial pressures and indicative funding, result in **a peak funding gap of £37.5million** over the period of the MTFP with £31.1 million attributed to 2023/24 as summarised in the table below.

Table 1: Summary Financial Outlook

General Fund Outlook	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Original Budget (March 2022)	428.235	437.167	447.096	458.379	458.507

Total Emerging Pressures	38.590	45.232	44.458	45.342	46.007
Indicative Budget Requirement	466.825	482.399	491.554	503.721	504.514
Total Indicative funding	(435.687)	(445.314)	(455.349)	(466.741)	(466.979)
Indicative Funding Gap	31.138	37.085	36.205	36.980	37.535

- 2.5. This funding gap needs to be viewed in the context of post pandemic and the additional cost of living cost and demand pressures. The forecast is extremely sensitive to inflation and core funding and by revising the forecast to best and worst case of these factors the forecast position could vary to between £14 million - £87.6 million and as such a degree of resilience in our planning assumptions and finances will be critical.
- 2.6. The funding gap will need to be addressed and it is inevitable that the £34.3 million of savings planned over the medium term as part of the 2022/23 budget will have to increase significantly. The Council will not be able to resolve this problem on its own, either expectations of what can be delivered will have to reduce or new funding found.
- 2.7. The planning assumption is that **Public Health, and the Housing Revenue Accounts (HRA)** are ringfenced accounts and operate on a principal of self-funding, as such they will seek to contain the additional costs and any new burden. There is a risk however that in the absence of additional Public Health funding, the service, traded services and/or our subsidiaries may be unable to absorb the full impact of the pay offer and inflation, and this could lead to a depletion of ring fenced reserves and a call on the central contingency.
- 2.8. The forecasted deficit to be carried forward in the **Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)**, continues an upward trend and is expected to reach circa £44.6 million by the end of 2022/23. This forecast is in line with the DSG cumulative deficit position outlined in the March 2022 budget report. The provisional DSG Block funding (excl. early years) has been published for 2023/24, with a provisional uplift to the High Needs Block of 5%. Based on current trends and 5% funding, if unmitigated the indication is that a cumulative deficit position of £63.1 million could be reached by the end of 2023/24.
- 2.9. A longer term plan is required, and the evolving Education Transformation Programme aims to improve the experiences and outcomes of children and young people, enable need to be met in a sustainable manner and addresses the increasing financial challenges for the local authority, and the Council's acceleration to tranche 1 of the Department for Education (DfE) Delivering Better Value in SEND (DBV) programme will provide the Council with additional support in achieving this objective.
- 2.10. Despite these funding constraints the Council will need to adapt swiftly and innovatively to meet the needs of our residents in a rapidly changing world. The Council remains committed to tackling the financial challenges, while at the same time modernising the services it delivers with a clear emphasis on tackling poverty and inequality and addressing climate change, in partnership with residents and other organisations. The Council will need to continue to work to assess, quantify and where possible manage emerging pressures outlined in this report, and ensure that in achieving a balanced position, investment and disinvestment decisions are driven by our strategic priorities.
- 2.11. While Revenue budget expenditure is concerned with the day-to-day running of services our Capital Programme is concerned with investment in the physical assets required in Bristol as a place; to maintain the essential infrastructure and attractive environment that we know is so important to the people who live, work and visit the city.
- 2.12. The Capital Strategy 2023/24 to 2032/33 sets out a framework for funding and investment decisions in respect of capital assets, in the context of our vision and priorities and available financial resources. As a rolling strategy with an annual refresh, it sets out the long-term context in which capital expenditure and investment decisions are made. In addition to the budgetary impact, it considers both risk and reward and impact on the achievement of priority outcomes.

- 2.13. Capital investment decisions have implications for the Revenue budget, in relation to:
- The revenue costs of financing capital, including prudential borrowing.
 - The ongoing running costs and/or income generated by new capital assets such as buildings.
- 2.14. A key consideration in assessing the Council's resilience will be the adequacy of the Council's reserves and the need to be continually alert to the risks and uncertainty to which the Council could be exposed and ensure the financial sustainability of the Council would not be challenged over the medium term. As a matter of prudence, the Council aims to manage the level of the reserves held at between 5% - 6% of the net revenue budget, in order to cover any major unforeseen expenditure.
- 2.15. The Council will need an approach that meets service demand in a sustainable manner; leveraging external income, maximising locally generated income and reducing costs in order to provide ongoing resilience against a backdrop of continuing economic uncertainty.

3. Governance

- 3.1. Local government finance in the UK is governed by primary legislation, regulation and professional standards as supported by statutory provision and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA) Professional Financial Management Code. The purpose of the Code is to provide a solid foundation to manage the short, medium and long term finances of the organisation; to manage financial resilience, to meet unforeseen demands on services and to manage unexpected shocks in financial circumstances and to place long term sustainability of local services at its heart.
- 3.2. The Council is compliant with the standards outlined in the code (the supporting Financial Management Standards are summarised in Annex 1), which provides assurance of the Council's effectiveness in its prudent use of public resources, financial management, adherence to legislative requirements in our jurisdictions and evidence of good governance. Development of the MTFP is an iterative process. Regular review is required to ensure it reflects most recent information and captures emerging issues. Elected Members, Scrutiny and Senior Management are engaged in the process through a series of regular briefings, to scope, inform and review the plan.
- 3.3. The transition from high-level planning principles, to detailed budgets that align with the Council's priorities, is shaped by elected Members with support and advice from senior management. As proposals develop, engagement is extended to a wider range of partners including citizens, staff, Schools Forum and Trade Unions. Consultation feedback is considered as part of the finalisation of the annual budget proposals.

4. Council Priorities

- 4.1. The Council's Corporate Strategy 2022 - 2027 lays the foundation for delivery of the vision for Bristol including the key priorities to be delivered over the medium term. It consists of **7 high level strategic themes** and 32 priorities that are the most important in achieving the Council's vision. As seen in Figure 1 below they are all underpinned **by 5 building blocks** and the values and behaviours that guide how the Council will work.

Figure 1: Corporate Strategy at a Glance

Our Corporate Strategy – at a glance

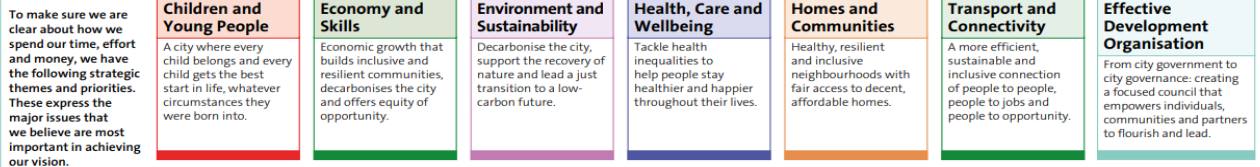
Vision

“ We play a leading role in driving an inclusive, sustainable and healthy city of hope and aspiration, one where everyone can share in its success. ”

Building Blocks



Themes



Values and Behaviours



- 4.2. The Corporate Strategy links with other key strategies and contributes to the delivery of the long-term One City Plan and shared vision for the city. The MTFP and Capital Strategy sit alongside and seek to complement the Corporate Strategy (medium term) and the Council's contribution to the One City Plan (long term), setting out a framework to ensure the Council lives within its means and targets available resources to the priority areas and regulatory obligations that may arise over the medium term.
- 4.3. A robust MTFP will seek to ensure:
- Sufficient provision is available for a balanced budget to be achieved in all five years of the MTFP
 - An alignment of expenditure to the strategic priorities contained in the Corporate Strategy
 - i. **Children and Young People** - City where every child belongs and every child gets the best start in life, whatever circumstances they were born in to.
 - ii. **Economy and Skills** - Economic growth that builds inclusive and resilient communities, decarbonises the city and offers equity of opportunity.
 - iii. **Environment and Sustainability**- Decarbonise the city, support the recovery of nature and lead a just transition to a low carbon future.
 - iv. **Health, Care and Wellbeing** - Tackling health inequalities to help people stay healthier and happier throughout their lives.
 - v. **Homes and Communities** - Healthy, resilient and inclusive neighbourhoods with fair access to decent, affordable homes.
 - vi. **Transport and Connectivity** - A more efficient, sustainable and inclusive connection of people to people, people to jobs and people to opportunity.
 - vii. **A Development Organisation** - From city government to city governance: creating a focussed council that empowers individuals, communities and partners to flourish and lead.
 - The making of suitable provisions for general reserves and known liabilities.
 - Building sufficient risk / contingency allocations into budget plans.
 - Making plans for capital financing that are appropriate, timely, cost effective and affordable across the life of the asset.
 - Principles are adopted for how we spend, save and invest that drive value for money and safeguard public money.

Implications for Financial Planning

The MTFP needs to reflect the revenue funding requirements of the Corporate strategy. This will include, where applicable, the financing requirements of capital investment needed to deliver the priorities. Funding solutions will not always mean a revenue budget allocation or the inclusion of a sum in the capital programme. In developing a financial strategy to support policy delivery there will be a need to draw on earmarked reserves set aside to support change, to proactively seek external funding and to work with partners in delivering solutions.

- 4.4. The themes, priorities and principles above are also used to set the framework for performance monitoring and guide the alignment and development of affordable and sustainable annual service and business planning across the Council.

5. Financial Outlook

The financial outlook considers the implications of the following on both the demand for services and likely resourcing levels over the next 5 years:

- 1.1. National Economic Context
- 1.2. New Legislative and Policy Change

National Context

- 5.1. Since the Council approved the current budget and five-year outlook in March 2022 there have been significant changes to the background context. The world economy, already weakened by the Coronavirus pandemic, now faces high inflation and the wide-spreading ramifications of a war in Ukraine.
- 5.2. In February 2022, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) approved a 3-year settlement for Local Government. The settlement frontloaded funding to councils for 2022/23, with no additional funds made available for 2023/24 and 2024/25. This indicates the funding plans for local authorities are 'cash flat' – meaning, services will face further real terms cuts. The agreed settlement was prior to any knowledge of the current inflation and cost of living crisis impacts on local government.
- 5.3. The outlook has changed, with inflation rates rising steeply and impacting not only on the Council's own expected future costs of supplies, but also on local business' finances and viability and the cost of living for our residents – in the latter case, leading to potential increased fuel and food poverty being seen.
- 5.4. The Bank of England has responsibility for controlling the annual inflation rate and thereby ensuring price stability. Earlier this year inflation was recorded as having reached a 30 year high. It is currently recorded as being 9.9% (CPI) compared to 1 year ago. This level of inflation significantly exceeds the Bank of England's target of 2%. Therefore, to reduce inflation and bring stability to the rate, the Bank of England decided in September of this year to increase the bank interest base rate by 0.5% to 2.25%. The market is predicting that this base rate will rise above 3% by the end of 2022 and as high as 4.25% by August 2023. The IFS has stated that the effects of inflation on local government could be worse than the period of austerity after 2010 if there is no increase in public sector funding to compensate for rising costs.

Table 2: 12 Month Inflation

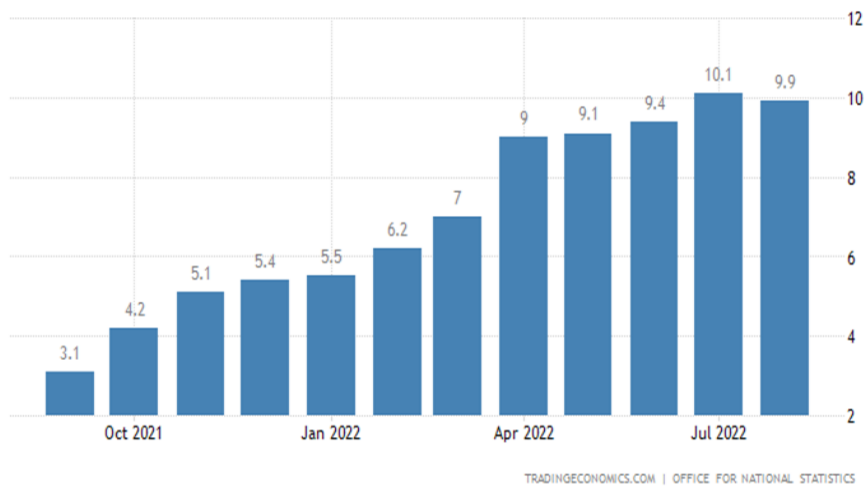
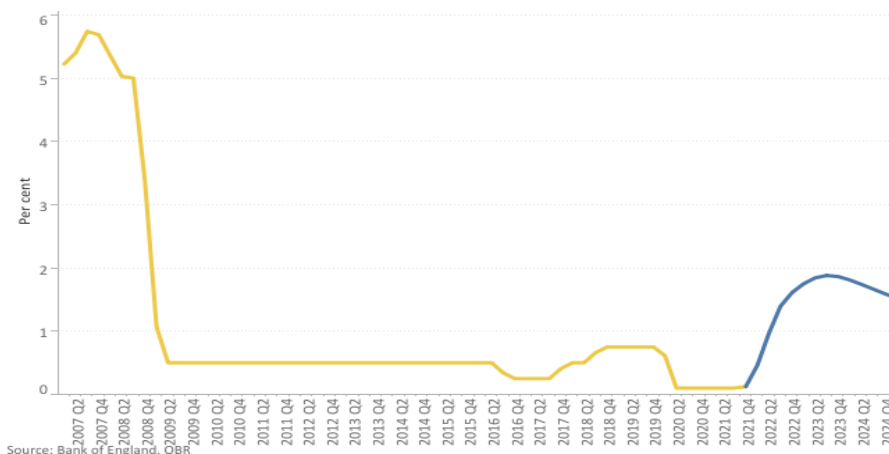


Table 3: Historic and Forecast Interest Rate



Interest Rate Forecasts

- 5.5. Rising interest rates may have repercussions for public finances. Future government debt becomes more expensive, which could put a further squeeze on public spending and future restrictions on local government borrowing.
- 5.6. The Council currently makes use of internal borrowing from reserves and balances to fund new capital expenditure although the requirement to borrow (known as the Capital Financing Requirement) is set to increase by around £105 million and £346 million for the General Fund and HRA respectively over the next 5 years, putting pressure on the Council to take on Public Works Loans Board (PWLB) external debt. The increases in borrowing rates illustrated above are around 1.5% higher than those used in the MTFP in the earlier period moving to 2% higher in the later years. As reserves are utilised reducing the availability for internal borrowing this could have a material impact on capital financing.
- 5.7. Over the life of the MTFP the Council's subsidiary companies will equally be affected by interest rate rises over the life of the MTFP, possibly by as much as £37.9 million for loans from the Council which have not yet been drawn down. This may impact on project viability and profit / returns to the Council. These changes have yet to be factored into the MTFP assumptions below.
- 5.8. Following the appointment of the new Prime Minister and Cabinet in September 2022, the government announced a range of financial measures to address NHS challenges, tackle cost of living pressures, inflation and stimulate economic growth.

- The **Energy Price Guarantee** will reduce the unit cost of electricity and gas so that a typical household pays, on average, around £2,500 a year on their energy bill for the next 2 years, from 1 October 2022.
- The **Energy Bill Relief Scheme** to provide relief for non-domestic customers by providing a discount on wholesale gas and electricity prices. Discounts will be applied to energy usage between 1 October 2022 and 31 March 2023, including for the Public Sector. The government supported price has been set at:
 - £211 per megawatt hour (MWh) for electricity
 - £75 per MWh for gas

The Department for Health & Social Care (DHSC) to provide:

- £500 million dedicated funding for hospital discharge to help people to receive four to six weeks' free social care on leaving hospital to remove barriers to discharge.
- £15 million to support care providers to recruit staff from overseas, visa processing, accommodation and pastoral support for new recruits.

5.9. The main headline changes from the fiscal event 'mini budget' are outlined below

- **Reversal of Health & Social Care Levy** of 1.25% on national insurance contributions effective from 6 November 2022
- **Basic rate of income tax to be cut** by 1p to 19% with effect from April 2023
- **The additional rate of income tax of 45% and dividend tax of 38.1% to be abolished** from 6 April 2023
- The planned **increase in corporation tax to 25% effective from April 2023, has been cancelled** so one rate of 19% remains
- The **Annual Investment Allowance limit** which was due to reduce from £1m to £200,000 from April 2023, will not happen. The allowance will be permanently set at £1m
- **Investment zones** (including West of England Combined Authority) will be introduced with specific tax benefits including:
 - 100% business rates relief
 - Full stamp duty land tax relief (SDLT) on land bought for commercial or residential development
 - 100% first year enhanced capital allowances for plant and machinery and 20% Enhanced Structures and Buildings Allowance
 - Zero rate on employer NIC on new employee earnings up to £50,270 per annum
- A turnaround in relation to **off-payroll working (IR35)** - reforms introduced in 2017 and 2021 will be repealed from April 2023. With the responsibility for determining employment status and paying the appropriate tax on the personal service entity
- With immediate effect, **the threshold to pay SDLT on residential properties will be increased** from £125,000 to £250,000. The rate for first-time buyers will also increase from £300,000 to £425,000 and the maximum value of a qualifying property for first-time buyers will increase to £625,000
- **Universal Credit Claimants** who earn less than the equivalent of 15 hours a week at National Living Wage will be required to meet regularly with their Work Coach and take active steps to increase their earnings or face having their benefits reduced
- Plans to **accelerate new roads, rail and energy infrastructure**
- The government will change regulations to **increase investment by pension funds** into UK assets, benefiting savers and boosting economic growth, and incentivising investment into Britain's science and tech companies.

5.10. No announcements have been made or plans outlined in respect of public spending and public services.

New Legislative and Policy Change

- 5.11. On 10 May, at the opening of Parliament as part of the Queen's speech the government announced a wide range of proposals, relating to devolution, planning, council tax, education, energy, housing, and health. It also included measures on business rates, public procurement, and local audit:
- Levelling Up & Regeneration Bill
 - Renters Reform Bill
 - Social Housing Regulation Bill
 - Schools Bill

- Energy Security Bill
- Transport Bill
- Draft Mental Health Act Reform Bill
- Non-Domestic Rating Bill
- Procurement Bill
- Draft Audit Reform Bill
- UK Infrastructure Bank Bill

5.12. These pieces of legislation were covered in the financial outlook (July 2022) and as such have not been covered in this refresh.

Liberty Protection Safeguards

5.13. The replacement of the statutory Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) policy and procedures with the new statutory Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) policy and procedures as part of the Mental Capacity (Amendment) Act 2019.

- *This is the biggest change in Adult and Children's Social Care since the introduction of the Care Act 2014*
- *Includes increased scrutiny with CQC including within their inspection regime*
- *This change will apply to Adult Social Care, Children's Services and Education (SEN) Services (16+).*

5.14. LPS will provide protection for people aged 16 and above, who need to be deprived of their liberty in order to enable their care or treatment and who lack the mental capacity to consent to those arrangements. There has been a 14% annual increase nationally in deprivations of liberty since 2014, reflecting the recognition of deprivations in practice alongside the changing needs of the population. With the national trend of people living longer, children surviving birth with more complex needs and numbers with cognitive impairment increasing, there is recognition that the support for this increasing population required revised legislation, statutory duties and management to deliver appropriate support and protection to these clients.

5.15. The final Code of Practice (COP) will be released by DHSC following their response to the public consultation that closed in July 2022. There was considerable feedback on the consultation at a local and regional level and the expectation is that the COP will have been revised for the final version.

Adult Social Care Charging Reforms

5.16. The government has delayed giving all self-funders the right to take advantage of, typically lower, council care home rates and plans to extend the right to have your council arrange your residential care – under section 18(3) of the Care Act 2014 – to all self-funders, from October 2023. It will be applied first to new entrants to care homes, with those already in residential care becoming eligible from April 2025 at the latest.

5.17. Councils and providers raised significant concerns about the feasibility of implementing section 18(3). Section 18(3), of reforms encompass the introduction of an £86,000 cap on the amount people pay for their personal care and a more generous means test for accessing council funded social care, both of which will also come into force in October 2023.

5.18. All three would likely give self-funders an incentive to approach their council to have their needs assessed, whether to benefit from council-funded care through the extended means-test, to start a care account metering their progress towards the cap or to benefit from lower fee rates through section 18(3).

5.19. This would generate the need to carry out an additional 100,000 assessments a year at a time when there is a perceived lack of social workers and practitioners to implement the reforms. Councils and providers also raised concerns about the impact of the change on the care market, given providers' longstanding reliance on the much higher fees paid by self-funders than councils in their business models. The Competition and Markets Authority estimated self-funders paid 41% more, on average, than councils for a place in the same care home.

- 5.20. Funding to pay councils fair rate is 'inadequate' - as part of its care funding reforms, the government intends to close the fee gap by insisting councils pay providers "a fair cost of care", backed by £1.4bn from 2022-25. However, initial analysis indicates that this fund would not be sufficient for councils to pay providers a fair rate and ensure the sustainability of the market, in the context of section 18(3) bringing down self-funders' fees.
- 5.21. Further work is being undertaken by the Council in this regard and our planning assumption is that the implementation of these reforms will be fully funded by government with a principle of no detriment.

Support To Refugee Families

- 5.22. The Bristol Refugee Resettlement Team (previously called the Syrian Resettlement Team) was established in January 2016. Its team provides support to refugee families assessed by the United Nations as particularly vulnerable and therefore eligible for formal resettlement.
- 5.23. Families have allocated Support Workers who help them to readjust, orientate and understand UK systems and services alongside practical support with day-to-day living, and work towards independence by the end of the support period.
- 5.24. Supported families live in private sector housing provided by landlords working in partnership with the team.

Afghanistan Resettlement Schemes

- 5.25. There are two schemes in operation to resettle Afghan families in the UK:
- The Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) – This opened on 6 January 2022 and provides vulnerable refugees from Afghanistan and those put at risk by recent events in Afghanistan with a route to safety. The scheme prioritises vulnerable people, including women and girls at risk, and members of minority groups at risk. The government aims to resettle more than 5,000 people in the first year and up to 20,000 over the coming years.
 - Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) - offers eligible current or former Afghan locally employed staff who are assessed to be under serious threat to life priority relocation to the UK. It has already settled thousands of Afghan nationals who have worked with the UK government and their families.

Homes For Ukraine Scheme

- 5.26. Responding to the crisis in Ukraine the Council's Refugee Resettlement Team is responsible for supporting Ukrainian guests arriving as part of the Homes for Ukraine Scheme. As at August 2022, 498 guests have arrived in Bristol from Ukraine and the team have visited more than 400 guests, including 120 children.
- 5.27. Ukrainian refugees can live and work in the UK for up to 3 years and access benefits, healthcare, employment, support to make sure a tenancy is well managed and the property is well maintained, and support from a network of community welcome hubs.
- 5.28. With no sign of the war in Ukraine ending anytime soon, many refugees won't be able to return home and the future support that will be provided by government when the agreed six-month period of their stay ends needs to be confirmed. In particular an increase in the homeless prevention grant to support refugees looking to move into privately rented

accommodation and increase the Local Housing Allowance to better reflect the costs of rents within the respective areas.

Early Years Funding Consultation

5.29. In July 2022 the DfE launched a government consultation seeking views on proposed updates to the early years funding formulae and maintained nursery school supplementary funding. Proposals are being considered to update the funding formulae for the early education entitlements for children aged 2, 3 and 4 because these formulae are no longer using the most recent data available. Using up-to-date data will help to ensure the funding system remains fair, effective, and responsive to changing levels of need. The consultation is also proposing reforms to create a fairer distribution of maintained nursery school supplementary funding.

6. Five Year Financial Outlook

The financial outlook provides the indicative funding envelope that facilitates the development of service plans and budgets, that will allocate resources in a manner that will enable effective mitigation of risks and deliver key commitments as outlined in the Council's Corporate Strategy.

General Fund Revenue

6.1. The Budget approved by Council in March 2022 outlined a 5-year balanced position. The net budget over the medium term is inclusive of £34.1 million of savings and efficiencies (pre optimism bias), impacting 2022/23 to 2026/27 financial years. The table below outlines the indicative funding envelope underpinning the Council's medium term budget.

Table 4: Previous Summary of General Fund Revenue Budget for the MTFP Period

2022/23		2023/24	24/25	25/26	26/27
Budget	Description	Projection	Projection	Projection	Projection
£m		£m	£m	£m	£m
388.795	Base budget Carried Forward	425.033	428.238	436.816	446.746
5.216	Pay Award	4.834	4.955	5.079	5.206
2.000	Pay Contingency				
11.991	General Contract Inflation	8.064	5.209	5.257	5.306
1.800	Health & Social Care Levy - NIC				
21.007	Total Inflationary Pressures	12.898	10.164	10.336	10.512
16.058	Adult Social Care	1.692	1.037	0.885	1.185
6.993	Children and Families	(0.694)	(0.945)	(0.671)	
3.947	Education	0.050	0.436	0.053	0.053
2.300	Homelessness				
0.670	Transport & Regulatory Services				
29.968	Total Service Pressures	1.050	0.528	0.267	1.238
50.975	Total Pressures	13.946	10.692	10.603	11.750

-0.271	Pipeline Savings				
-17.866	New Savings	(13.189)	(2.113)	(0.673)	(0.468)
3.400	Contingency	2.445	0.000	0.000	0.000
-14.737	Total Savings	(10.744)	(2.113)	(0.673)	(0.468)
425.033	Baseline Costs	428.235	436.817	446.746	458.028
6.017	One-off Costs	-	-	-	-
431.052	General Fund Budget	428.235	436,816	446,746	458,028
FINANCED BY:					
243.198	Council Tax	252.743	261.212	269.400	277.100
140.745	Business Rates (NDR)	138.896	138.834	140.033	143.058
3.430	New Homes Bonus	-	-	-	-
37.456	Social Care Grant	36.596	37.123	37.665	38.223
0.814	Lower Tier Services Grant	-	-	-	-
7.032	22/23 Services Grant	-	-	-	-
9.231	General & Earmarked Reserve	2.800	(0.353)	(0.353)	(0.353)
-10.854	Collection Fund Surplus/(Deficit)	(2.800)	-	-	-
431.052	Funding	428.235	436.816	446.745	458.028
0	Budget Surplus/(Deficit)	0	0	0	0

- 6.2. The development of the 2023/24 projections contained the following key assumptions:
- Council Tax increase of 1.99% for general purposes
 - No permissible Adult Social Care Precept for 2023/24
 - Reforms to business rates retention pilot from 100% to 75%
 - Social Care Grants – retained and cash flat with the exception of BCF
 - Services Grants – one off 2022/23 only
 - New Homes Bonus - legacy payment only 2022/23
 - Pay award 2.5% - subject to agreement with trade unions
 - 1.25% new Health and Social Care levy
 - No general inflation provision for supplies and services budgets
 - General inflationary increase of 3% for 2023/24 and 2% from 2024/25 and beyond for fees and charges
 - Centrally held 3% inflationary contingency for essentials (utilities, Adult Social Care or unavoidable Private Finance Initiative or other index linked contracts) and 2 % from 2024/25
 - Adult Social Care demographic cost pressures of £1.0 million in 2023/24
 - Contingency of up to £2.4 million for variations in efficiency propositions or undeliverable savings
 - Unallocated General Reserve will be retained at a minimum level of between 5-6% of the net revenue budget at each budget setting period.
- 6.3. Within this baseline position there remained significant uncertainty in relation to future collection fund losses, one-off grant funding streams, ongoing Covid-19 recovery funding and future local government funding reforms such as fair funding and business rates and inflation. The Council sought to de-risk the budget by only allocating one off or uncertain funding to one off initiatives and pressures.

- 6.4. The financial outlook is a live document and is under regular revision. The baseline position has been adjusted to reflect the latest information. The assumptions are scenario tested to show a realistic indication of the possible available resources and potential best / worst case to provide a range of outcomes.

General Fund Resources

- 6.5. The forecast level of overall general fund resources available to the Council, including retained business rates, central grants, and Council Tax income, over the next financial year is projected to be £435.7 million (this figure is £7.4 million higher than originally estimated in the budget) and broken down in the table below.

Table 5: Forecast Level of Overall General Fund Resources available to the Council

Core Funding	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
March 2022 Forecast	428.235	437.167	447.096	458.379	458.507
September 2022 Forecast	435.687	445.314	455.349	466.741	466.979
Changes since March 2022	7.452	8.147	8.253	8.362	8.472
Of which:					
2021/22 Collection Fund Outturn	(0.616)				
Business Rates Multiplier	2.430	2.593	2.644	2.697	2.751
Additional Grants (One off's)	5.638	2.819	2.819	2.819	2.819
Council Tax Second Home Premium	0.000	2.735	2.790	2.845	2.902
Total Additional Core Funding	7.452	8.147	8.253	8.362	8.472

- 6.6. The 2022/23 Finance Settlement outlined the overarching spending limits, indicating that the total envelope of funding available to local government will remain unchanged (cash flat). The following are key assumptions on future government funding, much of which is still uncertain as indicated below.

Collection Fund Surplus / Deficit Outturn

- 6.7. The actual movement from the council tax and business rates budget estimates for 2021/22 and 2022/23 will impact on the 2023/24 budget as they are included in the collection fund estimates. The 2023/24 budget assumed a £2.8 million deficit on the collection fund. The combination of the 2020/21 Covid losses spread across the subsequent 3 financial years, an adverse variation in the business rates annual Section 31 reconciliation, appeals provision for 2021/22, partially offset by a positive 2021/22 business rates outturn movement has resulting in a forecasted net deficit, of £3.469 million, opening balance on the collection fund (movement of £0.619 million).

Table 6: Breakdown of Carry Forward Deficit from 2021/22 and 2022/23 on Collection Fund

2023/24 Collection Fund Surplus/(Deficit)	Council Tax	Business Rates	Total	One Off Movement
£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Original Budget Assumption	2.800			
Forecast Outturn Movement in 22/23		(0.511)	(3.294)	
S31 Movement in 21/22 Outturn			3.335	
Losses from 20/21 (spread over 3 yrs.)		1.103	2.783	
Total	2.800	0.592	3.416	0.616

Business Rates Multiplier and Settlement Funding

- 6.8. In line with the principles of business rates retention, business rates are increased by inflation each year. Previously if the multiplier was frozen instead of increasing in line with inflation, the Under-Indexing Multiplier Grant would be increased to ensure that local authorities' shares of income were not impacted. The current high levels of inflation provide an increase in estimated business rates in 2023/24 and over the medium term. It is assumed any compensation for freezing business rates would be capped at circa. 3%, £2.340 million.

Additional One-off Grants

- 6.9. Since publication of the budget, there has been no new information related to local government funding regarding future or current grant income. At the time of writing the Council is still waiting notification of consultations regarding local government funding reform and the future of key grants deemed one-off, such as New Homes Bonus and the Service Grants.
- 6.10. The 2022/23 services grants utilising a distribution formula that allocates more of the funding to the most deprived local authorities. As the settlement did not include any longer-term changes for allocating funding, the Services Grant may indicate that the DLUHC intends to channel more grant funding to the most deprived local authorities to support "levelling up" in future years.
- 6.11. The 2022/23 budget assumed £11.3 million of non-ringfenced grants as one-off. The government has not confirmed the distribution of grant funding in 2023/24 and 2024/25 and in response to the Fair Funding Review and business rates retention this could change the distribution of funding between councils.
- 6.12. Whilst these grants have not been assumed in the funding available in the budget there is the potential that grants up to these levels may be rolled forward into the 2023/24 settlement. No confirmation of ongoing funding has been given and was not assumed in the budget; however this has now been revised to assume a transitional approach with at least 50% of this funding received in 2023/24 (£5.6m) and tapering to 25% (£2.8m) thereafter.

Council Tax Second Home Premium

- 6.13. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill includes proposals that billing authorities will have the power to charge a 100% premium, on second homes or empty dwellings. Whilst the bill is still subject to change as it progresses through parliament the estimate could yield an additional £2.7 million from 2024/25 for Council Tax for Bristol City Council based on latest CTB1 empty property data, band B council tax rates and 98.5% yield.

Table 7: Council Tax Second Home Premium

	Tax Base CTB1	Band B	Bristol	98.5% Yield £M
Bristol Latest CTB1 figures & Band B	1,878.00	1,734.73	1,478.73	2.735

- 6.14. Subject to the legislation receiving royal ascent the premium could be applied from April 2024 at the earliest and would require local decision by Council as to whether to apply the premium.
- 6.15. As stated above the funding assumptions contain uncertainty. In the past, changing circumstances have resulted in funding allocations ultimately being less favourable than

indicative amounts. In the event that that happens, there may be a need to identify significant additional savings at short notice. This could pose a material risk to the Council’s financial resilience, as the achievability risk associated with such savings is likely to be high.

General Fund – Indicative Available Funding

6.16. The forecast level of overall general fund resources available to the Council, including retained business rates, central grants, and Council Tax income, over the next planning period is £435.7 million (including the additional funding sources outlined below).

Table 8: Indicative Available Funding

2022/23	Indicative Available Funding (Base Case)	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Budget		Projection	Projection	Projection	Projection	Projection
£m		£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
243.198	Council Tax	252.741	261.210	269.400	277.100	277.228
140.745	Business Rates (NNDR)	141.326	141.427	142.675	145.753	145.807
3.430	New Homes Bonus	1.715	0.858	0.858	0.858	0.858
37.456	Social Care Grant	36.596	37.123	37.665	38.223	38.223
0.814	Lower Tier Services Grant	0.407	0.204	0.204	0.204	0.204
7.032	22/23 Services Grant	3.516	1.758	1.758	1.758	1.758
	Council Tax Second Home Premium	-	2.735	2.790	2.845	2.902
9.231	General & Earmarked Reserve	2.800				
(10.854)	Collection Fund Surplus/(Deficit)	(3.416)				
431.052	Total Indicative Funding	435.685	445.314	455.349	466.741	466.979

6.17. The underpinning assumptions in relation to each of the additional core funding categories are outlined in the subsequent sections.

Council Tax

6.18. Council Tax is the main source of locally raised income for the Council – *assuming referendum levels remain at below 2%* for Councils then council tax increases are assumed to be 1.99% each year of the MTFP period. Adult Social Care Precept - since 2016-17, local authorities have been able to increase Council Tax by an additional amount which must be allocated to fund Adult Social Care only. This is in addition to the usual funding of social care through Council Tax. This applies to London boroughs, county councils, metropolitan districts and unitary authorities.

6.19. No announcement has been made by the Government in this regard in relation to 2023/24 and as this is not currently included in future years MTFP planning assumptions. A 1% increase in core Council Tax or Precept generates c.£ 2.5 million additional income for core services. For planning purposes, this MTFP assumes annual core Council Tax increases of 1.99% and no additional Social Care Precept.

Business Rates

6.20. Since 2017-18 aligned with the West of England (WoE) devolution deal, constituent Unitary Councils in the region have been piloting 100% business rates retention. The Spending Review 2021 confirmed that existing 100% business rates arrangements continued for a further year to 2022/23 only for authorities in similar devolution arrangements. A strong local

economy is core to the success of the scheme and aside from the positive social outcomes of a buoyant city, there are direct financial rewards under the rates retention system.

- 6.21. The government is expected to make a final decision on the future of these arrangements beyond 2022/23 in the autumn alongside a consideration of the funding of Mayoral Combined Authorities. The MTFP is predicated on reforms happening in 2023/24, with the local retention share decreasing from 100% to 75%, and if the multiplier is frozen for 2023/24 instead of increasing in line with inflation, the Under-Indexing Multiplier Grant would be increased to ensure that local authorities' shares of income are not impacted.

New Homes Bonus

- 6.22. New Homes Bonus reforms have been in the pipeline for a number of years. The consultation covered several options for reforming the programme to provide an incentive which is more focused and targeted on ambitious housing delivery and dovetailed with the wider financial mechanisms, including the infrastructure levy and the Single Housing Infrastructure Fund. It is unclear how the government will incentivise local authorities to deliver additional housing within the new funding regime and as such from 2023/24 a tapered 50% £1.7million reducing to 25% is reflected in the MTFP.

Social Care Grant

- 6.23. The Social Care specific grants for 2023/24 is expected to be circa. £36.6 million after reversal of additional one off reform grants received in 2022/23 for one year only. In addition to the above the planning assumption is that the Improved Better Care Fund will be uplifted by c.5% mirroring the inflationary increase to the NHS.
- 6.24. The Health and Social Care Secretary announced £500 million for Adult Social Care this winter, to address delayed discharges from hospital. Further details are awaited on the distribution methodology and associated grant conditions. Whilst this funding is welcome, and will help to address discharge pressures, it falls significantly short of the funding needed to assist social care, and address inflation and workforce challenges faced within the care system.

7. Emerging Financial Pressures

Summary Position

- 7.1. The budget report to Cabinet in February 2022 outlined a balance position for all 5 years without the utilisation of reserves.
- 7.2. The emerging pressures identified over the planning period peak at £37.5 million. The underpinning assumptions in relation to each of the categories of emerging pressures are outlined in the subsequent sections.
- 7.3. This is a baseline position adjusted to incorporate the emerging pressures outlined in this MTFP and reflect the latest government funding assumptions to illustrate a realistic medium case, indication of the possible available resources and remaining budget gap.
- 7.4. These risk and scenarios will be taken into account when setting the Budget. Planning on this basis will ensure a proactive approach is being adopted and will support sustainability and resilience. The likelihood is that elements from both the best and worst case could arise,

having an offsetting impact, and providing options for the decisions that will be in the Council’s remit.

- 7.5. In reviewing the financial outlook different scenarios have also been modelled to stress test the key assumptions for best case and worst case in relation to both core funding and cost perspectives to analyse the likelihood that an alternative budget strategy / mitigation would be required.

Table 9: Emerging Financial Pressures

Recurrent 2022/23 Pressure	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Recurrent 2022/23 Pressure	25.810	25.810	25.810	25.810	25.810
Corporate Emerging Pressures	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Change in Funding	(7.452)	(8.147)	(8.253)	(8.362)	(8.472)
Pay Award	5.524	7.094	7.616	8.151	8.514
Health & Social Care Levy	(1.801)	(1.801)	(1.801)	(1.801)	(1.801)
Inflation & Levies	8.250	12.359	10.379	10.399	10.420
Capital Financing	0.807	1.770	2.454	2.782	3.064
Total	5.327	11.275	10.395	11.170	11.725
Total Pressures	31.138	37.085	36.205	36.980	37.535

2022/23 Recurrent Budget Pressures as at Period 5 / Quarter 2

- 7.6. At period 5 / Quarter 2 2022/23, the Council is forecasting a £11.0 million (2.5%) overspend against the approved General Fund budget (£431.1m), the majority of which is directly attributed to social care, homelessness, inflation including rising energy costs and undelivered savings. See Bristol City Council Quarter 2 2022/23 - Finance Monitoring Report Appendix A for full details. The review undertaken to inform the MTFP refresh has indicated a range of in year general fund pressures across a number of directorates which are recurrent in nature and to which mitigation activity has been identified on a one-off basis only.
- 7.7. Mitigations will continue to be explored including collaboration with partners to identify mechanisms to manage the challenges and improve outcomes. As at Quarter 2 £25.8million recurrent or unmitigated pressures are assumed within the general fund.

Table 10: Recurrent 22/23 Budget Pressures

<i>22/23 Service Pressures Carried Forward</i>												
	Revised Budget	Total Q1 Potential variance incl risk	Q1 Variance as % Net Budget	P3 Exceptions	P4 Exceptions	P5 Movement	Q2 Variance	Recurrent Pressures / Opportunities	One-Off Pressures / Opportunities	Recurrent Mitigations	One-Off Mitigations	Pressures C/F to 23/24
	£000s	£000s	%	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
People												
Adult Social Care	169,821	4,729	2.8%	1,840	554	(2,245)	4,878	4,878		(1,875)	(250)	3,003
Children and Families Services	71,738	7,717	10.8%		174	3,501	11,392	11,392			(1,200)	11,392
Educational Improvement	15,751	2,058	13.1%			45	2,103	2,103			(502)	2,103
Public Health - General Fund	5,858	0	0.0%			404	404	404		(253)		151
Total People	263,168	14,503	0	1,840	728	1,706	18,777	18,777	0	(2,128)	(1,952)	16,649
Resources												
Digital Transformation	13,885	1,477	10.6%			230	1,707	1,707			(635)	1,707
Legal and Democratic Services	14,043	89	0.6%			4	93		93		(320)	0
Finance	8,473	113	1.3%			(4)	109		109		(425)	0
HR, Workplace & Organisational Design	4,229	1	0.0%			(66)	(65)		(65)		(250)	0
Management - Resources	(1,798)	2,125	-113.3%			(202)	1,923	1,000	923		(1,015)	1,000
Policy, Strategy & Partnerships	4,647	54	1.2%			(16)	38		38	(10)		(10)
Total Resources	43,479	3,859	(1)	0	0	(54)	3,805	2,707	1,098	(10)	(2,645)	2,697
Growth & Regeneration												
Housing & Landlord Services	17,749	3,814	21.4%			1,337	5,151	5,151		(513)	(1,896)	4,638
Economy of Place	5,304	(0)	0.0%			(408)	(408)		(408)	(520)	(822)	(520)
Management of Place	1,256	25	0.1%			281	306		306			0
Corporate Landlord	7,362	(4)	32.4%			4	0		0			0
Management - G&R	(410)	0	0.0%			5,667	5,667	1,454	4,213			1,454
Property, Assets and Infrastructure	30,281	(14)	0.0%			14	0		0			0
Total Growth & Regeneration	61,542	3,821	1	0	0	6,895	10,716	6,605	4,111	(1,033)	(2,718)	5,572
SERVICE NET EXPENDITURE	368,189	22,183	(0)	1,840	728	8,548	33,298	28,089	5,209	(3,171)	(7,315)	24,918
Total Corporate Items	50,760						0					(7,925)
Earmarked Reserves and Contingencies	12,103						0					278
TOTAL REVENUE NET EXPENDITURE	431,052	22,183	(0)	1,840	728	8,548	33,298	28,089	5,209	(10,818)	(22,480)	17,271
RISKS												
Pay Awards - Base Case							6,352	6,352				6,352
Excess Inflation - Draft							2,187	2,187				2,187
General Reserves										(8,539)		0
TOTAL GENERAL FUND PRESSURE CARRIED FORWARD							41,837	36,628	5,209	(10,818)	(31,019)	25,810

7.8. The current forecast of the year end revenue position, for the ringfenced accounts at Quarter 2 is a £19.9 million overspend for DSG (4.7%), £2.0 million overspend for the HRA (1.8%), and a balanced position is currently reported in the Public Health grant

Pay Award

7.9. The 2022/23 annual budget and medium-term plan included a provision for an annual pay award of 2.5%. The current year’s pay discussions are still underway between unions and employers with unions setting out an ask for a “£2,000 rise at all pay bands or an increase based on the rate of RPI Inflation”. The impact of this ‘ask’ should it be agreed is incorporated within the In year forecast and as general reserves will need to be utilised to meet this unexpected liability this pressure is recurrent.

7.10. The 2023/24 annual pay award assumes 4% noting that every additional 1.0% increase in pay away would result in additional costs of £1.9 million per annum.

Health & Social Care Levy

7.11. The government has announced the cancelling the Health and Social Care Levy – initially introduced via a 1.25 percentage point rise in National Insurance contributions (NICs) - which took effect in April 2022. This will be delivered in two parts:

- The government will reduce National Insurance rates from 6 November 2022, in effect removing the temporary 1.25 percentage point increase for the remainder of the 2022-23 tax year;

- The 1.25% Health and Social Care Levy will not come into force as a separate tax from 6 April 2023 as previously planned.

7.12. The government have indicated that funding for health and social care services will be maintained at the same level as if the Levy was in place. Whilst the levy applicable to the public sector was supported by a grant uplift the MTFP planning assumptions is that the funding is unlikely to be clawed back. This reversal has therefore been assumed in the and like other government funding streams present a risk that will need to be closely monitored.

Contractual Inflation & Levies

7.13. General inflation assumption of 5% is assumed in the MTFP planning assumptions. Services are expected to absorb annual inflationary pressures within existing budgets and historically a corporate inflation contingency is included in each year, to allow for material contractual inflationary cost pressures and levies which cannot be managed within a service.

7.14. The MTFP has modelled a range of scenarios for specific areas where either there are contract commitments or evidenced industry specific inflationary pressures, such as energy, accommodation, transport, waste disposal and social care.

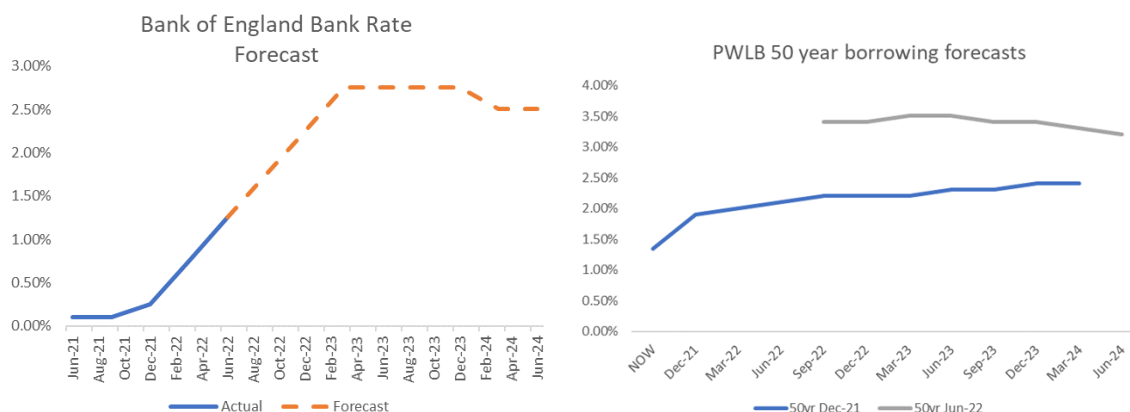
7.15. Whilst it is worthwhile stating that no decisions have been made in this regard, considering this change a further pressure of £8.2 million could emerge in 2023/24 and £12.3 million in 2024/25 above what was already assumed.

Capital Financing and Interest Rates

7.16. As noted above Bank of England Base Rate is now 2.25%. This is an increase of 1.5% from when the budget was set in March 2022.

7.17. Impact of further variations to forecast interest rates, both in terms of investment returns and borrowing costs will also present corporate risks. Interest rate risks are managed through effective treasury management and the use of fixed rate loans where appropriate.

Table 11: Forecasts for Bank of England base rates and impact of recent changes in long-term borrowing rates



Service Risks

Adult Social Care Risks

- 7.18. Adult Social Care continues to face significant financial challenges in 2022/23 in relation to service demand and inflationary cost pressures. Adult purchasing budgets are currently forecasting a risk adverse overspend of £8.2 million (5.9%) against a budget of £144.6 million.
- 7.19. Significant market pressures are being experienced by social care providers in relation to financial and business sustainability and workforce challenges, as they try to recruit and retain sufficient volume of workforce to meet demand. Other emerging pressures include those arising from demographic changes, increased care and support costs relating to young people preparing for adulthood, pressures from increased costs and usage of the community equipment service and additional costs arising from the exempt accommodation subsidy loss.

Children and Families Risks

- 7.20. Placement cost pressures:
- Placements continue to be the area of most concern and it is expected that this budget will be £10.0m overspent by the end of the financial year. The placements overspend is driven by a combination of a steady decline in the number of placements available in the external market alongside a growth in the Children in Care population (Care Review and CMA); a growing number of children with additional and/or complex needs (BCC EHC referral rates) and a rise in the complexity of some cases which is resulting in placement breakdowns and children needing to be moved to more expensive arrangements; delays in transferring eighteen-year-olds onto the housing pathway due to a shortage of housing and an insufficient number of foster carers. Exit strategies are still to be identified for activities with one-off funding. These include Families in Focus and PAUSE.
- 7.21. Other pressures within the Service include:
- £0.5 million Asylum Seekers' costs where families have no recourse to public funds Referrals to this service have increased by 50% and 93 families are being supported with accommodation and/or weekly subsistence payments.
 - £0.7 million on staffing costs attributable to temporarily filling Social Worker vacancies and several senior posts with agency staff.
- 7.22. The Children's Service is planning a Transformation Programme (subject to approval) which is intended to contribute to a balanced budget by enhancing early help services, improving quality of practice, developing the workforce, improving governance and quality assurance, implementing a new model for residential placements, and working more effectively with partners.

Education & Skills Service Risks

- 7.23. Education General fund (Division 16) is currently forecasting an in-year overspend of £1.6 million against its budget of £15.8 million. This is mainly driven by cost pressures in Home To Schools Transport driven by continued rise in children have EHC Plans (at around 10% per year) and the fact that more children needs Out of Local Authorities placements and having to drive further distance plus cost of living pressure (fuel price and drivers availability). HTST budget is currently estimating £1.6 million overspend against its £7.8 million budget. this is likely to continue as number of EHC plan requests continue to rise and national inflationary pressures. In addition, the increasing demand for SEN assessments and annual reviews added extra pressure circa £1m to current SEN team and legal support costs. In addition to these, taking into consideration of other new statutory duties announced in the White paper and some current year saving targets is proven to be challenging and non-

recurring, the Service is estimating a total cost pressure of near £4 million (£3.7m) in 2023/24 if no government funding received.

Growth & Regeneration Risks

Ash Dieback

- 7.24. Across Europe and across the UK, landowners and citizens are facing the impacts and challenges of Ash Dieback and its growing impact on the ash tree population. Ash Dieback is a highly destructive disease of ash trees (*Fraxinus* species). It is caused by a fungus named *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus* which is of eastern Asian origin and infects trees via windblown spores. The Forestry Commission has estimated that as many as 85% of ash trees in the UK will be killed by the disease, recommending that all major landowners develop a plan of action to deal with its effects.
- 7.25. During the summer of 2021 the council carried out an audit of its ash trees in locations where the public may be at risk if trees or branches fail. Over 500 ha have been surveyed with one third – 10,000 trees – found to be in a condition where urgent action is required to maintain public safety, with felling the primary, recommended approach. Some trees may have their canopy reduced or be monolithed (left as a standing stem) rather than be felled if of particular maturity or landscape interest, but these will be small in number. The remaining 20,000 surveyed trees in these locations will continue to be monitored in 2022 and beyond.
- 7.26. The cost of removing affected trees, reducing their canopy or monolithing them will be considerable – and estimates are being compiled for the 10,000 trees significantly affected by the disease identified in areas of high public use and recommended for felling and funds may be required when results from the survey extension are known. Costs will be estimated using the council's current tree management contract rates, applying a conventional felling method, carrying out a sample audit of sites to better identify real costs and a consideration of current market conditions.

Homelessness

- 7.27. The impact of the pandemic has increased homelessness in Bristol. The number of households in temporary accommodation is 59% higher than before the pandemic. This has created an overspend due to the increase in Housing Benefit subsidy loss.
- 7.28. In addition, most of the increase in temporary accommodation is due to higher number of families placed in temporary accommodation. Family temporary accommodation placements has increased by 26% in the last 12 months due to limited availability of affordable properties. This has resulted in the use of more expensive providers contributing to the increased subsidy loss.
- 7.29. While approximately 1,028 people have been moved on into settled accommodation in 2021/22, the average number of households in temporary accommodation is approximately 1,156 in 2022/23, of which 815 is attributable to the £5 million subsidy loss pressure.
- 7.30. The pressure in 2022/23 is forecast to be circa 50% increase when compared to 2021/22. The trend of increasing homelessness presentation is expected to continue into 2023/24 due to the impact of cost of living and wider economic conditions, including higher interest rate. The current economic climate could also have an impact on the rent collection rates and in increases in rent arrears in temporary accommodation.

- 7.31. The national picture on homelessness at the end of the 1st quarter of 2022/23 reported an increase of 11%. With more people in temporary accommodation, higher costs and less supply available to prevent homelessness, this will create additional financial pressures on ongoing budgets.

Savings at Risk

- 7.32. The savings programme agreed by Council in March 2022 included savings totalling £34 million over the medium term of which £17.9 million was attributed to 2022/23. In addition, £6.4 million of savings were carried forward from prior years which still require delivery.
- 7.33. The total savings delivery target for 2022/23 is £24.4 million.
- 7.34. It is currently assessed that £8.7 million of these targeted savings are at risk of not being delivered in the planned way. The current gap in savings programme delivery is largely attributed to adult and children's social care and is currently reported either within service forecasts or within risk and opportunity registers.
- 7.35. The total savings delivery target for 2023/24 is £13.2 million (excluding any carry forward of prior year undelivered savings).
- 7.36. The Council created a total savings contingency of £6.2 million (legacy and 2022/23) for variation and non-delivery of savings which were in their infancy and £3.6 million of this has been earmarked for these pressures at Quarter 2. This leaves £2.6 million contingency for the remaining financial years period. It should be noted that this is prior to any further in year mitigation savings identified for 2022/23 and or beyond.

Corporate Expenditure

Pension Changes

- 7.37. The Fund is currently carrying out the next pension triennial review, effective from 1 April 2023. The Council is currently almost 100% fully funded. The review will recommend reducing the deficit recovery period from 15 years to 12 years. It will then remain at 12 years.
- 7.38. There are potential inflationary pressures affecting contribution rates, but also investment opportunities for the Pension Fund in a higher interest rate environment. Consequently, we have assumed no anticipated pressures or opportunities arising as a direct result of the 2022 valuation results.

Capital Financing

- 7.39. Our approach to capital investment and financing is outlined in full in our Capital Strategy. Our ambitious programme of investment has a large impact on the Council's annual revenue budget and create long term costs. These 2 areas must be simultaneously reviewed, and implications clear in decision making.
- 7.40. The maximum affordable level established for the cost of capital financing for the General Fund element of the capital programme, is 10% of general fund net revenue budget over the medium to long term. The current forecast level of the programme is 9.9% by 2026/27. If the Council opted to utilise this headroom of 10%, this would equate to an extra £10 million of borrowing with an estimated capital financing revenue budget cost of £0.5million.

- 7.41. In reflecting on the capital trends and revenue forecast, the Council is proposing to reprofile its capital programme activity for 2023/24 to 2027/28 to more accurately reflect the level of work it has capacity to deliver. In recent years the average annual programme, prior to the addition of slippage from the previous year, has been budgeted at around £260 million. Within the same time frame, the Council has only had capacity to deliver an annual programme of no greater than £167 million.
- 7.42. In 2022/23 the budget allocated to the programme was £333.9 million (including schemes carried forward from prior year) and the forecast outturn as at period 5 is £252.2 million. A mid-year capital programme budget reset is proposed based on the period 5 forecast outturn position which will ensure that the budget required to finance the capital (interest & debt repayment) will reflect the Council's performance rather than an aspirational delivery position. It is therefore not anticipated the general fund borrowing headroom will be utilised. The Council may identify other funding sources, including grants and capital receipts, to finance additional capital expenditure and the MTFP also assumes that the Council will continue the use the flexibility provided by government to use capital receipts to fund the revenue cost of transformation.
- 7.43. The feasibility fund is assumed in the capital strategy to assist in developing schemes with sufficient robustness/certainty before they enter the Development Pool. The fund is created from any reduction generated in the current capital financing budget and therefore the level of the fund would be established each year, and be aligned to the volume and complexity of schemes at full mandate stage.

Ring Fenced Funds – Indicative Funding Available

Public Health (PH) Grant

- 7.44 Public health services are funded by a ringfenced grant to the Council which for 2022/23 was £34.6 million. The grant is likely to continue to be subject to conditions on what it funds, including a ring-fence requiring local authorities to use the grant exclusively for public health activity which may include public health challenges arising directly or indirectly from Covid-19. The Council will continue to make sure that the increased cost of services are contained within the envelope provided, whilst recognising that this is an increasing challenge due to inflationary pressures.
- 7.45 Within the Council's earmarked reserve is a Public Health ring fenced reserve of £3.8 million (as of 27 September 2022). There is a potential forecast draw down of £0.5 million in the current year leaving a balance of £3.3 million. This balance will be assumed in plans to be developed over the medium term and provide a small buffer for unexpected adverse grant allocations.

Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)

- 7.46 A cumulative deficit of £44.5 million is forecast at the close of 2022/23. This is mainly due to increased demand for Special Educational Needs provision within the HNB. The main cost driver is the rise in demand for Education, Health and Care plans (EHCPs) following national reforms from 2014, increasing complexity of children's needs and the rising costs of out of authority placements. Demand continues to increase and despite additional funding from the Department for Education (DfE), it has not been possible to recover the deficit which began to accelerate in 2019/20. With the support from Bristol Schools Forum, and through delivering evolving Education Transformation Programme, the Education Service has been on the journey of improving experiences and outcomes of children and young people. The High Needs recovery proposals has been developed (subject to consultation) and the LA has

recently participated in DfE’s Delivering Better Value for SEND programme with the aim to bring DSG to a sustainable footing.

- 7.47 The 2021 Spending Review committed real terms increases to Education Spending over the next two years. The High Needs Block received 14.4% increase in 2022/23 and recommended future budget funding assumptions of 5% increase in 2023/24 and 3% for subsequent years thereafter. The indicative figures for 2023/24 are built into the deficit management plan. The additional High Needs block funding allocation 2022/23 and beyond results in an improved unmitigated DSG deficit forecast. However, increasing inflation will clearly erode how much this additional funding is in terms of a real terms increase and will address inflationary pressures rather than some of the funding concerns the spending review initially set out to address.
- 7.48 The Dedicated Schools Grant comprises four blocks: Schools, High Needs, Central School Services and Early Years. 2022/23 was the fifth year of the National Funding Formula (NFF) for schools, high needs and central school services. With 2023-2024 intended to be the first year of transition to a full and hard NFF, the Schools Forum will be consulted ahead of submitting the final local formula for 2023-34 to the ESFA, in January 2023. The early year’s block of the DSG is determined by the separate national formula for early years.
- 7.49 On 19 July, the Minister of State for School Standards made a written statement setting out information on the schools, high needs and central school services national funding formulae (NFF) for 2023 to 2024. Final allocations and high needs block allocations will be published in December and we estimate that the likely level of funding for Bristol in 2023/24 will be £405.5 million (excluding early years block).
- 7.50 The provisional allocation for Bristol (excluding early years block) is outlined in Table 8 below and it is important to note that the indicative figures provided ignore any changes in pupil numbers and characteristics and reflects the indicative allocations before any movements between blocks.

Table 12: DSG - Indicative Available Funding and Prior Year Comparator

Comparative allocations	2023/24 Indicative DSG allocation	Comparative 2022/23 DSG allocation	£ change	% change
	£m	£m	£m	
Schools Block excl. growth	319.860	304.311	+15.549	+5.1%
Central School Services Block	2.700	2.742	-0.042	-1.5%
High Needs Block	82.979	78.607	+4.372	+5.6%
Total	405.539	385.660	+19.879	+5.2%
Growth funding in school block	No data	1.881		
Early Years	No data	35.988		-

- 7.51 The underpinning assumption in relation to each of the funding blocks is as follows:
- The announcement has stated that funding for mainstream schools through the National Funding Formula will increase by 1.9% overall, as compared to 2022/23, and that all LAs will receive at least a 5% increase on funding, with some LAs receiving up to 7% increase.

- The provisional Schools Block allocation for Bristol has been published at £319.9 million, before growth funding, with actual allocations expected to be published in December 2022.
- The provisional High Needs Block allocation for Bristol has been published at £82.9 million (a £4.4m increase from 2022/23), with actual allocations expected to be published in December 2022.
- The Central Schools Services Block provides funding for the ongoing responsibilities that local authorities continue to have for all schools. As has been practice in recent years, funding for historic commitments within this block will be reduced by a further 20% for 2023-2024. The provisional Central School Services Block allocation for Bristol has been published at £2.7 million, with actual allocations expected to be published in December 2022. This is an overall reduction of £42,000 reflecting a £119,000 reduction in the historical commitments' allocation, partially offset by an increase (+£77,000) in funding for ongoing responsibilities allocation. The Central School Services Block provides funding for the statutory duties the Council holds for both maintained schools and academies. The Council must seek Schools Forum approval for central services spend. The 2023/24 allocation has been indicated at £2.7 million. This is a 1.5% decrease on the prior year allocation. The reduction is primarily attributed to the funding for historic commitments (such as for the Prudential Borrowing initiative that ceased in 2017/18) where it has been an aim of ESFA to withdraw this funding over time.
- These provisional allocations are based on current pupil data. Final allocations of the 2022/23 funding will use information from the autumn 2022 census are expected to be issued in December 2022.
- For 2023/24 we will continue to set a local school funding formula. The government has stated that 2023/24 will be the first year of transition to hard national funding formula, and that LAs will be restricted in their options in setting the local formula for 2023/2024.
- Minimum funding levels per pupil are increasing again, setting a floor as to the minimum each pupil can attract into a school based upon key stage.
- The Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) is a protection for schools against significant year-on-year changes in pupil led funding and must be set at between +0.5% and +2%. An MFG of +0.5% was applied for 2022/23, For 2023/24 the MFG has to be set in the range 0.0% to 0.5%. Schools are consulted and the Schools Forum, after consideration of the feedback, will need to discuss and agree what MFG rate is set for 2023/24.
- Funding previously provided via the teachers' pay grant and teachers' pensions employer contributions grant were incorporated into the School Block funding (for mainstream schools), and into the High Needs Block (for special schools) in 2022/23 and this approach continues for 2023/24.
- Block Transfers - local authorities will continue to be able to transfer up to 0.5% of their school's block to other blocks of the DSG, with Schools Forum approval. In 2022/23 0.5% was transferred from the school's block to high needs block, providing £1.5 million, ring-fenced to support the Education Transformation Programme. If up to 0.5% of the indicative schools block is transferred for 2022/23 this would equate to £1.5 million.

- The indicative High Needs Block allocations to Bristol is £83.0 million, an indicative increase of £4.4 million (5.6%) over 2022/23's allocation of £78.6 million. This needs to be considered in the context that high needs block is experiencing cost pressures in excess of funding, of c.£19.9 million and carrying a forecast accumulated deficit at the end of 2022/23 of c.£44.5 million. This deficit is projected to increase to £63.1million in 2023/24 if unmitigated.
- Developing and sustaining effective local system-level approaches to supporting children and young people with SEND is essential. The Education Transformation Programme is working with partners to develop the necessary steps to provide the right level of support, meet needs, ensure effective use of local resources and achieve good long-term outcomes for children and young people with SEND, in what is considered a highly challenging context.
- The Council will need to consider the resourcing of related areas within the General Fund, such as increase in levels of statutory assessments and transport and cannot transfer funding into the DSG without ministerial approval. If up to 0.5% of the indicative schools block is transferred for 2023/24 this would equate to £1.5 million, to contribute to the continuation of the programme over the medium term. Transferring more than 0.5% of the schools block or any funding from the General Fund would require Secretary of State approval.
- The early years sector is experiencing significant funding pressures which if not addressed will impact on their capacity to support the most vulnerable children and potential missed early intervention opportunities. Lack of adequate funding for the sector will have knock-on effects for primary and special schools as children move on to the next phase.

7.52 In all the above examples we have assumed no changes in pupil numbers or composition. A consultation is underway with schools and the outcome will be reported to the Schools Forum. The final authority proforma tool (APT) containing the actual figures and basis for 2023/24 funding is expected to be issued in December 2022.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

7.53 The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is a ring-fenced account containing the income and expenditure relating to the Council's landlord duties in respect of circa 28,600 dwelling including those held by leaseholders. This means the HRA does not receive any subsidy from the government or from Council Tax and surpluses or deficits generated each year would be transferred to / from the HRA general reserve. The HRA is not allowed to subsidise the General Fund and legislation sets out those items that can be charged to the account.

7.54 The HRA budget is prepared each year in accordance with the requirement to set a 30-year business plan. The business plan is reviewed annually allowing for horizon-scanning and mitigation of risks in the short, medium & long term, ensuring there is sufficient resources to meet future operational commitments.

7.55 The HRA activities are a key element in delivering the Council's priorities in the Corporate Strategy. The key areas of expenditure are the delivery of housing management services plus repairing, maintaining & improving existing housing stock. Provision is made to ensure compliance with legislation and national policy, including meeting decent homes standards and building & safety regulations.

- 7.56 The rent standard currently allows rents to increase by 1% above inflation (CPI + 1%). Given inflation is expected to reach around 10% in the third quarter of 2022, landlords are unlikely to implement this scale of increase in 2023/24 because of tenants' affordability constraints.
- 7.57 Considering these exceptional challenges, the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Community (DLUHC) is consulting on a temporary amendment to the CPI plus 1 percent policy for next year (2023-24). This is directing Registered Providers (RP) to consider setting rents capped at 5 percent or CPI + 1%, whichever is lower.
- 7.58 The government is also seeking views on the option of setting the ceiling at 3%, 5% and 7%. It is also open to proposals from RPs at other percentage upper limits.
- 7.59 Variations in the rental income stream and decisions regarding annual rent setting will impact on the level of resourcing available. The economic crisis and rising cost of living has exacerbated the likelihood of non-collection of rents and may, as a consequence result in elevated levels of rent arrears and bad debt. The increased costs for goods and services resulting from the inflationary pressures would have to be met by rents and by modifying service delivery.
- 7.60 The forecasted dwelling rental charges and other income is estimated to generate £125.9 million in 2022/23 for the delivery of HRA activities. The high levels of uncertainty around rising interest rates and inflation pose a financial risk to the HRA, in particular, energy, insurance, construction labour & material cost inflation as well as the cost of borrowing.
- 7.61 The opening balance on the HRA reserve on 1 April 2022 was £115.1 million. This comprises £102.2 HRA general reserve plus £12.9m HRA major repairs reserve. At Period 5 an adverse variance of £2 million has been forecast in the revenue account. In addition to the reserve, the Council can make use of a blended financing model, for example this could include grants, borrowing, developer contributions, capital and RTB receipts, revenue contributions to capital outlay (RCCO) to fund its capital programmes.
- 7.62 The funding will be appropriately risk assessed and based on affordability, sustainability, and optimisation of resources, profiled to the programmes within the plan. A minimum balance must be retained in the HRA reserve to cover at least 1 year's interest cost and a clear strategy outlined in approved plans for repaying borrowing above the level of the historic HRA debt cap.
- 7.63 As part of the budget setting process, the influences outlined above will be appraised and continuously monitored.

New Priority Investments / Reserves

- 7.64 The MTFP is underpinned by the key strategic priorities for the Council and will need to ensure that resources are aligned with their delivery. The intent of the MTFP is to set out the financial implications for the Council and consider the Corporate Strategy, objectives, and policies against the resources projected to be available. This then provides a basis for service decision making.
- 7.65 Any update of the MTFP needs to be cognisant of the legacy impact of the pandemic and the need to maintain the integrity of the Council's financial position and future sustainability, to support our communities.
- 7.66 These strategic priorities will sit alongside our continued efforts to build and embed our One Council approach, with a sustainable platform that will drive Council activity in the years

ahead. Within each of the 7 themes are a range of projects and proposals, which reflect the scale of the Council's ambition for the area and critically, each has an important part to play in managing future demand on Council Services.

7.67 One of the aims of the MTFP will be to deliver budgets over the medium term period that shift our existing spend towards the priorities outlined in the strategy. In the current climate a phased approach may need to be adopted to ensure services are sustainable and can plan appropriately for change.

7.68 The transition can begin by several means, including:

- Articulation of the vision with key local regional and sub-regional partners, with government and incorporate within our bids for external funding
- Collaboration with partners in the pursuit of mutual advantage
- Provide the platform for leveraging the experience and capability and allowing community and private sector to deliver for local government, and vice versa
- Aligning the service and budget planning timetables, as well as aligning finance and performance reporting.
- Change Programme and delivery resource: enhancing the investment in the transformation delivery to prioritise project resource that can respond to the major challenges and opportunities that the Council will face through the period of this plan
- Establish via our annual budget processes the feasibility fund and advance scheme design as outlined in the Capital Strategy for scheme development
- Utilisation of specified earmarked reserves such as climate and ecological reserves to pilot prototype or develop new and innovative approaches.

7.69 The strategic and risk framework requires appropriate oversight and governance of the achievement of the Council Priorities and to ensure it is delivered through effective programme management. Where performance indicators are not on target, corrective action will be required.

8. Scenario Modelling and Sensitivity Analysis

General Fund Scenarios

7.70 We are in a period of unprecedented economic uncertainty which is having a significant impact on the ability to forecast with accuracy, and in reality with the scale and volatility of the current climate, the only certainty we have is that this reported financial position will be subject to change.

7.71 Owing to uncertainty arising from the economic environment, and from the lack of clarity about what the government's plans for local government funding will mean for the Council, financial projections have been prepared for three different scenarios, as follows:

- **Base-case scenario** – refers to the typical, realistic or most likely scenario.
- **Best-case scenario** – refers to the most favourable or optimistic projected outcome.
- **Worst-case scenario** – refers to the most extreme situation that can happen if things don't go as planned.

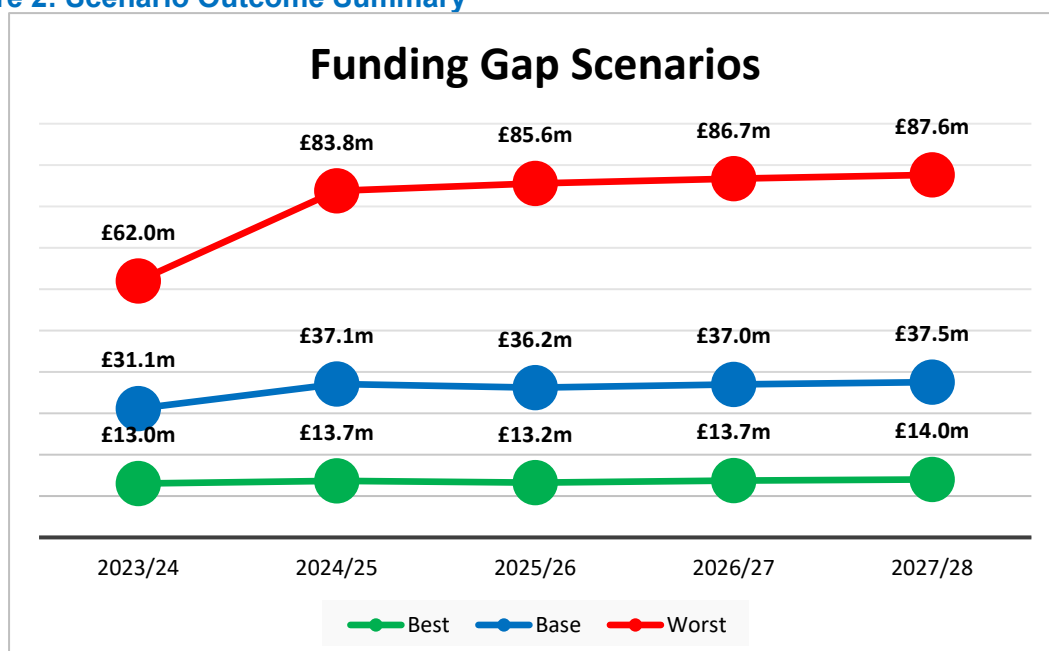
7.72 The budget approved by Council in March 2022 achieved a balanced budget across each of the financial years and as such the changes that are outlined in the scenarios are in addition to the provisions made in the budget for 2023/24 to 2026/27 (as outlined in the main body of

the MTFP report (Table 4: Previous Summary of General Fund Revenue Budget for the MTFP Period).

7.73 The scenarios assess the effect of changing all the input variables at the same time and determine the different possible events that could occur in the future. We have also examined the effect of changing just one variable at a time and assessed which of the variables our funding gap is particularly sensitive to.

7.74 This approach produces a range of funding gap outcome scenarios as set out below, with peak funding gaps at the end of the MTFP period ranging from £14.0 million to £87.6 million of which £13.0 million to £62.0 million is applicable to the 2023/24 financial year.

Figure 2: Scenario Outcome Summary



Base Case

7.75 We have aimed to take a prudent approach in arriving at a ‘base’ case which indicates a peak funding gap of £37.5 million over the MTFP period with £31.1 million in 2023/24.

7.76 This ‘base’ case has been set out in the MTFP report at Table 9 and is here again below for ease of reference.

Table 13: Base Case Indicative Funding Gap

2022/23 £m	Original Budget	Variation %	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
431.052	March 2022 Forecast	-0.7%	428.235	437.167	447.096	458.379	458.507
Recurrent Pressures							
2022/23 £m	Recurrent 2022/23 Pressure	Variation %	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
25.810	Service Pressures	100%	25.810	25.810	25.810	25.810	25.810
Emerging Pressure							
Emerging Pressures			2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
Corporate Emerging Pressures							
	Pay Award & H&SC Levy	1.5%	3.723	5.293	5.815	6.350	6.713
	Inflation & Levies	2.0%	8.250	12.359	10.379	10.399	10.420
	Capital Financing	4.0%	0.807	1.770	2.454	2.782	3.064
	Total Corporate Pressures		12.780	19.422	18.648	19.532	20.197
	Total Pressures		38.590	45.232	44.458	45.342	46.007
	Indicative Budget Requirement		466.825	482.399	491.554	503.721	504.514
2022/23 £m	Core Funding	Variation %	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
431.052	March 2022 Forecast	-0.7%	428.235	437.167	447.096	458.379	458.507
Funding Changes							
0.000	2021/22 Collection Fund Outturn	100%	(0.616)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
2.964	Business Rates Multiplier	45%	2.430	2.593	2.644	2.697	2.751
11.276	Additional Grants (One off's)	50%	5.638	2.819	2.819	2.819	2.819
0.000	Council Tax Second Home Premium	100%	0.000	2.735	2.790	2.845	2.902
14.240	Total Additional Core Funding	0%	7.452	8.148	8.253	8.362	8.472
	Indicative Core Funding		435.687	445.315	455.349	466.741	466.979
	Base Case Funding Gap		31.137	37.084	36.205	36.980	37.535
	Service Risks		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

7.77 This is the realistic scenario, with the key driver reflecting the value of the 2022/23 pressures which are not forecasted to be mitigated in an ongoing sustainable manner and as such are carried forward into 2023/24. This scenario also contains funding assumptions in relation to funding previously advised as one-off, that present risks, therefore in addition to this funding gap, headroom should be considered to provide some agility for change.

Best Case

7.78 If we assume the best possible outcome in the case of each of these variable factors, we produce a 'best' case scenario, which indicates a peak funding gap of £14.0 million over the MTFP period, with £13.0 million in 2023/24. This is set out in Table 2 below. It is important to state that many of the key factors are outside the Council's control, notably a favourable core and or specific funding equalisation approach, increasing the government funding allocation for the Council.

Table 14: Best Case Indicative Funding Gap

2022/23 £m	Original Budget	Variation %	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
431.052	March 2022 Forecast	-0.7%	428.235	437.167	447.096	458.379	458.507
Recurrent Pressures							
2022/23 £m	Recurrent 2022/23 Pressure	Variation %	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
25.810	Service Pressures	80%	20.648	20.648	20.648	20.648	20.648
Emerging Pressure							
Emerging Pressures			2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
Corporate Emerging Pressures							
	Pay Award & H&SC Levy	0.75%	3.138	3.480	3.830	4.190	4.372
	Inflation & Levies	1.00%	5.150	4.154	3.159	3.163	3.167
	Capital Financing	2.50%	0.673	1.250	1.661	1.989	2.271
	Total Corporate Pressures		8.961	8.885	8.650	9.341	9.810
	Total Pressures		29.609	29.533	29.298	29.989	30.458
	Indicative Budget Requirement		457.844	466.700	476.394	488.368	488.965
2022/23 £m	Core Funding	Variation %	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
431.052	March 2022 Forecast	0.5	428.235	437.167	447.096	458.379	458.507
Funding Changes							
0.000	2021/22 Collection Fund Outturn	120%	(0.739)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
2.964	Business Rates Multiplier	90%	4.919	5.018	5.118	5.221	5.325
11.276	Additional Grants (One off's)	110%	12.404	6.202	6.202	6.202	6.202
0.000	Council Tax Second Home Premi	170%	0.000	4.640	4.732	4.827	4.923
14.240	Total Additional Core Funding		16.584	15.860	16.052	16.249	16.449
	Indicative Core Funding		444.819	453.027	463.148	474.628	474.956
	Best Case Funding Gap		13.025	13.673	13.246	13.740	14.008
	Service Risks		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

Worst Case

7.79 If we assume the worst possible outcome in the case of each of the key variable factors which impact the Council's financial performance we produce a 'worst' case view. This is set out in Table 3 below. It indicates a peak funding gap of £87.6 million over the MTFP period with £62.0 million in 2023/24. This scenario assumes high inflation levels, a poor financial settlement and claw back of the grant allocations for the Health & Social Care Levy following the reversal of the scheme.

7.80 This worst case scenario includes a provisional amount of £9 million (flat across all years) for additional service risks such as those outlined in the MTFP report (at paragraph 7.18 onwards). Some of the risks identified are considered duplication of the carried forward service pressures, have recovery actions which are seeking to address the specific issue and or require further deep dives and due diligence to quantify the unavoidable exposure.

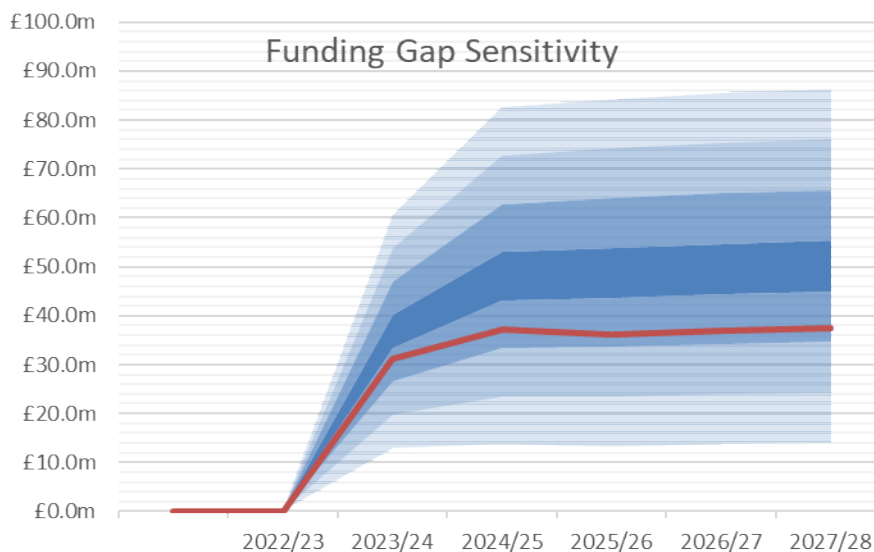
Table 15: Worst Case Indicative Funding Gap

2022/23 £m	Original Budget	Variation %	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
431.052	March 2022 Forecast	-0.7%	428.235	437.167	447.096	458.379	458.507
Recurrent Pressures							
2022/23 £m	Recurrent 2022/23 Pressure	Variation %	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
25.810	Service Pressures	135%	34.810	34.810	34.810	34.810	34.810
Emerging Pressure							
Emerging Pressures			2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
Corporate Emerging Pressures							
	Pay Award & H&SC Levy	2.5%	7.712	13.839	14.578	15.335	15.926
	Inflation & Levies	7.0%	21.929	37.348	37.373	37.397	37.423
	Capital Financing	4.0%	1.076	2.617	3.712	4.149	4.525
	Total Corporate Pressures		30.716	53.804	55.662	56.881	57.873
	Total Pressures		65.527	88.614	90.472	91.691	92.683
	Indicative Budget Requirement		493.762	525.781	537.568	550.070	551.190
Core Funding							
2022/23 £m	Core Funding	Variation %	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
431.052	March 2022 Forecast	-0.7%	428.235	437.167	447.096	458.379	458.507
Funding Changes							
0.000	2021/22 Collection Fund Outturn	80%	(0.493)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
2.964	Business Rates Multiplier	22%	1.215	1.240	1.264	1.290	1.315
11.276	Additional Grants (One off's)	25%	2.819	1.410	1.410	1.410	1.410
0.000	Council Tax Second Home Premium	80%	0.000	2.188	2.232	2.276	2.322
14.240	Total Additional Core Funding	0%	3.541	4.837	4.906	4.975	5.046
	Indicative Core Funding		431.776	442.004	452.002	463.354	463.553
	Worst Case Funding Gap		61.985	83.777	85.566	86.716	87.637
	Service Risks -Inc in Service Pressures		9.000	9.000	9.000	9.000	9.000

Funding Gap Sensitivities

7.81 The wide range between best, base and worst case impact on the funding gap is clearly shown in the chart below where the red line shows the 'base' case which it is recommended be considered at this time for budget planning purposes.

Figure 3: Funding Gap Sensitivity



7.82 Sensitivity analysis considers the key cost drivers as assumed for the above scenarios and their respective financial impact. It should be understood that each % assumption is over and above (incremental) to that which was included in the prior year’s MTFP and Budget. Inflation is the most significant driver which alone, if assumed at an average 7% above assumptions included for the base case, accounts for an additional circa £27 million over the MTFP timeframe. The high levels of uncertainty around rising inflation rates pose a financial risk to a range of services across the Council, which include, but are not exclusive to, the following:

- Adult social care services - including higher fees to care providers offsetting rising costs of running settings and pay awards
- Children’s social care - increased placement costs such as Independent Fostering Agencies, Fostering, Residence Orders and Special Guardianship
- Energy price increases beyond the recently introduced reliefs - including for streetlights and energy bills for the corporate estate
- Rising fuel and labour costs - bus, taxi and minibus providers for areas such as Home to School and other transport services
- Indexed linked external contracts such as PFI and waste management.

7.83 In addition to the above, as previously outlined, the service risks provision of £9 million is a large contributor to the sensitivity.

7.84 These two areas (inflation and service risk) combined account for approximately £36 million of the 2027/28 sensitivity gap. We need to consider our ability to influence these factors and level of resilience required in our budget for any areas broadly outside the Council’s control.

DSG Deficit Management Plan

7.85 A cumulative deficit of £44.5 million is forecast at the close of 2022/23. This is mainly due to increased demand for Special Educational Needs provision within the HNB. The main cost driver is the rise in demand for Education, Health and Care plans (EHCPs) following national reforms from 2014, increasing complexity of children’s needs and the rising costs of out of authority placements. The summary table below from the DSG Management Plan shows the unmitigated full year forecast position for 2022/23 as at Quarter 2. If not mitigated, this is projected to increase to £63.1 million in 2023/24 and grow to a gap of £128.2 million by 2027/28.

7.86 The latest assessment assumes an average growth in expenditure of 33.3% since the March 22 report. As part of the Education Transformation Programme a range of cost avoidance measures and mitigations are being explored to meet the current and future needs and recovery of the High Needs Block, which currently has the biggest effect on the DSG overspend. These remain in their infancy and are covered in more detail within the DSG Mitigations report in the school forum agenda:

(<https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=481&MId=10303&Ver=4>).

The working assumption is that the indicative cost avoidance measures and mitigations range from £3.0 million in 2023/24 to £12.6 million by 2027/28. We recognise that these measures are options and if supported would not be sufficient to deliver a balanced plan but are the first financial recovery step in this long-term journey.

Figure 4: DSG Management Plan Estimates and Indicative Mitigations Summary

DSG Management Plan estimates and indicative Mitigations Summary
For illustration purposes only
 As at 140922 - Period 5/Quarter 2

Overall DSG position (pre recoupment total) Income/surplus should be shown as negative	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Carried Forward Unmitigated deficit	£24,650	£44,556	£63,177	£80,871	£98,579	£114,732
Total expenditure	£443,435	£460,570	£464,887	£467,391	£468,399	£468,399
Total income	£423,529	£441,948	£447,193	£449,683	-£452,247	-£454,888
Funding Gap	£44,556	£63,177	£80,871	£98,579	£114,732	£128,242
Carried Forward Indicative proposals			-£3,075	£12,040	-£23,512	-£36,086
Annual Indicative Proposed Mitigations	£0	-£3,075	-£8,965	£11,473	-£12,574	-£12,574
Funding Gap after mitigations applied	£44,556	£66,251	£68,832	£75,067	£78,645	£79,582

Footnote: *The funding assumptions may vary as a result of the changes in Government, Cabinet and the SEND Green Paper and the indicative cost avoidance measures and mitigations which are estimates only and may be subject to change following consultation and further due diligence.*

7.87 The forecast presented above contains risks and challenges, examples of which are outlined below:

- Ofsted re-inspection may highlight new areas to address (as inspection framework is tightened and strengthened)
- Some proposed mitigations may not deliver a financial benefit and extensive growth within this area may outweigh the financial benefit of the mitigations that are implemented
- Higher than expected increase in Education Health and Care plans
- Cost of living crisis.

7.88 The opportunities within the current system are summarised below:

- Delivering Best Value (DBV) - the Council has been accelerated to Tranche 1 of the programme and the engagement has commenced. This means that the DfE will provide support and challenge to the local authority on the plan and more specifically the indicative mitigations
- Proactive Schools Forum engagement via Early Years and High Needs working groups and key stakeholders

- SEND reviews delivers policy reform with positive impact and needs based funding methodologies.

7.89 The Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2020, allow authorities to hold DSG deficits in a separate reserve in the authorities accounts but this accounting treatment is only allowed up to and including the accounts for 2022/23. Due to a number of authorities still holding large DSG deficits, further guidance is expected from the Department for Education (DfE) regarding how DSG deficits should be treated after 2022/23.

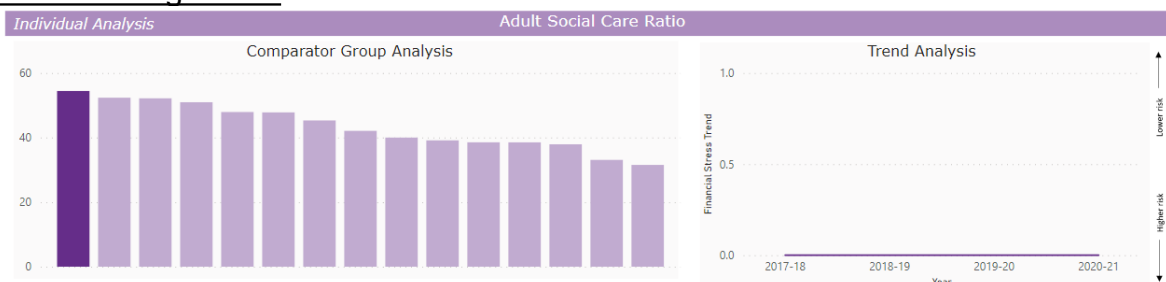
9. Financial Health Indicators

9.1 In developing the budget strategy for 2023/24, and the medium term, the Council has been reflective of the outcomes of the CIPFA Financial Resilience Index and other financial benchmarking. In determining the medium term budget strategy it is essential to ensure the Council manages its financial resilience to meet unforeseen demands on services.

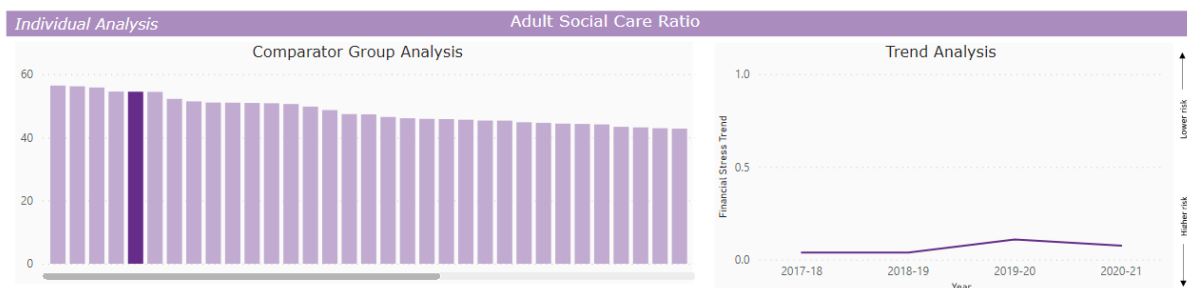
9.2 In that respect the three areas, as set out below, are particularly pertinent and have been used to shape the budget strategy and MTFP.

Adult Social Care Ratio

Nearest Neighbours



Unitary Authorities

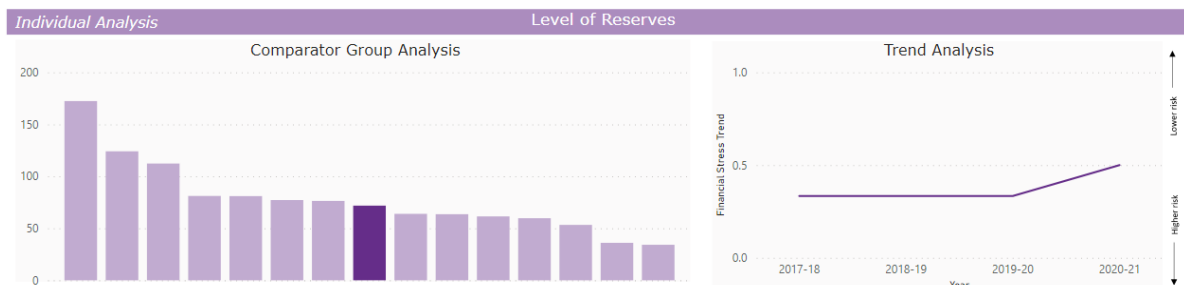


9.3 The highest area of risk to the financial resilience of the Council compared to other similar authorities is the proportion of budget spent on adult social care services as this is seen as an inflexible cost which is difficult to reduce over short term and impacts on the Council’s ability to respond with agility to changing demands.

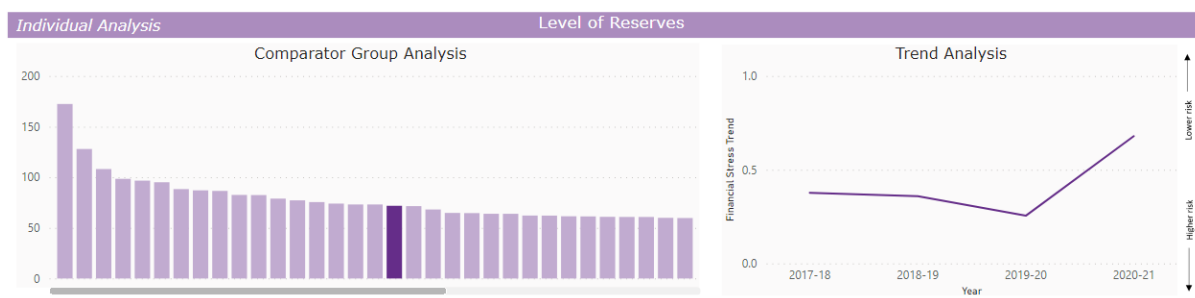
Level of Reserves

9.4 This is a ratio of the current level of reserves (total useable excluding Public Health and Schools) to the Council’s net revenue expenditure. Undertaking this analysis as a percentage of net revenue expenditure ensures the relative size of the Council is considered.

Nearest Neighbours



Unitary Authorities



9.5 The benchmarking analysis above shows that the Council currently has useable reserve of 71.81% and has improved significantly in comparison to other unitary authorities. The analysis when compared to nearest neighbours whilst not quite as stark, still shows an improving trend in 2020/21. It should be noted that the 2020/21 position includes reserves relating to the Covid response, and each council in the comparison will have utilised varying proportions of their Covid funding in 2020/21, whilst other councils will have carried forward a greater proportion to manage the Covid response in 2021/22 and beyond.

9.6 This indicator is extremely important in terms of the Council’s ability to respond to extreme shocks, such as that recently experienced.

9.7 The Council’s need for greater resilience (as above) and the other risk emerging from the MTFP, need to be considered in the annual refresh of the reserve policy.

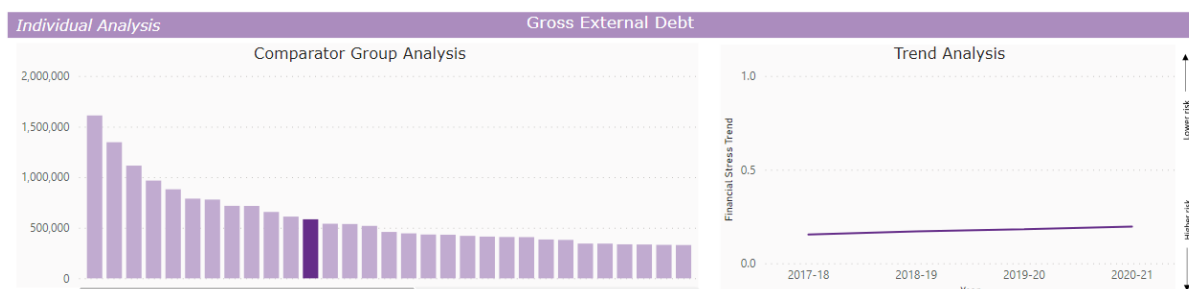
Gross External Debt

9.8 This indicates the Gross External Debt held by the Council and is used to finance the Council’s borrowing liability known as its Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). It is a requirement of the CIPFA Prudential Code to set a CFR and link into the prudential indicators agreed by Council as part of its annual Treasury Management Strategy.

Nearest Neighbours



Unitary Authorities



9.9 The Council's CFR at 31 March 2021 was £886 million. It was financed by Gross External Debt of £584 million and Internal Borrowing (use of the Council's surplus cash resources) of £302 million.

9.10 Given the current position the intention is to retain a mid-point of all upper tier authorities as a percentage of net revenue expenditure and seek to leverage external funding and grants to provide the headroom and parameters for the additional amounts required to deliver the wider Corporate Strategy ambitions. As such the Capital Strategy approved by Council in December 2021 includes the following indicators limiting exposure:

- General Fund - capital financing costs to no more than 10% of net revenue budget
- Loans to subsidiary companies (with risks weighted provisions) - are limited to 10% of the CFR or £70 million, whichever is lower
- HRA - an interest cover ratio and coverage in reserves, which will support service delivery, housing and regeneration schemes, such as those being delivered to increase housing stock and the schemes being delivered by the subsidiary companies, over the next ten years.

9.11 Further enhancements to these affordability metrics are proposed in the Capital Strategy being considered in this report. These enhancements include providing greater clarity on the level of liability exposure (including loans) to subsidiary companies and a requirement for more transparency in decision making on the level of net present value within capital projects, including exceptions to re-invest surplus net present value generated into expenditure which have positive environmental and social impacts. The Council will be requested to endorse the new affordability approach as part of the development of the 2023/24 Capital Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy.

10. Budget Strategy

10.1 The Council has experienced a period of sustained increase in demand resulting from current global market factors and for some of the key services it provides to the most vulnerable members of the community, particularly within adult and children's social care. There is no

sign of the growth in these areas reducing in the foreseeable future and based on the current evidence it is more likely that growth will continue in the period covered by this plan.

10.2 As at September 2022, we estimate in our MTFP a peak funding gap of £31.1 million. With such a significant challenge, our Council budgets will not be able to be balanced without additional funding/making greater efficiencies and/or transformation projects.

10.3 Balancing the need to be financially sustainable and deliver value for money to residents, the Council will need to deliver efficiency savings to manage growing cost pressures and maintain service levels. The scale of the efficiency will be dependent on the income received by the Council over the coming years, which at this point remains uncertain.

10.4 There are many different scenarios for bridging the gap and the main options for mitigating the financial impacts outlined in this MTFP include:

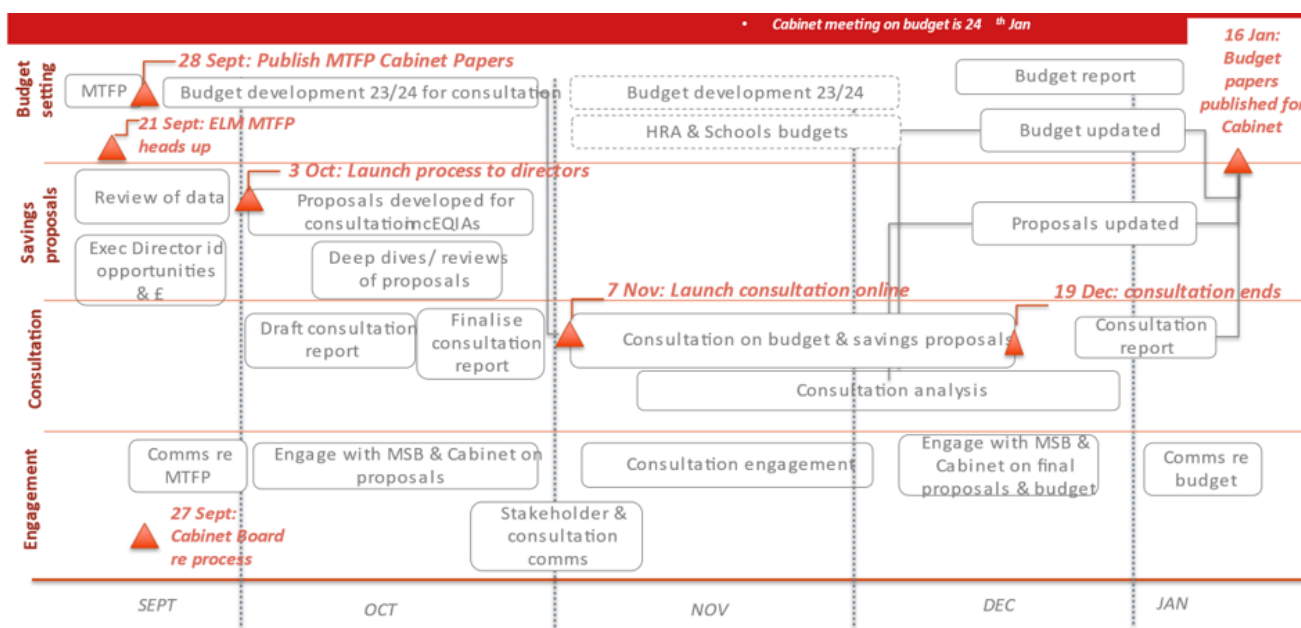
- We will ensure resources are aligned with the emerging Corporate Strategy priorities.
- Ensuring that all funding bids made can be fully justified by an identifiable need and can be linked to the strategic priorities and objectives of the Council.
- We will continue to work internally and externally with our partners locally, regionally and nationally to refine forecasts, assumptions, gather evidence and where appropriate jointly commission to achieve scale in our response and drive value.
- We will assess and challenge the value for money (economy, efficiency and effectiveness) provided by each service through the service & financial planning process.
- We will be prudent, taking into account the exceptional market conditions, by building flexibility into future contracting plans to facilitate best value.
- We will ensure that, in the interests of sustainability, exit and forward strategies are considered for projects and programmes receiving one-off or external funding and these strategies are developed for those areas currently in the budget.
- We will seek to ensure that new burdens are appropriately costed, funded and that mechanisms are in place to make representation where required and prevent permanent commissioning against short term resources.
- We will adopt a multi-faceted approach, collective leadership and genuine collaboration across the Council and finance, to have the right resources working effectively to manage the pressures and identify suitable and innovative solutions to meet need and manage the associated spending, in a sustainable manner.
- We will remain resilient through uncertainty, maintaining an adequate level of reserves, regularly review their planned use, redirection and allocation to support delivery of our priorities and management of our risks and where the funds are still required, they will be subsequently replenished.
- We will continue national and regional monitoring and lobbying, to encourage the government to provide funding to meet the cost of new burdens and new legislative or regulatory requirements.

- We will on an ongoing basis review the capital programme financing and debt portfolio, with a particular emphasis on future year’s commitments that could be financed or alternatively refinanced by alternative sources.
- We will ensure a long-term sustainable view is taken of our investments and that appropriate risk analyses are used when considering new investments.
- We will undertake detailed deep dives on service areas with material emerging pressures and deficit and consider the robustness and likely cashable benefit realisation from the associated recovery and transformation plans.
- We will deliver proposals for consideration to reduce the Council’s net expenditure by at least the indicative budget gap, for consideration as part of the budget for 2023/24.

Budget Timetable

10.5 Outlined below is the indicative timetable for the development of the 2023/24 Annual Budget for the General Fund including Public Health, Housing Revenue Account, Dedicated Schools Grant and the Council’s 2023/24 – 2027/28 Capital Programme. Please note that in some instances dates are indicative or to be confirmed and as such may be subject to change.

Table 16: Budget Timetable Latest Timeline



11. Reserves Policy

An essential part of the financial planning process of the Council is a robust policy on the level and nature of reserves.

We must ensure that our reserves are kept at an appropriate level to enable the Council to be resilient to future shocks, stressors and emergency situations that we may encounter in the future, and plan effectively for our known and potential one-off liabilities.

- 11.1 Section 25 of the Local Government Act (Part II) 2003 requires the Chief Financial Officer (Section 151 Officer) to report formally on the adequacy of the Councils financial reserves when setting a Medium Term Financial Plan and the budget requirement as part of the annual budget report. The accounting treatment for reserves is set out in the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting.
- 11.2 The Council continues to face a shortfall in funding compared to spending demands and must annually review its priorities in order to address the shortfall. Unlike central government, local authorities cannot borrow to finance day-to-day spending, and so they must either operate to agreed cash limits or seek approval to draw down reserves to ensure that their annual spending does not exceed their annual revenue budget.
- 11.3 Reserves are one-off monies and can only be spent once. The Council aims to avoid using reserves to meet ongoing financial commitments, other than as part of a sustainable budget plan. One of the Council’s financial principles is to stop the use of one-off funding to support the base budget. The Council has to balance the opportunity cost of holding reserves in terms of the impact upon Council Tax against the importance of internal borrowing, interest earning and planning for long-term financial resilience.
- 11.4 This practice note sets out the Council’s policy for the management and governance of its financial reserves, including:
- The General Fund Reserves
 - Earmarked Reserves
 - Housing Revenue Account reserves
 - Schools Reserves
- 11.5 The report covers the principles for when reserves will be held, the appropriate categories for reserves, the Section 151 recommended minimum levels of reserves and criteria for the release of reserves.

Summary

- 11.6 Reserves are an important part of the Council’s financial strategy and are held to create long-term financial resilience and stability. All movements in reserves will continue to require Section 151 Officer approval and are subject to a quarterly review. The outcomes of this quarterly review will then be presented to Cabinet as part of the quarterly budget monitoring reports and are included within the annual MTFP.
- 11.7 As at 1 April 2022, the Councils reserves were as follows:

Table 17: 1 April 2022: Reserves

Reserves	1 April 2022/23
General Fund:	£m
• General Reserve	(33.062)
• Earmarked Reserves	(180.086)
HRA Reserves	
• HRA General Reserve	(102.231)
• HRA Major Repairs Reserve	(12.9)
Schools	

• DSG Reserve	24.650
• Schools Reserve	(5.604)
Other Ringfenced	
• Public Health Reserve	(3.837)
TOTAL	(313.070)

11.8 Reserves enable the Council to manage its business and its change agenda without undue impact on the annual Council Tax or Tenants, and they are a key element of ensuring the Council’s strong financial standing and resilience over the medium to long-term. The Council operates in an uncertain and volatile environment and its main sources of funding face an uncertain future. The Council therefore holds earmarked reserves and a General Fund reserve in order to mitigate against future financial liabilities and risks.

11.9 The Council is an extremely complex organisation with a wide range and diversity of activities and assets, interests and liabilities. By their nature many of the risks cannot be quantified and in this current challenging financial climate it is essential that the Council maintains adequate levels of reserves.

General Fund

11.10 The Council’s earmarked reserves are currently categorised and reported in the MTFP and Budget in the following way:

Table 18: Description of Reserve Types

Reserve Type	Description
Capital Investment	The capital reserve is maintained to provide funding for the Council’s capital and commercial investments.
Risk and Legal	Risk Reserves Funds set aside to mitigate risks not otherwise provided for as well as commission advice and mitigate risks of potential litigation/claims.
Statutory/Ring-Fenced	Amounts required by statute or accounting code of practice to be set aside and ring-fenced for specific purposes, e.g. Public Health Reserve, City Deal Business Rate Pooling.
Financing	Includes PFI sinking fund, grant income carried forward in accordance with accounting regulations, including troubled families grant and resources set aside to match known contract liabilities.
Service	Amounts set aside to finance specific projects or to meet

General Reserve

11.11 The purpose of the Council’s General Reserve will be to meet costs arising from any unplanned or emergency events such as unforeseen financial liabilities or natural disasters. It also acts as a financial buffer to help mitigate against the financial risks the Council faces and can be used to a limited degree to ‘smooth’ expenditure on a one-off basis across years.

11.12 The level of the reserve will be a matter of judgement having had regard to the advice of the Section 151 Officer which will take account of the specific risks identified through the various corporate processes. This is considered on an annual basis as part of the robustness of reserves assessment, which forms part of the annual budget setting process. It will also take account of the extent to which specific risks are supported through earmarked reserves.

11.13 The current General Reserve Policy is that an unallocated general reserve will be retained of at least 5-6% of the net revenue budget, subject to the sensitivity and risks in the financial plans, to which the Council is exposed.

11.14 The table below shows the assumed general fund opening balance for each year of the current MTFP and the percentage of net budget. The percentage of net budget ranges from 8.4% to 6.1% across the period of the MTFP. The Council's Section 151 Officer recommends that the Council should work towards increasing this percentage in future MTFPs to reflect the heightened financial risk that the Council is facing.

Table 19: Current MTFP General Fund Assumptions and % of Net Budget

	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
1 April general fund balance assumption	(36.899)	(28.360)	(28.360)	(28.360)	(28.360)
Net Budget	435.687	445.314	455.349	466.741	466.979
General Fund % of net budget	-8.47%	-6.37%	-6.23%	-6.08%	-6.07%

Table 20: Earmarked and Ringfenced Reserves

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Earmarked Reserves Total	(180.086)	(102.321)	(85.389)	(82.719)	(82.719)
General Reserves	(36.899)	(28.360)	(28.360)	(28.360)	(28.360)
DSG	24.650	44.225	63.187	80.881	80.881
Schools	(5.604)	(5.604)	(5.604)	(5.604)	(5.604)
HRA	(102.231)	(102.231)	(102.231)	(102.231)	(102.231)

11.15 The purpose of the Council's earmarked reserves is to meet identified spending commitments. These reserves will only be used for the purpose for which they were created and will be reviewed periodically but as a minimum annually.

11.16 The Council's controllable reserves will be held corporately and the use of is subject to a prioritisation process and assessment of the use of the reserve for the approved purpose. Approval of the Section 151 Officer or Deputy Section 151 Officer is required in order to apply the use of earmarked reserves to support revenue expenditure. Each application will require a robust justification and will be assessed based on the planned and approved legitimate use of the reserve and the financial situation of the Council at that time and may result in earlier decisions for funding being revisited and amended.

11.17 All reserves are to be reviewed at least annually to determine whether the original purpose for the creation of the reserve still exists and whether or not the reserves should be released in full or in part or require topping up based on known/expected calls upon them. Particular attention will be paid in the annual review to those reserves whose balances have not moved over a twelve-month period.

HRA Ringfenced Reserve

11.18 The Council will continue to use a range of funding opportunities to ensure the Interest Cover Ratio (ICR) of the HRA is a minimum of 1.25 and the minimum ICR will be supplemented by an HRA capital investment reserve of at least £10m (approx. 1 year's interest cost) after provisions for any known liabilities and provision in the HRA budget each year to set aside monies to repay borrowing above the level of the historic HRA debt cap.

Management and Governance

11.19 Approval arrangements to be as follows:

- Cabinet Board approval is required for the creation of new earmarked reserves, upon recommendation from the Section 151 Officer.
- Directors and Heads of Service are required to apply to establish a new reserve and to specify the intended use and to demonstrate their plans for use of such a reserve over the period of the MTFP. The planned use shall be reflected in the development of the annual budget process.
- Directors and Heads of Service are required to apply to the Section 151 Officer / Deputy Section 151 Officer in order to draw down from the reserves.
- The Section 151 Officer / Deputy Section 151 Officer shall approve the use of all earmarked reserves provided that the intended use is in accordance with the purpose for which the reserve was established and approved. Intended use outside the defined purpose will require Cabinet approval upon recommendation of the Section 151 Officer.
- Section 151 Officer / Deputy Section 151 Officer approval is required for all contributions to reserves.
- The quarterly timetable for movements in reserves is aligned to the quarterly budget monitoring, which is reported to Cabinet
- Directors will be the designated officer in each Directorate responsible for submitting requests to the Section 151 Officer / Deputy Section 151 Officer for any contributions to or from earmarked reserves via their relevant Finance Business Partner.
- Movements in reserves will be reported to cabinet quarterly for noting as part of the budget monitoring process.

11.20 Each earmarked reserve must be supported by a standard proforma to maintain an audit trail. The proforma can be obtained from your Finance Business Partner and will need to contain:

- the named individual in the Directorate/Division and the Finance Business Partner
- a clear rationale and description for the movement in the reserve;
- details of any conditions associated with the reserve (e.g., grant, legal requirements, etc.); and
- a profile of expected movements and an end date – at which point any balance should be transferred to the general reserve.

11.21 If there is a genuine reason for slippage, then the proforma will need to be updated at the next available quarterly review. An annual review of each earmarked reserve is to take place between the Section 151 Officer / Deputy Section 151 Officer and relevant Director and Finance Business Partner to ensure that all reserves comply with legislative and accounting requirements. This review will ensure that that the number and value of reserves is not unnecessarily increasing annually and will continue to be held corporately.

11.22 The Transformation Reserve will be the Corporate Leadership Boards tool for managing additional expenditure is required for business activities, projects and capacity that is critical to delivering the Councils' improvement agenda.

- 11.23 A de-minimis level has been set to avoid small funds being set up that could be managed within existing budgets or declared as an overspend and then managed collectively with the express agreement of the Section 151 Officer. This has been set at £0.100m, the exception being where reserves have specific grant or legal conditions.
- 11.24 Each proforma will clearly identify contributions to and drawdowns from reserves, and these will be built into the MTFP and monitored on a quarterly basis. Accessing reserves will only be for significant unusual spend, more minor fluctuations will be managed or declared as budget variances. Ongoing recurring costs should not be funded from reserves. Any request contrary to this will only be considered during the annual budget-setting process.
- 11.25 The short-term use of reserves may be agreed by the Section 151 Officer to provide time to plan for a sustainable funding solution in the following financial year. Decisions on the use of reserves may be delayed until financial year end and will be dependent on the overall financial position of the Council rather than the position of just one budget area.
- 11.26 The report will contain estimates of reserves where necessary.
- 11.27 The following principles will be applied by the Section 151 officer:
- Any in year use of the general reserve will need to be approved by Cabinet and any planned use will be part of the budget setting process
 - Any in year use of the General reserve which reduces the level below the policy compliant level
 - In considering the use of reserves, there will be no or minimal impairment to the Council's long term financial resilience unless there is no alternative.
- 11.28 The Council will review the Reserves Policy on an annual basis and will form part of the MTFP reports to Cabinet which will then be subject to Full Council annually. Reserves with no movement in 2 years will be returned to the centre to be held corporately.
- 11.29 Within the existing categories, there are a number of earmarked reserves that are established for a specific purpose. During 2022/23 a review of earmarked reserves will be undertaken in order to:
- increase the visibility and transparency of reserves
 - clearly define the purpose and intended use of reserves
 - review the justification for continuation of all reserves, including a review of the level of reserve that is justified
 - identify those reserves that are subject to statutory regulations governing their use, e.g. grants; and
 - update the categorisation of reserves.
- 11.30 Progress on this review and the outcomes of the updated categorisation will be reported part of the Quarterly Budget Monitoring reports, Annual MTFP and next MTFP report.

12. Our Financial Principles

Putting this Strategy into Practice

Our financial principles provide a guide and good practice, to support the financial management arrangements in the Council for delivery of a sustainable and balanced budget.

While any one principle, if properly implemented, will likely yield positive results, it is the way these principles reinforce each other that will more fully deliver on the promise of effective financial planning and management.

The detailed resourcing principles that underpin these elements and activities are outlined in Annex 2 and provide the tools for a consistent, transparent approach to the annual budget review.

- 12.1 The Council identified three overarching financial elements; spending, investment and efficiencies and adopted guiding principles and good practice to support the process for determination of the budget and the financial management arrangements for delivery of a balanced budget position:

1. Spend

Aligning spend with corporate priorities

Maintaining sustainable finances as a priority

Being resilient to future uncertainty

2. Investment

Capital Programme Prioritisation

Investment for sustainable inclusive growth

Investment to improve and maintain

Investment to save and generate income

3. Efficiency

Financial resilience

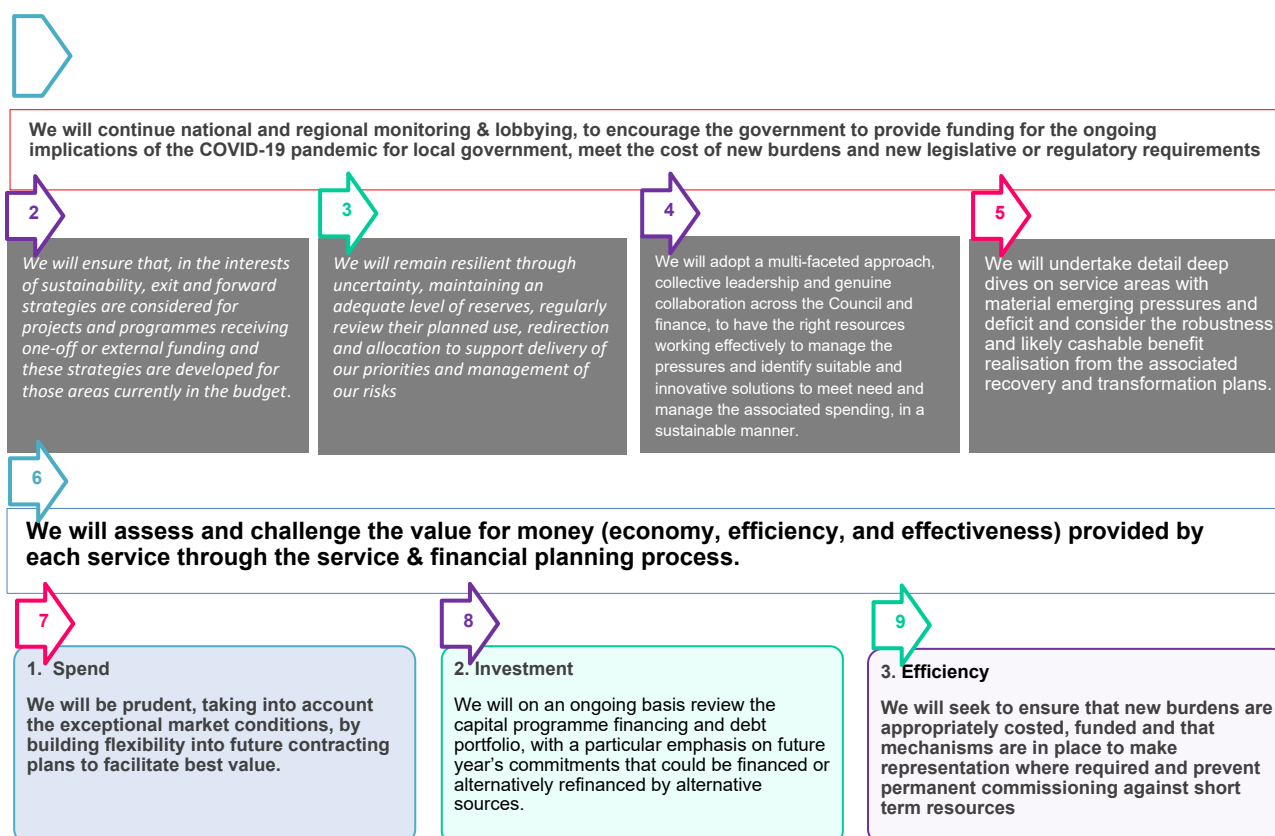
Transforming services

Financial sustainability

Affordability

- 12.2 The Council is now facing a set of fresh financial challenges and as we focus on pandemic recovery, financial sustainability and resilience are the key aspects of the Council's future strategy. To be resilient to future uncertainty we are proposing to focus on nine key principles:

Figure 5: Nine Key Principles



13. Risk Management

- 13.1 Change is happening at an increasing pace and while this brings with it risks, it also offers new opportunities. We will proactively manage risks and opportunities to support delivery of strategic objectives, to improve service delivery, to achieve value for money and reduce unwelcome surprises.
- 13.2 We are continually developing and refining our approach to risk management in order to provide a more effective response to risks while also embedding risk management across our decision-making and service planning processes.
- 13.3 We will refresh the Corporate Risk Register to appropriately reflect the key risks which have materialised from the MTFP refresh and ensure close monitoring and transparent reporting on progress and actions.
- 13.4 In developing the 2023/24 budget to be presented to Council for approval we will consider the key corporate risks that we face, how we propose to address these risks and sufficiency of the financial provisions made, and reserves held, to ensure resilience and sustainability.

14. Consultation and Cumulative Equalities Impact Assessment

- 14.1 The Council will continue to strive to deliver efficient services that provide value for money. Proposals developed where relevant and proportionate will be subject to internal, external and

public consultation. We need to ensure that optimal choices being made are done on a fully informed and transparent basis.

- 14.2 The Council's budget planning framework is supported by the development of cumulative Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) for the budget proposals, identifying possible disproportionate impacts in relation to groups with protected characteristics. The EqIAs will also identify potential mitigation where applicable. Where required, specific consultations will also be launched throughout the respective year and made available via the Council's website.
- 14.3 The Council maintains its strong commitment to equality, and the EqIAs help us to arrive at informed decisions and to make the best judgements about how to target resources.

Annex 1: CIPFA FM Code - Financial Management Standards

FM standard reference	CIPFA financial management standards
	Section 1: The responsibilities of the chief finance officer and leadership team
A	The leadership team is able to demonstrate that the services provided by the authority provide value for money.
B	The authority complies with the CIPFA <i>Statement on the Role of the Chief Finance Officer in Local Government</i> .
	Section 2: Governance and financial management style
C	The leadership team demonstrates in its actions and behaviours responsibility for governance and internal control.
D	The authority applies the CIPFA/SOLACE <i>Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework</i> (2016).
E	The financial management style of the authority supports financial sustainability.
	Section 3: Long to medium-term financial management
F	The authority has carried out a credible and transparent financial resilience assessment.
G	The authority understands its prospects for financial sustainability in the longer term and has reported this clearly to members.
H	The authority complies with the CIPFA <i>Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities</i> .
I	The authority has a rolling multi-year medium-term financial plan consistent with sustainable service plans.
	Section 4: The annual budget
J	The authority complies with its statutory obligations in respect of the budget setting process.
K	The budget report includes a statement by the chief finance officer on the robustness of the estimates and a statement on the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves.
	Section 5: Stakeholder engagement and business plans
L	The authority has engaged where appropriate with key stakeholders in developing its long-term financial strategy, medium-term financial plan and annual budget.
M	The authority uses an appropriate documented option appraisal methodology to demonstrate the value for money of its decisions.
	Section 6: Monitoring financial performance
N	The leadership team takes action using reports enabling it to identify and correct emerging risks to its budget strategy and financial sustainability.
O	The leadership team monitors the elements of its balance sheet that pose a significant risk to its financial sustainability.
	Section 7: External financial reporting
P	The chief finance officer has personal and statutory responsibility for ensuring that the statement of accounts produced by the local authority complies with the reporting requirements of the <i>Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom</i> .
Q	The presentation of the final outturn figures and variations from budget allows the leadership team to make strategic financial decisions.

Annex 2: MTFP Principles

Spending Principles

Aligning spend with corporate priorities

- Subject to delivering statutory responsibilities, we will challenge all existing spend in the context of our strategic priorities and consider our legal obligations in providing services.

Being resilient to future uncertainty

- We will be prudent; taking into account the uncertain financial outlook, by building flexibility into future contracting plans and developing exit strategies for all externally funded activities.
- Maintain sufficient reserves and balances to manage risks.

Maintaining sustainable finances as a priority

- No additional spend unless matched by savings or income.
- Implement all endorsed savings and efficiencies
- We will maintain balanced budgets over the MTFP cycle.
- We will undertake a manageable rolling programme of zero-based budget reviews.

Other Principles

- Invest in agreed priority areas
- Grant reductions fully passported

Investment Principles

Capital Programme

- We will operate a clear and transparent corporate approach to the prioritisation of all capital spending.
- We will create a Strategic Capital Investment Board to ensure our capital spending and the delivery of this programme is effectively managed and any material changes are endorsed in order that it can be presented for approval and published at the start of each subsequent financial year
- We will ensure that investments are affordable and sustainable.
- We will ensure the first call for financing will be against external generated resources, e.g. ring-fenced, non-ring-fenced grants, public and private sector contributions. The balance of funding will come from the council's internally generated resources and then external borrowing.

Capital Investments

- Investing for inclusive growth: We will expand its capacity to grow the economy, whilst delivering whole systems solutions to demographic, social and environmental challenges sustainably across the City
- Invest to save and to generate returns: We will expand its capacity to grow the economy, whilst delivering whole systems solutions to demographic, social and environmental challenges sustainably across the City.
- Investment to improve and maintain Council assets: We will improve and maintain the condition of core assets to extend their life where appropriate. The Council will make provision for lifecycle investment to maintain infrastructure to a standard that effectively supports service delivery
- Risk aware: The risks of the project have been fully assessed, consulted, communicated, and are at an acceptable level.

Efficiency Principles

Financial Resilience

Building resilience and reducing dependency

- Enable sustainable and resilient businesses; we will replace start-up grants with start-up or scale-up loans, or alternatively an equity stake offered with business support.
- Level the playing field; provide transparency in subsidies and alignment with strategic objectives.
- Review concessions, with a view to replacing peppercorn rents with fees and charges that transparently recognise the value and importance we place on those services.
- Capital and revenue Investments require returns and these should be about improved outcomes and reduced pressure on the core public budget.
- We will offer pump-priming, pump-priming plus grants, or loans to allow for innovation and development of partnerships that require funding for up to a maximum of three years.
- Low interest-paying loans repaid within 2-3 years will be available as a step down mechanism from long term grants.
- Bristol City Council funded Partnership contributions should be subject to the same level of rigour in contributing to the budget 'gap' as all base budgets.
- Capital investment on non-BCC assets: financed via interest-bearing loan, equity stake (subject to risks assessment), charge to be placed on the asset, or other appropriate mechanism for a return on the investment.

Fraud, Cost Avoidance and Recovery

- We will proactively use data intelligence for successful revenue collection; data cleansing, analytics and technology to locating new payers as well as contacting defaulters and getting the right bill, to the right person, at the right time.

- Through better gathering of evidence at source, and robust calculation of rates to be consistently applied in our charging, we will minimise the need to negotiate and write off invoices.
- We will consider an incentive scheme for information provided at an incident which directly enhances the Council's ability to recover costs, e.g. third party damage to infrastructure.
- Develop a debt management strategy to provide clarity on purpose; develop process that enables us to have a single view of the debtor across all systems, which can then be monitored and more effectively tracked to increase recovery

Balance Sheet Management

- We will actively manage the balance sheet with a view to releasing long-held funds which could be utilised for current priorities and to maximise investment returns within agreed levels of risk
- We will develop protocols for releasing developer funds as planned and for the purpose intended, reducing unnecessary budget growth for increased maintenance and works.

Capital financing, investments and borrowing

- We will not increase the indicative prudential borrowing commitment in the annually approved capital programme unless substituting a current scheme or where the Council can make an evidenced return on investment.
- We will be evidence-led; matching projects & delivery to economic reality and benefit realisation.
- Any capital investment decision which involves prudential borrowing must include the cost of servicing the debt and anticipated pay-back period as part of a robust business case.
- Investment to save/grow decisions will only be supported when the cashable cost reductions (or increased income) exceed the financing costs of any borrowing needed to fund the investment within the agreed pay-back period for the asset type (to be determined).

Transforming Services

Workforce & Productivity

- Develop the right organisational design that enables delivery of Mayoral priorities, including structure, pay and grading framework, and capacity.
- We will invest in the culture, training and development that will deliver a diverse and inclusive workforce for the future.
- The Pay bill should not exceed the annually determined budget percentage.
- We will consider where automation or digital delivery mechanisms are more appropriate.
- Services should fund their own service pressures wherever possible e.g. inflationary uplifts, general inflation (unless there is a contractual agreement that cannot be re-negotiated).

Maximising Asset Utilisation

- Assets held must support a strategic need or offer a net financial return that supports the financial resilience of the Council.
We will invest in the development of an inventory and valuation system, with clear accounting standards.
- Where it is fit for purpose, we will seek to optimise the infrastructure that we have already invested in.
- The repurposing of the existing infrastructure to allow the Council to deploy for multi-use, e.g. advertising, digital connectivity, with rental income from service providers and from a revenue share on the income they receive.
- We will review restrictive regulation and dysfunctional incentives that encourage waste and low-value use.
- We will ensure all of our assets demonstrate value generation, e.g. no idle assets.
- We will target a minimum IRR of 6.00% over a 10 year period, or less e.g. 4.00% with social value opportunities.

- We will save costs and reduce carbon through smarter use of energy.
- We will seek to leverage optimum funds from our estate including opportunities for pension fund investment where this provides best value.

Smart Technology

- We will optimise the infrastructure that we have available in exploring the 'Internet of Things (IoT) with the objective of reducing our current costs base.
- We will implement a twin track approach; prototyping appropriate concepts with strategy development.
- We will leverage other public and private sector investment for new market developments that transform and future proof services at a reduce costs.
- We will proactively seek a mixed portfolio of quick wins and early adopters to create a revolving fund to support a sustainable programme of longer term developments.

Partnership Working and Earlier Intervention

- We will invest in capacity building in the community, local and regional partners to support delivery of strategic priorities and reduce costs to the general fund.
- We will work with key stakeholders to use pooled arrangements to increase available cash-flow and /or create revolving funds to deliver long term savings which can be redistributed to re-invest.
- Community and third sector partners should be partners in development, not just recipients of funding.
- Capacity building should not be developed to simply mirror what the Council already does with a transfer of the same budget.
- The approach should embrace voluntary effort as well as "not for profit" service delivery.

Financial Sustainability

Fees and Charges

- The introduction of charges for services should have a clear link between user consumption and the financing of that service.
- As a minimum all locally determined charges will be reviewed annually which will include relevant benchmarking information, and increased in line with general inflation, unless it can be demonstrated such an increase will harm service usage levels.
- Services operating on a costs recovery basis, will ensure a calculation is available that determines the total cost of providing the service including overheads.
- Where charges are set in statute but do not fully recover costs we will undertake detailed review of services and where appropriate provide the evidence to the awarding body.
- Council Tax increases will be reviewed annually and only levied where necessary and justifiable.

Third Party Expenditure

- We will organise procurement activity and resources to focus on specific areas of spend (category management approach) and seek to drive greater value in our procurement.
- We will focus on supporting local businesses to improve processes and collaboration to enable them to compete for opportunities within the Council's supply chain.
 - We will consider Social Value and sustainability in our procurement activity.
 - We will encourage value chain development, whereby collaborating partners can be recognised and reimbursed for their contribution to delivery of outcomes utilising 'payments-by-results' methodology.
 - We will utilise outcomes-based commissioning (avoiding perverse incentives) and incentivise with shared benefits and liabilities.

- Market failure: We will intervene earlier where there is a clear rationale to do so, using insight to manage specification and demand.
- Consider a range of opportunities to deliver a return on Strategic and Shareholder Investments, to include creation of value through a wider strategic and outcomes based commissioning.

Entrepreneurial Approach

- We will be more 'Entrepreneurial' in our approach to delivery and commissioning.
- We will actively engaging in market development and market shaping where no such market currently exists and using insight to manage specification and demand.
- We will invest and use our financial strengths and trusted brand to deliver a financial return.
- We will attract alternative investment models to support service delivery, e.g. through social investment.
- We will reassess our expectations of our sector and think big and bold in what we can achieve.
- We will ensure all viable options that create a sustainable asset should be considered in service redesign.
- We will equip staff in selected service areas with the right commercial skills to operate more competitively and generate new income for the council which will support services for tax payers.
- Where viable and appropriate opportunities exist we will create the capacity that will enable a financial return to be delivered.
- We will consider services more appropriate for trading with an agreed return to the general fund.

Affordability

- As a last resort other necessary measures will be considered to ensure a balanced budget can be delivered in each of the financial years; including divestment where non-priority or lower priority outcomes are no longer cost-effective or affordable.

**Bristol City Council
Capital Strategy
2023/24 – 2032/33**

Capital Strategy 2023/24 – 2032/33

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Capital Strategy 2023/24 to 2032/33

1. Background and Scope

- 1.1. The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Prudential Code requires local authorities to produce a Capital Strategy to demonstrate how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of desired outcomes and take account of stewardship, value for money, prudence, sustainability and affordability. The Prudential Code has been significantly updated to incorporate changes which restrict councils using borrowing to finance commercial property investment solely for generating yield. The Capital Strategy reflects the new requirements and compliance to them.
- 1.2. This Capital Strategy forms part of the framework for financial planning and is integral to both the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and the Treasury Management Strategy (TMS). It sets out how capital investment will play its part in delivering the ambitious long term strategic objectives of the Council, how associated risk is managed and the implications for future financial sustainability.
- 1.3. All capital expenditure and capital investment decisions are covered by this strategy, not only as an individual local authority, but also those entered into by the authority under group arrangements. It is refreshed annually in line with the MTFP and TMS to ensure it remains fit for purpose and enables the Council to make the investments necessary to deliver its strategic aims and objectives.
- 1.4. The Capital Strategy is considered by the Council as one of the foundations of good financial management and reflects the requirements under the CIPFA Financial Management Code.

2. Capital Expenditure

- 2.1. In contrast to revenue expenditure which is spending on the day to day running costs of services such as employee costs and supplies and services, capital expenditure seeks to provide long-term solutions to Council priorities and operational requirements. Capital expenditure is technically described as: expenditure on the acquisition, creation or enhancement of 'non-current assets' ie. items of land, property and plant which has a useful life of more than 1 year. Expenditure for capital purposes therefore gives rise to new assets, increases the value or useful life of existing assets or, generates economic and social value and an income stream to the Council via non-treasury investments.
- 2.2. The five aims of the Capital Strategy are:
 - i. To take **a long term perspective on capital investment** and to ensure this contributes to the achievement of Bristol's One City Plan, emerging Local Plan and key strategies such as the Corporate Strategy.
 - ii. To ensure investment is **prudent, affordable, and sustainable** over the medium term and adheres to the prudential code, Treasury Management Code and other regulatory conditions.
 - iii. To maintain the arrangements and **governance for investment decision-making** through the established governance boards.
 - iv. To make the **most effective and appropriate use of the funds available** in long term planning and using the most optimal annual financing solutions.
 - v. To establish **a clear methodology to prioritise capital proposals**.
- 2.3. The MTFP sets out the key principles and this strategy will support the achievement of the right blend of investment in key priority areas to enable the following:

- Investing for sustainable, inclusive economic growth
- Invest to save and to generate returns
- Investment to improve and maintain Council assets

3. Policy Context

National Policy Context

3.1. The UK economy is recovering from the unprecedented economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and is consequently facing significant inflationary pressures. The graphs below from the Office of National Statistics show that during the pandemic the UK's Gross Domestic Product fell by around 25%, recovered strongly initially and then plateaued. The UK's Consumer Price Index has increased substantially in the last 12 months. There are a number of risks around the economy including a potential recession in the short to medium term and also how long the inflationary pressures will last.

Figure 1: GDP and CPI



Source: Office for National Statistics

- 3.2. These national economic issues impact on the Council's capital investment plans. The inflationary pressure in the economy is being seen in the construction industry and will affect those capital projects that are currently at business case stage/procurement and also projects that have already commenced.
- 3.3. A core policy area for the current government is its Levelling Up Agenda with its aim to reduce levels of disparity across the UK. The government's Budget in Autumn 2020 announced a £4.8bn Levelling Up Fund which will invest in infrastructure including regeneration, local transport projects and cultural and heritage assets. A further core policy area for government is to reduce carbon emissions and become carbon neutral. Each of these policy areas provide opportunities for Bristol.

Local Policy Context

- 3.4. A number of significant developments and strategic documents have been established in recent years that will continue to have a major influence on the future shape and approach to capital investment within the City. These include Bristol's One City Plan, Corporate Strategy and the proposals to ensure there is a diverse housing offer for the city including homes that are affordable, the emerging Local Plan and within a wider regional context our role within the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) in terms of transport, skills and inclusive economic growth.
- 3.5. **Bristol's One City Plan** has been developed by many different partners covering almost every aspect of life in Bristol; all have a role in making Bristol a thriving, healthy and more equal city in the future. It is an ambitious, collaborative approach to reach a shared vision for Bristol where no one is left behind. It is recognised Bristol's successful local economy has not always delivered prosperity evenly across citizens. Increasing economic inclusion will provide a boost to local economic growth and provide sustainability and resilience.

- 3.6. The Council's **Corporate Strategy 2022-27** sets out the Council's vision and priorities for the City and sets out the Council's role in supporting the One City Plan. The Strategy has been refreshed to make sure our priorities reflect our current situation such as: refreshed political priorities; the One City Plan, continued Covid-19 recovery and carbon reduction. It is based around the following five guiding principles that influence how we do things and the way in which we design our projects, services and priorities. The five building blocks are:
- **Development & Delivery** - develop people, places and partnerships to improve outcomes.
 - **Environmental Sustainability** - tackle the Climate and Ecological Emergencies while inclusively growing the economy, maximising our positive environmental impacts and avoiding or mitigating negative ones wherever possible.
 - **Equality & Inclusion** - pro-actively and intentionally improve equality and inclusion across the city by designing it into everything we do.
 - **Resilience** - build Bristol's city resilience through early intervention, minimising our contribution to future environmental, economic or social shocks and stresses.
 - **World class employment** - role model, influence and promote the highest levels and standards of employment.
- 3.7. The graphic below summarises how these strategies and plans link together and 'Our Corporate Strategy – at a glance' is shown at Appendix 1.

Figure 2: How the Council and Partners work together



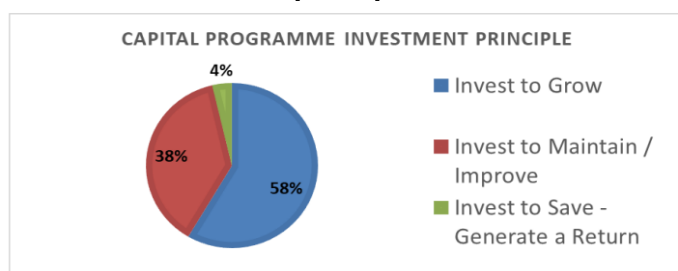
- 3.8. In addition to the Corporate Strategy there are a number of complementary proposals and emerging plans which will also drive the Capital Strategy and future capital investment; examples of which are outlined below:

- Capital spending on its assets should be fully aligned to the Council’s **Asset Management Plan** and **Property Strategy** and the annual review of the Capital Strategy will ensure these are aligned as these strategies are reviewed and developed.
- **West of England Combined Authority’s (WECA)** aim is to deliver clean and inclusive economic growth for the region and address some of its challenges, including productivity and skills gaps, the need for more homes and congestion.
- WECA was developing a Spatial Development Strategy but has now ceased work on the plan given the challenges of agreeing housing allocations on a regional basis. Bristol will develop its **Local Plan** with the intention to consult later this year and to have a Local Plan approved by full council and submitted to enquiry in 2023 and adopted in 2024.
- **Joint Asset Board (JAB) / One Public Estate** regional collaboration to use public sector land more efficiently, transform public sector services and strengthen local communities. The JAB links very closely with the West of England Housing Delivery Board.
- West of England **Local Industrial Strategy** was co-produced with government and was launched in July 2019. The strategy draws on the strengths of our region and sets out our ambition to be a driving force for clean and inclusive growth.
- **Western Gateway Sub-National Transport Body** is formed by an alliance of local authorities that have made a commitment to work together to drive innovation, maximise economic growth and improve industrial productivity by strengthening travel connections to local, national and international markets.
- **Great Western Powerhouse** - opportunities are being explored across the West of England and South Wales regions to improve transport connections across the M4-M5 stretch, reduce congestion, speed up rail journey times, increase trade and investment internationally and focus on creating more opportunities for urban and rural areas with problems of deprivation and low skills to take positive action to address these regional challenges.

4. Capital Investment

- 4.1. The Council has an ambitious capital programme over the next ten years. The largest proportion, 58%, of this programme is aligned to large infrastructure investments that will support long term regeneration across the city, such as the programme of new housing building and developing the Temple Quarter area, with 4% aligned to invest to save schemes such as investing in infrastructure to support delivery of Social Care and Education services and 38% invest to maintain propositions, undertaking mandatory duties keeping the public safe and maintaining our assets. The pie chart below shows the forecast programme spend by capital investment principle. The Council will seek to access further external funding to finance its programme in the future.

Figure 3: Breakdown of Capital Programme 2022-32 approved by Council in March 2022 between investment principles



- 4.2. The aims are to improve alignment to the Council’s strategic objectives, allocate resources effectively across the services provided and strike a balance between the things that make the most difference to residents, customers and businesses.
- 4.3. The table below sets out the change in allocation of capital resources over the Investment Principles achieved during the capital planning work since the Capital Strategy was refreshed in December 2021.

Table 1: Change in Allocation of Capital Resources over the Investment Principles

Investment Principle	Capital Programme 2021-26 (Agreed by Council in Feb 2021)	Capital Programme 2022-32 (Agreed by Council in March 2022)	Change
Invest to Grow	73%	58%	-15%
Invest to Maintain/Improve	18%	38%	+20%
Invest to Save/Generate a Return	9%	4%	-5%

- 4.4. Locally-led investment in the economy and infrastructure will be critical to provide assurances to investors and local, regional and international partners to help drive and support economic and social recovery. The Covid-19 pandemic will continue to have a long term impact on the City and the Council.
- 4.5. The Council will need to invest in the city’s infrastructure to achieve its decarbonisation ambitions.
- 4.6. The Council needs to make a clear distinction between capital investments, where the achievement of strategic aims will be considered alongside affordability, and treasury management investments, which are made solely for the purpose of cash flow management.
- 4.7. Investment decisions must be clearly within the economic powers of the Council and in adherence with the Prudential Code whilst commercial decisions will focus on yield, long term capital investment decisions will not be made purely on the basis of financial returns but will also give consideration to economic, social and environmental impact. Notwithstanding that there will be fully externally funded programmes such as those for schools.
- 4.8. The Council will ensure that all of its investment types are covered in its Capital Strategy and will set out, where relevant, the Council’s risk appetite and specific policies and arrangements for its non-treasury investments. It will be recognised that the risk appetite for these activities may differ from that for treasury management.

5. Principles for Capital Planning

- 5.1. Like most public sector bodies, the Council has experienced significant delays in the physical progress of projects against the approved profile and cost over runs. This can be directly linked to the size of the programme, capacity to deliver and over optimism about the project in terms of cost, time and external factors outside the sponsor’s control.
- 5.2. When capital schemes are approved their inclusion into the capital programme is based on best estimates and slippage is measured against the approved profile at the end of the financial year. The Council will need to significantly improve its performance to ensure that all projects being proposed for inclusion can be delivered within the timeframe and budget stated prior to programme entry. Resource capacity and size of the programme will need to be assessed annually as part of the budget setting process and a range of optimism bias tools that are available should be utilised in business case assessments of delivery of major projects, as well as at a programme level.
- 5.3. Delivery of the programme will be overseen by the established governance boards as outlined in section 8. The Council will operate a clear and transparent corporate approach to the prioritisation of capital spending and the MTFP investment principles are set out in more detail in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Investment Principles

Investment Principles	
Investing for sustainable, inclusive, economic growth	The Council will expand its capacity to grow the economy in an inclusive manner, whilst delivering whole systems solutions to demographic, social and environmental challenges sustainably across the City
Invest to save and to generate returns	The Council will invest in projects which will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduce running costs (including in alternative service areas) • avoid costs (capital or revenue) that would otherwise arise • generate a financial return.
Investment to improve and maintain Council assets	The Council will improve and maintain the condition of core assets to extend their life where appropriate. The Council will make provision for lifecycle investment (capital and revenue) to maintain infrastructure to a standard that effectively supports long term service delivery.
Risk aware	The risks of the project have been fully assessed, consulted, communicated and are at an acceptable level.

- 5.4. Where appropriate the Council will invest in latest developments in order to stay at the forefront of service delivery, this includes areas such as Smart Technology, low carbon technology, and environmental sustainability. Where this investment is generated from the Council’s own resources the principles above will apply.
- 5.5. When entering into investments with financial return as a purpose, subject to affordability and sustainability the Council must consider the balance between security, liquidity and yield based on its risk appetite and the exit route from the investment. Bristol has not borrowed for outright investment purposes and will not do so in the future in line with the CIPFA prudential code.
- 5.6. When entering into non-financial investments (i.e. financial return is secondary) in addition to the above the Council considers the alignment to its strategic objectives and the contribution and local impact the investment could have to a range of outcomes including city growth, social fabric and the environment (further details on this can be found in Table 4).
- 5.7. Currently the Council is not overly dependent on profit generating investment activity to achieve a balanced revenue budget. Any shortfall in investment income would be reconsidered as part of the MTFP and seek to ensure that the quality and security of long-term investments minimises the income risk.

Property Investment Portfolio

- 5.8. The Council owns freehold land across the city where it has granted long leases to developers and investors, and from whom ground rents are received of various kinds as investment income. The estate has been acquired and built up over many years and includes a wide range of property types of variable quality.
- 5.9. This portfolio generates a revenue return. The return is not a significant element of the net revenue budget and therefore the scale of any associated investment must be proportionate and the risk managed at an acceptable level. In addition to the revenue return the Council also receives capital receipts in exchange for restructuring existing lease terms.

- 5.10. Investment properties are regularly revalued to market level under a rolling programme. The top 150 properties by value have a formal valuation report annually. Other properties are valued over a 4-year cycle. In between valuations property indices are used for the lower value properties.
- 5.11. A portfolio approach to commercial property investments needs to be aligned to a Cabinet agreed investment strategy, which will provide an outline of the earmarked envelope available, consistent framework to assess all future investment opportunities and divestment. It will set out the approach for use of the current estate and future opportunities to be able to drive regeneration and economic growth through recycling capital receipts where investment is aligned to principles within this strategy. A transition from investments held purely for yield to investments that more closely align to Council strategy and regeneration projects may be required over the medium term.

Subsidiaries

- 5.12. Where appropriate the Council will invest in wholly or partly owned companies where this is considered to be the most appropriate means to deliver strategic objectives or for a financial return. The Council may be required to issue Parent Company Guarantees (PCG) or letters of support underwriting activities which will be regularly monitored and appropriately risk assessed. The accounting treatment of any PCGs will be assessed individually in line with relevant accounting standards.
- 5.13. Third party loans/liability exposure may also be requested by a subsidiary and where these are agreed the Council must ensure appropriate interest rates are applied and arrangements are in line with the subsidy control bill. The rate of interest applied will take into account control, risks, the different nature of each subsidiary activities and the potential exposure to the Council.
- 5.14. The Council will undertake appropriate due diligence on such transactions.
- 5.15. The maximum exposure of the Council to loans/liabilities in subsidiary organisations will be governed by an affordability indicator as set out in Section 7.
- 5.16. These arrangements once agreed via the relevant decision making process will be monitored through the Governance arrangements set out in Section 8. Appropriate disclosures will be made in the statement of accounts, including the fair value of such investments.

Private Finance Initiative

- 5.17. Although Private Finance Initiative (PFI) schemes are not shown within the capital programme as they are not financed by the Council's capital resources, PFI has been a means by which the Council can facilitate major new infrastructure projects. PFI schemes involve partnerships between the public and private sector to fund public sector infrastructure projects with private capital.
- 5.18. The Council has three PFI projects associated to 8 schools and 1 leisure centre. Under PFI, a private sector contractor agrees to accept the risks associated with the design, construction, operation and maintenance of the asset over the contract term, which is typically for a 25 year period post construction. The public sector partner pays an annual fixed price during the contract term, part of which is subject to inflation and benchmarked activities. At the end of the term the asset is wholly owned by the Council. The collective annual charge of the contracts is around £32m which includes approximately £17m of interest and debt repayment costs. The government provides some financial support for PFI schemes by way of PFI credits / grants.
- 5.19. Any financial pressures arising are dealt with through existing contractual mechanisms which are in place for each specific PFI, but this may impact on the level of the sinking fund available to meet the future costs of the schemes.

- 5.20. No additional PFI projects are anticipated and any proposals for refinancing or making material variations to existing contractual arrangements will be fully evaluated and presented to members and cabinet for approval.

6. Funding Capital Investment

- 6.1. The Council's core capital programme is approved as part of the annual budget setting process, by the Cabinet and the Council and is funded from a range of sources, principally:
- Grants
 - WECA - Economic Development Fund/Local Growth Fund
 - Developer Contributions
 - Prudential Borrowing
 - Capital Receipts
 - Revenue and Reserves.
- 6.2. The first call on available capital resources will always be the financing of spending on live projects, including those carried forward from previous years.
- 6.3. In establishing the most economic means to finance our capital programme we will seek to optimise any freedom and flexibilities given to the Authority from government in how we deploy our capital investment.
- 6.4. The figure below shows the indicative funding available to the Council for the next ten years within the principles outlined in this strategy and budget as set in the Medium Term Financial Plan.

Table 3: Indicative Funding from 2023/24 to 2032/33 for Capital Investment

	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027-33 £000	Total £000
Financed by:							
Prudential Borrowing	72,136	36,306	23,968	22,419	18,460	50,000	223,289
Developer Contributions	12,675	7,361	5,980	5,400	4,430	15,000	50,847
Capital Receipts	20,611	22,010	10,160	10,750	6,000	25,000	94,531
Revenue/ Reserves (GF)	3,501						3,501
Grants	60,482	33,825	21,047	5,111	3,500	57,750	181,715
WECA - Grants	22,021	15,442	9,772	8,772	8,772	35,000	99,779
Economic Development Fund (EDF)	19,733	20,013	14,980	478		55,980	111,184
Sub-total	211,159	134,957	85,907	52,931	41,162	238,730	764,846
HRA Self financing	30,357	31,735	33,060	33,967	34,722	160,000	323,841
HRA Borrowing	3,461	107,367	111,874	69,029	54,058		345,790
HRA Capital Receipts	52,999	7,102	6,561	5,916	14,228	50,000	136,806
HRA Grants	3,426	8,079	13,664	836			26,005
HRA Revenue / Reserves	32,438	40,146	1	1			72,586
Sub-total	122,681	194,429	165,160	109,749	103,009	210,000	905,027
Total	333,840	329,386	251,067	162,680	144,171	448,730	1,669,873

Notes:

- 2022/23 to 2026/27 as per approved capital programme reported to Cabinet at Period 5 of 2022/23 financial year
- 2026/27 to 2032/33 future funding is indicative based on an extrapolation of estimated financing (associated spending is not approved/committed at this stage).
- HRA available funding and additional borrowing updated as part of a review of the 30 year business plan -HRA Budget and Capital Programme in February 2022.

Grants

- 6.5. The Council receives grants from government, partners and other organisations to finance capital investment. Grants can be split into two categories:
- Un-ringfenced – resources which are delivered through grant that can be utilised on any project (albeit that there may be an expectation of use for a specific purpose).
 - Ring-fenced – resources which are ringfenced to particular service areas and therefore have restricted uses.

WECA Funding (Economic Development Fund & Local Growth Fund)

- 6.6. The West of England Combined Authority (WECA) is a key source of funding for capital investment in Bristol. The Economic Development Fund, GBF key and Investment fund, Development Infrastructure Fund (DIF), land acquisition fund, City regional sustainable transport settlement (CRSTS) and more recently Housing infrastructure fund (HIF) available for the Council to secure resources from.

Developer Contributions

- 6.7. Significant developments across the city are often liable for contributions to the Council in the form of section 106 or a community infrastructure levy (CIL). The community infrastructure levy is split between 5% for administrative costs, 15% to Area Committees and 80% for strategic infrastructure projects.
- 6.8. The current Capital Programme assumes a level of strategic CIL each year which is allocated to eligible infrastructure within the programme.
- 6.9. If contributions reduce the funding and timing of the planned programme will need reviewing. This will also need to consider any outcomes and reforms following the current white paper on planning reforms and proposed changes to replace CIL and section 106 agreements with an Infrastructure Levy.
- 6.10. Following achievement of the targeted contributions, the Council can consider further projects with which to utilise this funding stream.

Prudential Borrowing

- 6.11. The Council's TMS sets out how the Council will fund its capital plans. These capital plans provide a guide to the borrowing need of the Council, essentially the longer term cash flow planning to ensure the Council can meet its capital spending operations. The management of longer term cash may involve arranging long or short term loans, or using longer term cash flow surpluses, and on occasion any debt previously drawn may be restructured to meet Council risk or cost objectives
- 6.12. In planning for long term capital investment it is essential the long term revenue financing cost is affordable. Any long term investment is paid for over the life of the assets. It is essential the Council is able to meet the costs of borrowing and minimum revenue provision (MRP) over the life of the asset. In developing subsequent capital schemes it will be with a view to ensuring the capital financing costs are less than 10% as a proportion of General Fund net revenue budget over the medium and long term. The capital financing costs as set out above is funded within current allocated revenue budget.
- 6.13. In taking out new external borrowing the Council will consider a range of different options such as Public Works Loan Board (PWLB), Market Loans, Private Placements and Bonds (Public, Pooled, Community Municipal Investment and Retail).

- 6.14. CIPFA published the 2021 revised Treasury Management and Prudential Code in December 2021. The formal adoption of this is not required until the 2023/24 financial year. As part of this update there is a requirement for the Council to adopt a new debt liability benchmark treasury indicator to support the financing risk management of the capital financing requirement. The Treasury Management Strategy for 2023-24 should explain how the treasury risks identified by the liability benchmark are to be managed over the medium term.
- 6.15. Any borrowing taken out is secured against the Council as an entity rather than against the specific assets for which they borrowed. The Council is required to demonstrate to PWLB in advance of borrowing that it is affordable.

Capital Receipts

- 6.16. Capital receipts come from the sale of the Council's assets. The Council will adhere to statutory guidance in relation to capital receipts. If the disposal is within HRA land or property then not all the receipt is available to support the capital programme as a percentage has to be paid over to the DLUHC.
- 6.17. The current strategy is for the assumed receipts from sale / disposal of assets to be taken into consideration when assessing the total value of receipts targeted to fund the overarching capital programme and planned flexible use of capital receipts.

Once the necessary capital receipts have been achieved to fund the overarching capital programme, as part of a Property Investment Strategy it would be expected that a certain proportion of those capital receipts from the portfolio may be recycled for reinvestment for economic regeneration opportunities aligned to the Investment Strategy and Affordability Principles outlined in this strategy. Following notional achievement of the target capital receipt, and subject to an option appraisal, the Council can also consider foregoing capital receipts for longer term and sustainable income streams through development sites if it delivers better value for money.

- 6.18. Where the asset has been temporarily forward funded from prudential borrowing a review will be undertaken to determine whether the most cost effective option is to utilise the receipt to repay the debt, considering the balance sheet position of the Council
- 6.19. Where the sale of an asset leads to a requirement to repay grant the capital receipt will be utilised for this purpose. Once this liability has been established and provided for, the residual capital receipt will be available to support the capital programme as a corporate resource.

Revenue & Reserves

- 6.20. The Council may choose to utilise revenue contributions to capital to finance its capital investment. This would be through contributions from the Council's revenue budget or from reserves.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

- 6.21. The **HRA Capital and Revenue Investment Programme** is entirely funded from the ring fenced HRA account. The investment programme is driven by the 30 year HRA Business Plan which is reflected in a rolling 5-10 year outlook based on stock condition and planned projects. The annual HRA budget is the first year of the 5 year outlook. Key areas of housing investment set out in the Capital and Revenue Investment Programme include planned and cyclical works; mechanical and electrical and heating; accessible homes and repairs. The programme also includes development and special projects. The HRA capital programme is funded from:
 - HRA Self Financing (the Major Repairs Reserve)
 - Capital Receipts (HRA – Right to Buy and other asset sales)
 - Revenue and Reserves (HRA)
 - Capital grants from governmental and other bodies

- Borrowing (HRA)
- 6.22. Prior to 2018 the HRA had a limit to how much it was allowed to borrow, known as the HRA borrowing cap, which is tighter than the value of their assets, in order to control public borrowing levels. The HRA borrowing cap was abolished in late 2018. Further borrowing may be undertaken within the HRA subject to overall affordability and requisite business cases which should consider all risks including loss through right to buy.
- 6.23. The Council can use right-to-buy receipts to fund up to 40% of building new homes, the receipt must be used within five years, if not the receipt is paid to Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) with interest. The removal of the cap means additional borrowing can be used to meet the remaining 60% costs of new home building.
- 6.24. Generally capital expenditure would be funded from capital sources however in exception revenue resources are able to be used to fund capital. The main exception is the use of housing rents to fund capital expenditure within the HRA.
- 6.25. All new build projects within the HRA are required to demonstrate a positive Net Present Value (NPV). This requirement is becoming more challenging to deliver given the level of social housing the city requires. This is primarily due to the councils aim for new social housing to be zero carbon compliant, complex sites and construction inflationary pressures. The Affordability Principles in Section 7 set out the criteria the HRA should adhere to when assessing the NPV of projects.
- 6.26. The historic funding strategy within the HRA has been that the principal borrowed hasn't been paid off over the life of assets. However, following changes in the HRA borrowing restriction the Council is adopting plans for a provision to be made in the HRA budget for repayment of debt over and above the historic debt cap to be aligned to the economic asset life.
- 6.27. Borrowing within the HRA must meet affordability principles as set in the prudential code and not expose the Council to unnecessary risk over the medium and long term. A key measure is the Interest Cover Ratio (ICR) - a measure of how well the fund can meet its fixed interest costs from annual surpluses. The impact of any additional borrowing must be considered over the Medium Term Financial Planning cycle and not drop below the agreed ICR.

Other Types of Capital Funding

- 6.28. In addition to primary funding sources for the capital programme the Council makes treasury management investment using its surplus cash and with the capital programme there are a range of funding pots to facilitate investment in priority areas of the programme. These are set out below.

Treasury Management Investments

- 6.29. The Council invests its surplus cash balances with approved financial institutions, predominately banks, building societies and other local authorities in accordance with the Council's Treasury Management Strategy. These funds support meeting our current and future obligations with regards providing revenue services and delivering the capital programme.
- 6.30. The authority has investments which are expected to generate a commercial and/or social return. For impact investments their primary purposes are to provide service benefits/social impact while the generation of yield and liquidity is secondary. These investments are funded from a mix of one-off sources.

Feasibility Fund

- 6.31. To support strengthened governance arrangements and assist in developing schemes with sufficient robustness/certainty before they enter the Development Pool a Capital Scheme

Feasibility Fund is to be established. The aim of the Fund is to provide funding to establish reasonable high level budget estimates for potential capital investment schemes at full mandates stage prior to them being proposed for addition into the Development Pool.

- 6.32. The level of the Fund would be established each year and be aligned to the volume and complexity of schemes at full mandate stage. The Fund will form part of the revenue budget. It will be subject to strict criteria for its use including:
- Proposed scheme must have been assessed against the Capital Prioritisation process and be considered a priority for the Council
 - Schemes must be capital investment in nature, have a reasonable likelihood of entering the capital programme and being delivered
 - Budget estimates must separately identify cost to develop an OBC, FBC and deliver the scheme
 - Once in Development Pool, schemes will be required to have an identified funding source to pay for OBC and FBC.
- 6.33. The governance and reporting mechanism for the Fund will be through Capital Investment Board who will allocate resources to schemes based on outcome of a prioritisation of pre mandate schemes. Cabinet will receive an update as part of Monthly Financial Report.

Invest to Save Fund

- 6.34. Invest to save capital schemes are an important element to the Council's successful delivery of its Medium Term Financial Plan. To maintain financial sustainability the Council recognises it must offer opportunities to encourage Directorates to be more efficient and effective in the way services are delivered to customers. One of the tools to achieve this are invest to save monies which form part of the Capital Programme. The Council established its Invest to Save Fund in March 2022.

Zero Carbon Initiatives and Decarbonisation Fund

- 6.35. In November 2018 Bristol City Council declared a climate emergency and as such will consider how impact investments could contribute to support implementation of UNs Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This may include Council direct and indirect investment in projects, bonds (private placements, public issuances and community municipal investments and retail bonds), taking lower par on investment and considering how to leverage wider inward investment through underwriting or guaranteeing an element of the proposition.
- 6.36. The Council is working with 3Ci which is a partnership between Connected Places Catapult, Core Cities UK, London Councils and other local authorities across the UK aimed at supporting local authorities secure the necessary long-term finance for achieving net zero. The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) has provided funding to support this work to leverage the combined scale of cities to mobilise finance and drive investment into low and net zero carbon projects across all of the UK's largest cities, rather than individual ones.
- 6.37. The Council recognises that it also needs to actively progress local projects included in its current capital programme to work towards its aim. As part of this the Council could explore community municipal investment or retail bonds up to a certain threshold (see Section 7) to finance zero carbon initiatives.
- 6.38. The Council has established a Decarbonisation Fund to enable it to deliver on its zero carbon initiatives.

7. Capital Financing Policies

7.1. This section sets out in more detail how the Council will ensure its investment decisions are consistent with its investment principles and MTFP.

Affordability Policies and Indicators

7.2. The Council must ensure its long-term investments are affordable within the Council's overall revenue budget and is able to meet the on-going financing of any borrowing which is undertaken to support this investment.

Table 4: MTFP Affordability Principles

Affordability Principles	
The Council's Prudential Borrowing Commitment	
General Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council will continue to use a range of funding opportunities that ensure the cost of capital financing does not exceed 10% of general fund net revenue budget over the medium to long term. • The current forecast level is 9.9% by 2026/27, if the Council opted for a 10% level this would equate to an extra £10m of borrowing with an estimated capital financing budget cost of £0.5m. • Any additional capital financing budget would need to be offset by corresponding savings in services to maintain a balanced budget for the Council.
Loans and liability exposure to Subsidiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has loans and liability exposure (including deferred capital receipts) to its subsidiary organisations (Bristol Waste, Goram Homes and Bristol Heat Networks). Cabinet have approved a loans/liability exposure level is £67.7m, of which £44.5m has been drawn down. • The maximum level of loans/liability exposure to subsidiaries is the higher of either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 10% of the Council's general fund capital financing requirement, or ○ £70m. • When loans, liabilities and investments are repaid they may be recycled into new loans, subject to cabinet/council approval, appropriate safeguards being in place, the above affordability indicators and adequate due diligence undertaken to protect the Council. • Should there be a strategic requirement by exception to this limit then there can be the flexibility to utilise any headroom in the General Fund 10% borrowing cap above if the excess is planned in advance and is temporary in nature in relation to short term cash flow. The application of this excess will be reported in the finance report at the next available Cabinet meeting.
Zero Carbon Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has established a Decarbonisation Fund to assist in delivering the capital investment to contribute towards its zero carbon ambitions. <p><u>Working with Partners</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council will work with government, local/regional partners and other regions to explore place based approach to deliver on it zero carbon ambitions.

Affordability Principles	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council will work with its City Leap and other partners to facilitate investment to deliver the aims of its zero carbon ambitions. <p><u>Community Municipal Investments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council can explore zero carbon initiatives funded through Community Municipal Investments or Retail Bonds. The maximum exposure in such investments is £2m. The exposure to such initiatives would be included within the General Fund capital financing costs exposure of a maximum 10% of the net revenue budget. In addition the Council will work closely with partners to facilitate community investments in zero carbon initiatives, including working together on Community Municipal Investments.
Substitute schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All new impact capital investments following setting the annual programme will be subject to defined prioritisation criteria, the capital programme governance arrangements and Cabinet/Council approval
Prudential Borrowing and affordability principles applied to all Impact Investments	
Housing Revenue Account	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council will continue to use a range of funding opportunities to ensure the Interest Cover Ratio (ICR) of the HRA is a minimum of 1.25. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The ICR is calculated as the HRA Operating Surplus divided by Interest Costs. ➤ The current ICR in 2021/22 is 1.27. The minimum ICR will be supplemented by an HRA capital investment reserve of at least £10m (approx. 1 year's interest cost) after provisions for any known liabilities and provision in the HRA budget each year to set aside monies to repay borrowing above the level of the historic HRA debt cap. <p>The 30 year HRA Business Plan received a fundamental refresh in 2021/22. The HRA Business Plan was adopted by Council in March 2022, at the same time the HRA budget is set. The HRA Business Plan is updated on an annual basis.</p>
Evidence based	All Impact Investments will require a business case providing a clear statement of the costs, benefits and risk to be realised by the projects which will be subject to proportionate due diligence.
Net Present Value (NPV)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All projects are required to have a positive NPV. The only exceptions to this are the following impact investments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Environmental and Social Impact To ensure transparent decision making, schemes should clearly identify the value of their: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ NPV on a commercial basis and; ➤ Social and/or Environmental value elements The Environmental and Social impacts must be quantifiable to demonstrate best value. Assessments should be undertaken on a project-by-project basis. However, on an exceptions basis, where sufficient NPV headroom exists within a clearly defined programme-of-works, consideration may be given to a

Affordability Principles	
	<p>negative NPV scheme where a scheme can clearly demonstrate best value to the Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council recognises that a phased approach will be required to implement these principles while the methodology and practices are further developed and embedded.
Affordability Principles Applied to Other Investments	
Invest to Save schemes Calculating the return on investment	<p>The business case for an investment to generate a return project or impact funding must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include the full additional costs and income streams arising from the project including the cost of servicing the debt Investments must demonstrate the ability to achieve a minimum of 6% IRR over a 10 -year period. Social Impact investments eg social investment must demonstrate the ability to achieve a minimum of 4% IRR or interest over a 10-year period. The case for investment should demonstrate how the investments are returned by the end of the period.
Invest to Save schemes Being more efficient and creating sustainable services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cashable cost reductions or increased income must exceed the costs of borrowing over the pay-back period. The first call on savings arising from the investment will be to repay the costs of borrowing to ensure the Council stays within its Affordability Principles.
Invest to Grow schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased income must exceed the costs of borrowing over the pay-back period. For major developments the increased business rates and council tax income attributable to the Council's revenue budget may be taken into account.
Invest to Maintain schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All relevant costs and revenue streams, both capital and revenue, should be taken into account when determining which assets to prioritise investment for.
Social Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where social value is able to be calculated as a notional value this will be taken into account as a secondary consideration to cashable benefits, Return on Investment and Payback. The concept of Social Value will be a separate consideration in investment appraisals.

Prioritisation of Capital Investment

- 7.3. The Council's capital governance arrangements in Section 8 set out the approach to progressing schemes through their capital programme lifecycle. A key element of this is prioritisation of total capital investment and individual schemes. Prioritisation aims to ensure the Council's finite resource is targeted at supporting the delivery of the Corporate Strategy and aligned strategies.
- 7.4. Prioritisation of the capital programme will be undertaken on two levels. Firstly, a strategic prioritisation of overall resources and secondly, a prioritisation of individual schemes.
- 7.5. The strategic prioritisation will focus on the balance and allocation of resources between Invest to Grow, Invest to Save and Invest to Maintain. As noted in paragraphs 4.1-4.3, and set out in the table below, the current programme is weighted towards Invest to Grow schemes. However, the current balance in 2022 is more even spread compared to 2021. This presents a risk that there is insufficient investment in assets which are used to deliver front line services or which generate an income for the Council (Invest to Maintain) and resources set aside to generate ongoing revenue

savings (Invest to Save). It is recognised that a strategic rebalance of the programme requires a medium to long term view of the programme. As such over the period of the next 10 years the Council will redress the balance of the capital programme between investment principles.

Table 5: Proportion of Capital Programme by Investment Principle

Invest to Grow	58%
Invest to Maintain	38%
Invest to Save	4%

- 7.6. The individual scheme prioritisation would be undertaken as part of the annual service planning process and form part of the mandate stage of the capital scheme lifecycle. Individual schemes/block programmes identified through the annual service planning process would be subject to a capital prioritisation model to assess strategic fit for the Council and level of complexity.
- 7.7. Schemes that are selected as priority schemes will be taken forward to produce a detailed mandate to undertake a more in depth assessment of costs, funding streams and risks. Schemes would have access to the Feasibility Fund to finance any external costs to develop a detailed mandate. Following completion of a detailed mandate, schemes will be considered for entry into the Development Pool. Further details on the individual scheme prioritisation approach are shown in Appendix 2.

Loans, Liability Exposure and Investments to Subsidiary Companies

- 7.8. Loans, liability exposure and investments in companies in which the Council has material shareholdings are assessed differently, as these are prioritised based on delivery of strategic objectives. When considering these transactions the Council will examine the business plans available to ensure that the plan and the investment is sound, facilitates the delivery of the long term strategy and wider social, economic and or financial benefits will be received back to the Council and residents in the short, medium or longer term.
- 7.9. Due to the nature of the assets or for valid service reasons, such investments do not always give priority to security and liquidity over yield. In these cases, such a decision will be explicit, with the additional risks set out and the impact on financial sustainability identified and reported. The appropriate level of due diligence will be undertaken with the extent and depth reflecting the level of additional risk being considered and the Chief Finance Officer will ensure affordability and the proportionality of all investments so that the Council does not undertake a level of investing which exposes it to an excessive level of risk compared to its financial resources.
- 7.10. The Council will be required to monitor company operations and this will take the form of regular performance and financial monitoring reports to Shareholders. The Council will manage within the affordability indicators set out in Section 7.

8. Governance of the Capital Strategy

Approval of Capital Strategy and Capital Programme

- 8.1. The Capital Strategy is agreed annually, alongside the MTFP. The Capital Programme is agreed annually by Full Council as part of the budget setting process. Variations to the Capital Programme or in-year additions – subject to delegation – will be agreed by Cabinet. Monthly monitoring of the Capital Programme will be presented to Cabinet.

Strategic Oversight and Delivery

- 8.2. The Capital Investment Board leads on the development and maintenance of the Capital Strategy that is consistent with the relevant code of practice, Corporate Strategy and core regulatory functions, Medium Term Financial Plan and Treasury Management Strategy.
- 8.3. The Capital Investment Board has an oversight and stewardship role for the development and delivery of the Council's capital expenditure within affordable limits, which will include both the Capital Programme and capital investments; as well as providing strategic direction to the programme and projects where necessary.
- 8.4. Delivery of the Strategy is overseen by a joint member/ officer Delivery Executive Board, chaired by the Deputy Mayor and Cabinet member with responsibility for City Economy, Finance & Performance. These governance arrangements ensure the Capital Programme is effectively managed and for companies that are wholly owned or the Council has a material interest these extend to the Shareholder Group. The Delivery Executive Board's role is to monitor and assess the effectiveness of the capital programme in delivering the Council's strategic objectives. It also monitors the Council's non-financial investments and the appraisal of new investments, ensuring appropriate techniques are used.

Directorate Capital Programme and Project Delivery

- 8.5. The delivery of individual capital projects and programmes are managed through boards in each directorate e.g. Growth & Regeneration Board, Adult's Strategy & Improvement Board, IT Board and for services which do not have a specific board delivery is managed through Executive Director Meetings. The Boards are responsible for developing, managing and progressing capital projects; as well as reporting into both Capital Investment Board and Delivery Executive.

Scrutiny

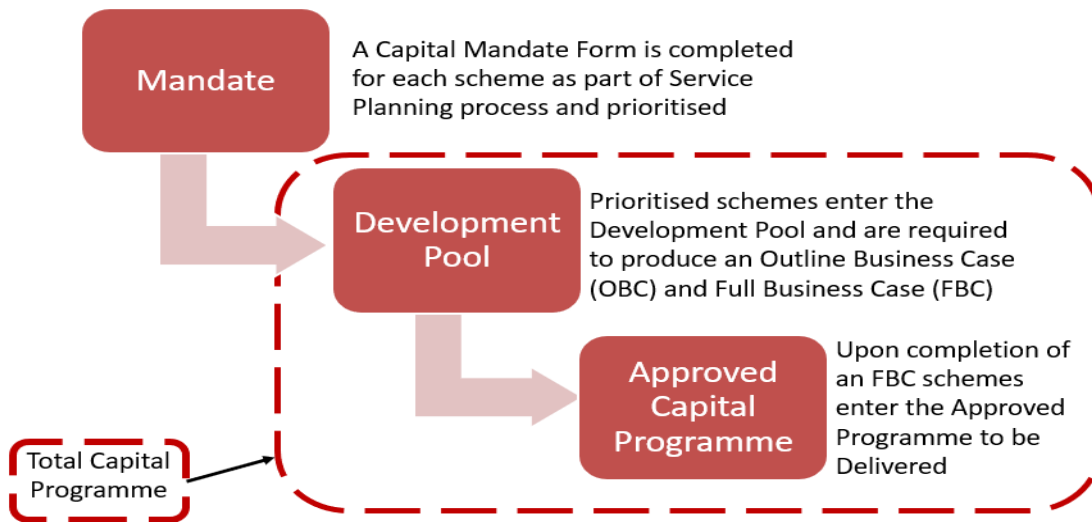
- 8.6. The formal scrutiny process will be used to ensure effective challenge. Relevant directorate scrutiny commissions will be responsible for providing scrutiny on individual capital projects which fall under their portfolio.
- 8.7. In addition the Scrutiny Task & Finish Group reviewing the Budget and MTFP is engaged to provide any feedback on the proposed Capital Strategy. The Group is also engaged when setting the Capital programme prior to its consideration by Cabinet and approval by Full Council. It should be noted business cases seeking cabinet approval will follow the standard decision pathway and as such can be subject to Scrutiny as part of that process.

Managing Schemes Through Their Capital Lifecycle

- 8.8. The management of capital schemes through their lifecycle is an important aspect of delivering a successful capital investment programme. The approach should balance cost/funding certainty, risk, clarity of commitment to scheme, robust governance and transparent decision making.
- 8.9. An important aspect of the Council's capital governance framework is at which point schemes are in their development stage and when they are sufficiently developed to enter the approved capital programme. The capital programme is split into three broad components:
 - **Mandate.** The initial concept and need for a capital scheme. Schemes will require prioritisation to ensure strategic fit and there are sufficient resources/capacity/capability to deliver the scheme.
 - **Development Pool.** A priority capital scheme in its early/developmental stages, typically outline business case (OBC) and full business case (FBC). At this stage costs/funding/risks are uncertain, gaining certainty as more in depth work is undertaken.
 - **Approved Capital Programme.** This refers to a capital scheme which has been through OBC and FBC stages, and is developed to an acceptable level of certainty to be formally approved in the programme for delivery/implementation.

8.10. The approach to managing schemes through their lifecycle is shown graphically in the diagram below. Further information is shown in Appendix 3.

Figure 4: Managing Schemes



Key Decision Making Considerations

- 8.11. All capital investment decisions will be underpinned by a robust business case that sets out any expected financial return alongside the broader outcomes/impacts, including economic, environmental and social benefits.
- 8.12. Throughout the decision making process the risks and rewards for each project are reviewed and revised and form part of the monitoring of the capital programme. The Capital Investment Board receives monthly updates detailing financial forecasts and risks.
- 8.13. The governance process for approving capital investments is the same as that for the wider capital programme, with the business case fully reviewed and due diligence undertaken with external and internal risks associated with the investment explored. The Council will compile a schedule setting out a summary of its existing material investment commitments and regularly update the governance boards on the drawdowns, guarantees, financial return and risks exposure.
- 8.14. There may be occasions when the nature of a particular proposal requires additional support in the production of the business case or for example in performing of a value for money or due diligence review. In these circumstances the Council may seek external advice.
- 8.15. The capital programme is reported to Cabinet and Council as part of the annual budget setting process which will take into consideration any material changes to the programme and the investment. The in-year position is monitored monthly, with periodic budget reports to Cabinet with capital reports incorporated. Within that monitoring report minor new investment proposals will be included and variations such as slippage and need for acceleration. Major new capital investment decisions will be subject to an individual report to Cabinet.
- 8.16. The Chief Finance Officer should report explicitly on the affordability and risk associated with the capital strategy. Where appropriate the Chief Finance Officer will have access to specialised advice to enable them to reach their conclusions and ensure sufficiency of reserves should risk or liabilities be realised.

West England Combined Authority (WECA) Funded Schemes

- 8.17. All schemes which include WECA funding, either in part or in full, will be required to go through the WECA governance processes in addition to those at the Council. All schemes with WECA funding should have been through the Council's governance processes including approval by Cabinet before they are approved by WECA.

The Council's approval process is that Cabinet approval is required where key decision thresholds / principles have been met. The Council's governance process includes procedures for urgency, eg grant applications which may require a very short turnaround, and as such where urgent decisions are taken this will be reported to the next available Cabinet meeting seeking approval prior to acceptance of the grant and adjustment of the capital programme for the scheme's inclusion.

9. Risk Management

- 9.1. One of the Council's key investment principles is that all investment risks should be understood with appropriate strategies to manage those risks. Major capital projects require careful management to mitigate the potential risks which can arise. The effective monitoring, management and mitigation of these risks is a key part of managing the capital strategy. All projects are required to maintain a risk register and align reporting to the Council's reporting framework.
- 9.2. In managing the overall programme of investment there are inherent risks associated such as changes in interest rates, credit risk of counter parties.
- 9.3. Accordingly, the Council will ensure that robust due diligence procedures cover all external capital investment. Where possible contingency plans will be identified at the outset and enacted when appropriate.
- 9.4. No project or investment will be approved where the level of risk - determined by the Cabinet or Chief Financial Officer as appropriate - is unacceptable.

10. Skills and Knowledge

- 10.1. Appropriate training will be provided to all charged with investment responsibilities. This includes all those involved in making investment decisions such as members of Capital Investment Board as well as those charged for scrutiny and governance such as relevant scrutiny commissions and audit committee. Training will be provided either as part of meetings or by separate ad hoc arrangements.
- 10.2. When considering complex and 'commercial' investments, the Council will ensure that appropriate specialist advice is taken. If this is not available internally it will be commissioned externally to inform decision making and appropriate use will be made of the Council's Treasury Management advisers.

11. Capital Governance Improvement Plan

- 11.1. The Council recognises it needs to improve its capital governance, delivery capacity and related processes. In the last 12 months it has embedded enhancements made to its capital strategy in 2021, integrated a delivery partner (Arcadis) to provide delivery capacity, improved governance arrangements for the delivery of capital projects and developed its financial processes. However, further improvements are planned over the forthcoming year.
- 11.2. The Council has developed and is implementing a capital governance improvement plan. The core elements of the plan have been implemented, with the remaining actions expected to be operational

by April 2023. However, it is recognised that the embedding of the new governance arrangements, delivery enhancements and related processes will take time to fully embed within the culture of the Council, and the full benefits are expected to be realised over the medium term period.

Appendix 1

Our Corporate Strategy – at a glance

Vision

“ We play a leading role in driving an inclusive, sustainable and healthy city of hope and aspiration, one where everyone can share in its success. ”

Building Blocks

We have chosen five principles that we call our 'building blocks'. These affect all our priorities and influence everything we do.

Development and Delivery

Develop people, places and partnerships to improve outcomes. Deliver quality public services while releasing the expertise and resources of empowered communities, individuals, community groups and city partners to help shape and deliver city priorities.

Environmental Sustainability

Tackle the Climate and Ecological Emergencies while inclusively growing the economy, maximising our positive environmental impacts and avoiding or mitigating negative ones wherever possible. Build our climate and ecological resilience.

Equality and Inclusion

Pro-actively and intentionally improve equality and inclusion across the city by designing it into everything we do. Work to make sure that everyone in Bristol feels they belong, has a voice and an equal opportunity to succeed and thrive.

Resilience

Build Bristol's city resilience through early intervention, minimising our contribution to future environmental, economic or social shocks and stresses. Build our ability to cope by learning from our past, taking a preventative approach and planning for long-term outcomes that support resilience.

World Class Employment

Role model, influence and promote the highest levels and standards of employment. Work with partners to drive for workforces that reflect the population, and workplaces that are healthy and inclusive, offering opportunities to progress and offering a Real Living Wage as standard.

Themes

To make sure we are clear about how we spend our time, effort and money, we have the following strategic themes and priorities. These express the major issues that we believe are most important in achieving our vision.

Children and Young People

A city where every child belongs and every child gets the best start in life, whatever circumstances they were born into.

Economy and Skills

Economic growth that builds inclusive and resilient communities, decarbonises the city and offers equity of opportunity.

Environment and Sustainability

Decarbonise the city, support the recovery of nature and lead a just transition to a low-carbon future.

Health, Care and Wellbeing

Tackle health inequalities to help people stay healthier and happier throughout their lives.

Homes and Communities

Healthy, resilient and inclusive neighbourhoods with fair access to decent, affordable homes.

Transport and Connectivity

A more efficient, sustainable and inclusive connection of people to people, people to jobs and people to opportunity.

Effective Development Organisation

From city government to city governance: creating a focussed council that empowers individuals, communities and partners to flourish and lead.

Values and Behaviours

We are **Dedicated**

We are **Curious**

We show **Respect**

We take **Ownership**

We are **Collaborative**

Appendix 2

Capital Prioritisation – Scheme Prioritisation Guidance and Criteria

As part of determining the relative priority of strategic resource allocation and individual schemes the following guidance should be considered:

Priority 1 Schemes - highest priorities for capital investment are schemes that either:

- The Council would fail to meet its statutory obligations if the scheme did not proceed and all other mechanism for funding has been exhausted or;
- The scheme can directly deliver on one or more of the key Corporate Strategy/One City Plan commitments for the next 5 years and is to be 100% funded from external resources (ring-fenced grants or other outside contributions
and,
- The ongoing revenue implications of the project are contained within the existing service budgets either as a result of secured additional internal /external funding or reduction in cashable revenue costs.

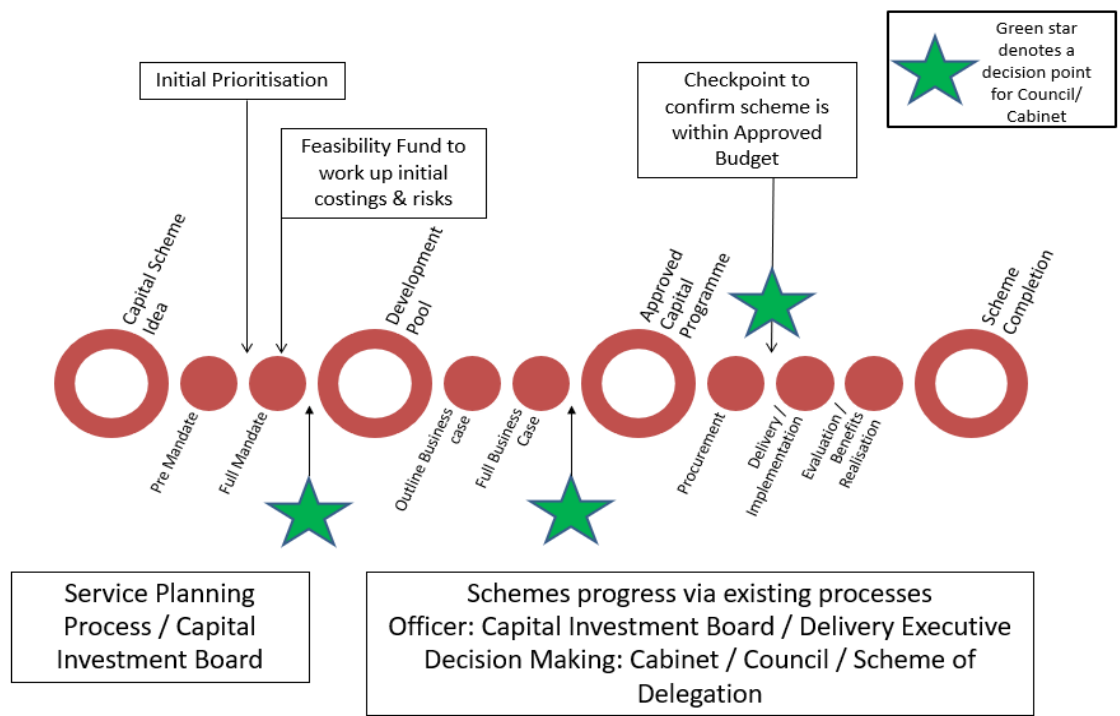
Only schemes that meet the above criteria will be defined as priority one.

Priority 2 Schemes - criteria for other projects

Projects which do not meet the criteria above are defined as priority 2 and may be prioritised depending on their fit based on the criteria set out below. The scoring matrix is to be finalised and will be weighted to ensure that a balanced programme can be achieved as outlined in section 2 above. Scores will be indicative and provide a guide for decision making.

- i. Scheme demonstrably meets one or more of the key commitments in the corporate strategy for the MTFP period measured by objective criteria
- ii. A need for the specific proposal has been identified in the One City Plan or emerging Corporate Strategy
- iii. The project will bring about future cashable revenue savings within the wider Council (or cost avoidance where the pressure is built into the MTFP and/or deliver organisation wide efficiencies)
- iv. The proposal can be shown to support the delivery of sustainable / inclusive economic growth and regeneration
- v. The scheme levers in external support, or attracts additional funding into Bristol, either financial or where the Council is working in partnership with other bodies
- vi. Scheme meets a key service objective in the agreed service plan and failure to provide the scheme would result in a significant reduction of the Council's stated level of priority service and/or greater exposure to risk
- vii. Provides support to Community Leadership and capacity building develops the locality focus agenda.

Capital Programme Governance Arrangements: Managing a Scheme Through its Lifecycle



Equality Impact Assessment [version 2.9]



Title: Medium Term Financial Plan and Capital Strategy	
<input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Function <input type="checkbox"/> Service <input type="checkbox"/> Other [please state]	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Already exists / review <input type="checkbox"/> Changing
Directorate: Cross Cutting	Lead Officer name: Denise Murray
Service Area:	Lead Officer role: Director: Finance

Step 1: What do we want to do?

The purpose of an Equality Impact Assessment is to assist decision makers in understanding the impact of proposals as part of their duties under the Equality Act 2010. Detailed guidance to support completion can be found here [Equality Impact Assessments \(EqIA\) \(sharepoint.com\)](#).

This assessment should be started at the beginning of the process by someone with a good knowledge of the proposal and service area, and sufficient influence over the proposal. It is good practice to take a team approach to completing the equality impact assessment. Please contact the [Equality and Inclusion Team](#) early for advice and feedback.

1.1 What are the aims and objectives/purpose of this proposal?

Briefly explain the purpose of the proposal and why it is needed. Describe who it is aimed at and the intended aims / outcomes. Where known also summarise the key actions you plan to undertake. Please use plain English, avoiding jargon and acronyms. Equality Impact Assessments are viewed by a wide range of people including decision-makers and the wider public.

The Medium Term Financial Plan and Capital Strategy are integrated and key parts of the Council’s financial planning process. They set out the Council’s strategic approach to the management of its finances and provides a framework within which delivery of the Council’s priorities will be progressed.

The refresh of the Medium Term Financial Plan considers the financial outlook for the Council over the next five years 2023/24 – 2027/28, taking into account, national and local changes which may impact on the Council, ongoing financial uncertainty associated to cost of living crisis and local government funding, delays to funding reforms, savings measures agreed in the past year and not delivered, emerging demands, pressures and opportunities.

The Capital Strategy 2023/24 – 2032/33, details the high-level approach and framework that will underpin the development of the Capital Programme, sets out the governance framework required to ensure the Capital Programme can be delivered and in a balanced way will support the delivery of the Council’s objectives, key issues and risks that will impact on the delivery of the programme and that capital investment remains sustainable and affordable.

The reports have been prepared in compliance with the relevant codes and in developing the financial outlook various assumptions have been made. These are modelling / planning assumptions which will be kept under constant review, given the increased level of uncertainty in the financial and economic climate. At the point at which specific service or project proposals are made regarding these assumptions, a full equalities impact will be undertaken.

The Council is required by law to set a balanced budget and even before the cost of living crisis , finding solutions to balance the Council’s annual budget was becoming ever more challenging, particularly while seeking to manage the impact on those with the greatest need for our support.

The Council has defined statutory responsibilities, but delivers against a far broader agenda, providing universal services benefiting the whole community, and targeted services aimed at individuals, communities with particular

needs and businesses, which are administered by our workforce, city partners, stakeholder organisations and commissioned services.

The Medium Term Financial Plan outlook considered in this report indicates a peak budget gap of £37.5million, of which £31.1million is attributed to 2023/24. This is on top of previously agreed savings. The financial strategy in the report to bridge the gap will focus primarily on delivering of previously agreed efficiencies, demand management and containment of growth and Invest to Save revenue.

The wider impact of lower than required funding levels on Council activities and services will be considered in particular decisions such as the level of Council Tax funding and planned expenditure in the annual budget process. At the point at which decisions are made regarding these assumptions an equalities impact will be undertaken in relation to the specific decision(s).

1.2 Who will the proposal have the potential to affect?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bristol City Council workforce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service users	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The wider community
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commissioned services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> City partners / Stakeholder organisations	
Additional comments:		

1.3 Will the proposal have an equality impact?

Could the proposal affect access levels of representation or participation in a service, or does it have the potential to change e.g. quality of life: health, education, or standard of living etc.?

If 'No' explain why you are sure there will be no equality impact, then skip steps 2-4 and request review by Equality and Inclusion Team.

If 'Yes' complete the rest of this assessment, or if you plan to complete the assessment at a later stage please state this clearly here and request review by the Equality and Inclusion Team.

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	[please select]
------------------------------	--	-----------------

We have not identified any significant equality impact from the Medium Term Financial Plan and Capital Strategy at this stage. This is because: any future individual proposals will be subject to their own separate Equality Impact Assessment, consultation if required at the relevant time; and because decision makers will have the ability to make changes to the individual spending plans following consultation (where necessary) and detailed evaluation of the impact of proposals.

The Medium Term Financial Plan and Capital Strategy will form the financial framework and set the parameters for the overall budget envelope (the monies available) for the Council, which will enable capital borrowing for investments and the delivery of the Council's priorities. They are set against the uncertain backdrop of local government financing, climate and ecological emergency, post pandemic recovery, cost of living crisis, increase in demand for already hard-pressed services such as adult and children's services and High Needs. The number of vulnerable adults (for example those with learning disabilities and mental health needs) and vulnerable children (for example, those with special educational needs and disabilities) and associated cost pressures are all increasing.

However, the impact of the Council budget proposals cannot be seen in isolation. The challenging economic climate is also likely to impact on some groups on the basis of their protected and other relevant characteristics and add to the cumulative impact of Council proposals.

The budget planning that has followed models 2023/24 to 2027/28 and incorporates assumptions regarding core funding and the following specific assumptions:

- Pay award of up to 4% for estimated pay awards in future years
- Inflationary increases of up to 5% in expenditure, fees and charges

- Small corporate contingency for cost of living pressures
- Continuation of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme at the same level of up to 100% - providing financial assistance with Council Tax bills for working age adults who are on a low income or less able to pay, and pensioners.
- Increases in Council Tax at 1.99% (subject to public consultation and Council decisions)
- DSG funding in line with DfE indicative funding allocations increase of 5% for High Needs Block.
- General Fund capital affordability borrowing levels of up to 10% net revenue
- HRA capital affordability income cover ratio not lower than 1.25 for HRA borrowing

We are conscious of the impact of price and Council Tax increases on Bristol residents and that this provides a difficult balancing act between income generation and reductions in valued services.

The final position regarding any of the above and continuation of schemes such as the Local Crisis Prevention Fund which provides support to low-income families and individuals requiring emergency financial support, will be decided at each year as part of the annual budget setting process and will be subject to a specific equalities impact assessment at that point.

These are live documents which are updated as more information becomes available from government such as the Autumn Budget and local government finance settlement and local service changes.

Previously approved savings proposals from prior budget setting decisions which include savings not delivered in 2022/23 and carried forward, ongoing savings for 2023/24 have been subject to individual equality impact assessments, with updates where appropriate. These are published on the Council's website <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/council-spending-performance/council-budgets> and will continue to be updated as appropriate.

The external consultation method for obtaining stakeholder and the public views of spending priorities, individual proposals to meet savings requirements and acceptable levels of Council Tax, will be considered as part of the preparation of the Council's budget for 2023/24. The Schools Forum are consulted on any factors impacting on the Dedicated Schools Grant with a consultation due to commence with all schools and wider stakeholders in relation to schools funding and indicative DSG mitigations, respectively.

Budget and service planning processes are entwined, will involve a wide range of staff across the Council and relevant stakeholders. The consultation results from all the above will be presented to Cabinet in advance of decisions in relation to the budget and if required managing change processes will be adhered to.

Step 5: Review

The Equality and Inclusion Team need at least five working days to comment and feedback on your EqIA. EqIAs should only be marked as reviewed when they provide sufficient information for decision-makers on the equalities impact of the proposal. Please seek feedback and review from the [Equality and Inclusion Team](#) before requesting sign off from your Director¹.

Equality and Inclusion Team Review: <i>Reviewed by Equality and Inclusion Team</i>	Director Sign-Off: Denise Murray
Date: 26 September 2022	Date 25 September 2022

¹ Review by the Equality and Inclusion Team confirms there is sufficient analysis for decision makers to consider the likely equality impacts at this stage. This is not an endorsement or approval of the proposal.

Motions received for 18 October Full Council

Golden Motion (Conservative)

'SEND' SOCIAL MEDIA MONITORING

"This Council remains extremely disturbed over the confirmed actions of local government officers being engaged in the compiling or collating of social media posts belonging to private individuals.

These controversial retrievals, involving the cross-referencing of tweets, photos and Facebook entries made by two prominent SEND campaigners and leading members of the Bristol Parent Carer Forum (BPCF) was profoundly ill-conceived.

The selective monitoring of those who have been 'rightly' critical of the Authority's SEND provision was also, arguably, contrary to the spirit of family law and associated statutory guidelines designed to foster confidence and promote the 'co-production, collaboration and partnership working' with those families who rely on these services.

Council believes that such data harvesting by officialdom is not an appropriate use of limited resources, has caused serious reputational damage and harmed particularly sensitive community relations. Moreover, Council is unhappy with this matter being concluded via an internal investigation i.e. effectively the bureaucracy marking its own homework.

In the interests of true transparency, the Mayor is called upon to agree to hold a genuinely independent inquiry, conducted by the LGA or similar appropriate body into all the facts, faults and failings surrounding this incident. The findings of that external body, together with any recommendations of best practice, must then be brought back to Full Council to determine the best way forward towards rebuilding recklessly broken relationships."

Golden Motion to be moved by Councillor Geoff Gollop (Conservative)

Received 5 October 2022

Silver Motion (Knowle Community Party)

Improved Communication for Ward Councillors

This council notes the result of the governance referendum. It also notes that over recent years more decisions, which sometimes have major local consequences, are being taken by the central administration or council officers without reference to local ward councillors.

This council calls for improved communication to ward councillors and the adoption of a default position that they should at least be informed and hopefully meaningfully consulted before action is taken that will affect their ward.

This will lead to better informed and more accepted decisions being made.

Proposed by Councillor Gary Hopkins (Knowle Community Party)

Received 21 September

Food Sustainability Motion

This Council notes

- Livestock is responsible for 14% of global greenhouse gases.
- Meat consumption has dropped by 17% in the decade leading up to 2019,
- However, the Government's Food strategy for England recommended cutting meat consumption by a further 30% in a decade.
- As well as reducing meat consumption, work to promote local food growing and reducing food waste is needed to make our food system more sustainable.
- The Labour administration in Bristol is already leading the way on this, as is evident in it being awarded Gold Status for Food Sustainability.

This Council believes:

- We can build on this good work by further encouraging people to make more carbon-friendly food choices.
- Gradual steps are needed if we are to encourage people to take up more sustainable diets and blunt instruments like total bans may cause people to simply not use Council / council-procured catering.

This Council resolves to:

- Request that officers in Catering Services explore the option of only offering plant-based meals on one day a week – in a system like 'Meat Free Mondays' Through the One City network, encourage schools, universities, and businesses to do the same.
- Encourage any events on Council-landed, or council-funded events, to offer vegan and vegetarian options.
- Reach out to local schools to encourage them to review their cooking courses to include a wider range of sustainable options and promote plant-based cooking.

Proposed by Councillor Katja Hornchen (Labour)

Received 3 October 2022

Democracy Motion

This Council notes that the Conservative Government's Elections Act replaced the Supplementary Vote system used to elect Metro Mayors and Police and Crime Commissioners with First Past The Post.

First Past the Post (FPTP) originated when land-owning aristocrats dominated parliament and voting was restricted to property-owning men.

In Europe, only the UK and authoritarian Belarus still use archaic single-round FPTP for general elections. Meanwhile, internationally, Proportional Representation (PR) is used to elect parliaments in more than 80 countries. Those countries tend to be more equal, freer, and greener.

PR ensures all votes count, have equal value, and that those seats won match votes cast. Under PR, MPs, Parliaments, and other bodies better reflect the age, gender mix and protected characteristics of local communities and the nation.

MPs (and other representatives) better reflecting their communities leads to improved decision-making, wider participation, and increased levels of ownership of decisions taken.

PR would also end minority rule. In 2019, 43.6% of the vote produced a government with 56.2% of the seats and 100% of the power. PR also prevents 'wrong winner' elections such as occurred in 1951 and February 1974.

PR is already used to elect the parliaments and assemblies of Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. So why not English Local Government or Westminster?

The Elections Act also brought in compulsory photo ID for people wanting to vote, despite the fact that three and a half million people in this country do not have any photo ID, while those forms of ID that are acceptable have been rigged to disadvantage and deter younger voters.

In contrast the Welsh Senedd passed the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill on 21 January this year which delivered the following:

- The right of Local Councils to scrap First Past the Post and instead elect Councillors using the Single Transferable Vote
- Votes at 16 - extending the franchise to 16 and 17 year olds and to all foreign citizens legally resident in Wales.
- Automatic Voter Registration - The bill also paves the way for an overhaul of Wales' outdated and ineffective system of voter registration. The bill could lead to a new system where registration officers can identify people missing from the register and let them know they'll be added.

English voters are already disadvantaged compared to voters in Northern Ireland, where STV has been used to elect Councils for decades, Scotland, where the same move was made in 2007, and now Wales is making the same changes.

This Council agrees to join the campaign by the Electoral Reform Society to demand the same rights for English voters that are already enjoyed by voters in Northern Ireland where STV has been used for years, Scotland, where STV came in for Council elections in 2007 and in Wales where Councils will, inevitably, make the move to fair voting.

This Council also commits to working with other Councils, Core Cities, and others to amend and if necessary repeal the Elections Act in order to:

- Reverse the scrapping of the Supplementary Vote system that ensures more votes count in Metro Mayor and PCC elections;
- Demand the list of acceptable photo ID for voters in the Elections Act is amended so younger and poorer voters are not excluded; including fully funding the cost of providing voter ID cards for voters with no other valid forms of ID
- Allow:
 - English Councils to switch to STV if they so chose
 - Votes at 16 for all UK elections
 - Automatic Voter Registration enabling registration officers to identify people missing from the register and let them know they'll be added.

Finally this Council acknowledges that British democracy is broken and calls on all UK political parties to embrace electoral reform for all elections so everyone can vote for the candidates or parties they truly believe in, safe in the knowledge that their vote will always count. Council therefore resolves to write to H.M. Government calling for a change in our outdated electoral laws to enable Proportional Representation to be used for all UK elections.

Proposed by Councillor Fabian Breckels (Labour)

Received 3 October 2022

Right-to-buy Extension Motion

This Council notes:

- During the Queen's Speech, the Prime Minister announced the Government intends to extend the right-to-buy scheme to make it applicable to tenants of housing associations.
- There is already a shortage of social housing in the United Kingdom.
- Right-to-buy has depleted Council housing stock, as the homes being sold were not replaced, resulting in a lower levels of social housing.
- 40% of council homes have been transferred to the private rented sector through right-to-buy.
- The UK Housing Review 2022 branding right-to-buy as a 'strategic failure.'
- Unlike the existing right-to-buy scheme, the Government has promised to replace every social home sold off. However, no plan yet exists for how it will do this. Even if a plan is drafted, it is unlikely that social housing stock will be replaced at a rate nearly fast enough to keep up with the number of homes being sold.
- The Government has not yet announced how it will fund the discounts for extending right-to-buy to housing associations.

This Council believes:

- The planned extension of the right-to-buy scheme will deplete Bristol's social housing stock and exacerbate the housing crisis.
- That we should stand shoulder-to-shoulder with housing associations in opposing the extension of right-to-buy.
- Measures to support homeownership should not come at the cost of depleting social housing stock.
- Therefore, there should be no further extension to the right-to-buy scheme. If the Government insists on pushing ahead with the scheme, all funding for it should be covered centrally and increased funding should be given to Councils and registered providers to build more social housing.

This Council Resolves to:

- Call on Party Group Leaders to write to the incoming Prime Minister, on behalf of all party groups represented within the Council, outlining the views in this motion and to ask them to stop any immediate extension of the right-to-buy scheme.
- Co-ordinate with housing organisations to write an open letter to the Government to ask it to stop the planned expansion of the right-to-buy scheme.
- Instruct Council officers to submit a plan to government of possible ways to boost affordable home ownership rates without depleting social housing stock.

Proposed by Councillor Tom Renhard (Labour)

Received 3 October 2022

Cost of living emergency within a climate emergency

Urgent situations require radical solutions. The covid pandemic has demonstrated the willingness of our city and our country to take radical steps when in an emergency.

We now face a cost of living emergency within a climate emergency, and this requires radical solutions. Extreme poverty and extreme weather cost lives - we simply cannot afford to not act in the face of the present and worsening challenges.

Bristol City Council notes:

1. 19,600 households were estimated to experience fuel poverty in Bristol in 2018 (9.8%). By 2022 this estimate had risen to around 30,000. (1)
1. 5% of households have experienced moderate to severe “food insecurity” in the last 12 months, but this rises to 11% in the most deprived areas (2021/22) (1)
2. 15,400 children under 16 (17.9%) live in relative low-income families in Bristol (2019/20) (1)
3. Average house prices in Bristol have increased by £161,000 over the last ten years, an increase of 93%. In 2021 Bristol had a ‘housing affordability ratio’ of 9.71, which means that the average house price is almost 10 times higher than average earnings.
4. At end of March 2022 there were 1,153 households living in Interim/Temporary Accommodation in Bristol (mostly due to a Statutory Homelessness Duty). (1)
5. Homelessness in the city continues to disproportionately affect certain communities, particularly single households, young people and people of colour (especially those who identify as Black).
6. The cost of private rental accommodation in Bristol was 29% of the market in 2018 and was expected to rise by 3.1% over the last 5 years, far more than the national average of 2.4%. This has led to increased amounts of residents over occupying their homes, or left unable to afford their rent. Homelessness is on the rise and expected to be far worse in the coming months. (2)
7. Since February 2020 the cost of petrol has risen by over 60p per litre to £1.73. A functioning, reliable and affordable bus service is critical for residents to travel, but in August 2022 Bristol Community Transport has collapsed, with warnings of more services being axed.
8. In October 2021 the Chancellor made the biggest cut to the incomes of the low-income families since the second world war when he removed £20 Universal Credit uplift.
9. Covid demonstrated that Universal Credit is not sufficient and means testing has caused many to fall through the gaps in the safety net of the welfare system.
10. In April 2022 Ofgem increased the consumer energy price cap by 54%, increasing the average bill by £693 a year. In October this will rise by another 80%. This winter many expect to be unable to afford to heat their homes or heat their food. In contrast, energy firms have seen the largest profits in 14 years.
11. Commercial energy prices are not subject to a price cap at all, causing small businesses to face closure creating job losses and severe impacts on local communities.
12. That councillors voting for this motion stand in solidarity with unions taking industrial action across Bristol.

Council resolves to:

Call on Party Group leaders to write a letter to Central government and requests that it:

1. Immediately reinstates the £20 Universal Credit uplift and double it to £40, with equivalent increases for those on legacy benefits and on Personal Independence Payments (PIP).
2. Introduce a Universal Basic Income
3. Lower the energy price cap to the level of October 2021.
4. Investigate what support can be provided to those not currently protected by the energy price cap, including small businesses and those on district heating systems.

5. Commit to raising the minimum wage to £12 immediately for all age groups, and to set it on a trajectory to reach £15 by the 2024/5 financial year.
6. Give Local Authorities the powers to set rent controls within their areas where the local rental market is overheated
7. Empowers Local Authorities to extend outside seating provision for hospitality businesses following appropriate consultation with local residents.
8. Accelerate the delivery of the CRSTS schemes to enhance the provision of Public Transport and active travel.

Further request that Party Group Leaders write a letter to the Mayor of WECA to request:

1. The purchase of Bristol Community Transport
2. The funding of carbon free warm and secure homes for everybody

And resolves to ask officers and Party Group Leaders to explore options to:

1. Call an Emergency Budget to immediately identify what emergency measures and reserves Bristol City Council can use to prevent destitution for Bristol's residents.
2. Set rent controls once the powers are obtained.
3. Create warm rooms for residents this winter, and cool rooms for the summer
4. Use reserve funds to help Bristol Foodbanks with at least £100,000 and increase the Local Crisis Prevention Fund.
5. Put a TTRO in place to enable an extension to outside seating provision until September 2023 in line with the off-sales extension

Sources:

1. Bristol Key Facts 2022 - July 2022 update
(<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/files/documents/1840-bristol-key-facts-2022/file>)
2. Communities Scrutiny Nov 2018 (bristol.gov.uk)
(<https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/documents/s26783/Housing%20Crisis%20Private%20Rented%20Sector%20combined%20presentation.pdf>)

Proposed by Councillor Ani Stafford-Townsend (Green)

Received 5 October 2022

A Universal Basic Income Trial for Bristol

This council notes:

1. The drastic impacts of the Covid Pandemic on employment and household incomes in the city;
2. The threat to income and employment from automation and artificial intelligence, which could affect a great many more jobs in future;
3. The development of universal basic income (UBI) trials in other countries, which offer a non-means-tested sum paid by the state to cover the basic cost of living, which is paid to all citizens individually, regardless of employment status, wealth, or marital status, which has been widely debated in recent months;
4. That a trial of UBI was promised by the Labour party had the party won the last general election;
5. The resolutions of other local authorities including Sheffield, Birmingham, Lewes, and Brighton and Hove [with cross party support] calling for trials of UBI;
6. A network of Universal Basic Income Labs has been set up and works with local authorities across the UK developing UBI proposals to address problems such as poverty, inequality, discrimination and environmental damage, long-term and immediately, in relation to coronavirus. One is operating in Bristol.
7. Birmingham City Council has issued a briefing on UBI. (1)
8. UBI has been Green Party Policy since about 1973 and more recently taken up by other parties. (2)

This council believes:

1. That the current benefit system is failing citizens, with Universal Credit causing hardship to many communities;
2. A UBI is the fairest, most effective way to mitigate the effects of coronavirus on people's incomes as it does not discriminate between employment status, caring responsibilities, age, or disability when providing basic support;
3. There is a danger of increasing numbers of people facing poverty as a result of the coronavirus crisis;
4. Testing a UBI is needed, as a UBI has the potential to help address key challenges such as inequality, poverty, precarious employment, loss of community, and breach of planetary boundaries through:
 - i. Giving employers a more flexible workforce whilst giving employees greater freedom to change their jobs;
 - ii. Valuing unpaid work, such as caring for family members and voluntary work;
 - iii. Removing the negative impacts of benefit sanctions and conditionality;
 - iv. Giving people more equal resources within the family, workplace and society;
 - v. Breaking the link between work and consumption, thus helping reduce strain on the environment in line with the One City Climate Strategy;
 - vi. Enabling greater opportunities for people to work in community and cultural activities or to train or reskill in areas that will be needed to transition to a lower-carbon economy.
5. The success of a UBI pilot should not be measured only by impact upon take-up of paid work, but also the impact upon communities and what the people within them do, how they feel, and how they relate to others and the environment around them; and,
6. Given its history of social innovation, wealth of expertise, and active networks across community, business and public services, Bristol is ideally placed to pilot a UBI.

This council calls on the Mayor to:

1. Send a joint letter with the other party leaders to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the leader of the party in Government, their counterparts in all opposition political parties in parliament, and all local MPs, asking for a trial of Universal Basic Income in the city citing the above reasons.

Sources

- 1) Birmingham City Council's official UBI briefing - see https://birmingham.cmis.uk.com/Birmingham/Document.ashx?czJKcaeAi5tUFL1DTL2UE4zNRBcoShgo=nb28HJzZZy8R6UE9qsv3LHJckreeBwn50TbzgOriXhiHQcf3zr1WGQ%3D%3D&rUzwRPf%2BZ3zd4E7Ikn8Lyw%3D%3D=pwRE6AGJFLDNIh225F5QMaQWctPHwdhUfCZ%2FLUQzgA2uL5jNRG4jdQ%3D%3D&mCTIbCubSFfXsDGW9IXnlg%3D%3D=hFflUdN3100%3D&kCx1AnS9%2FpWZQ40DXFvdEw%3D%3D=hFflUdN3100%3D&uJovDxwdjMPoYv%2BAJvYtyA%3D%3D=ctNJFf55vVA%3D&FgPIIEJYlotS%2BYGoBi5oIA%3D%3D=NHdURQburHA%3D&d9Qjj0ag1Pd993jsyOJqFvmyB7X0CSQK=ctNJFf55vVA%3D&WGewmoAfeNR9xqBux0r1Q8Za60lavYmz=ctNJFf55vVA%3D&WGewmoAfeNQ16B2MHuCpMRKZMwaG1PaO=ctNJFf55vVA%3D&fbclid=IwAR3v5XWzNYc_KENecR4_O6k4xSFL847QcMyKppBD6IUO5x2gLP5E3Gdl3_M
- 2) <https://www.bristol247.com/opinion/your-say/otherpartieswillridiculegreenpolicies/>

Proposed by Councillor Ani Stafford-Townsend (Green)

Received 5 October 2022

SEND and social media monitoring

Full Council notes:

- The level of trust between members of the Bristol SEND parent carer community and Bristol City Council is now at an all-time low. This is likely to have a negative impact on the latter's ability to deliver a level of service that is acceptable to those dependent upon it, and could, potentially lead to additional legal challenges that are likely to incur additional financial cost to the council. Coverage in both local and national media has also been damaging to the council's reputation and that of its officers.
- The November 2019 Ofsted/CQC inspection stated that "Parents and carers are overwhelmingly condemning of the SEND system in Bristol", that "Many parents and carers lack confidence in the local area and its ability to do anything for them or their children" and that "A lack of parental confidence in the SEND system is leading to a drive for specialist provision" which has only added to the High Needs Block deficit.
- Improving the fractured relationship between the LA and parents/carers with SEND was a key element of the Written Statement of Action following the inspection. Scrutiny has been told repeatedly since May 2021 that this area was improving – however, this incident has now seen elected members as well as our SEND parents and carers lose even further trust and confidence in this administration's approach to system improvement – this is unsustainable.

Full Council therefore resolves to call on the Mayor:

- To begin to rebuild the trust parent carers have in the SEND services provided by Bristol City Council, by initiating an independent investigation into the viewing and sharing by council staff of social media posts made by parent carers involved with Bristol Parent Carers Forum.
- That any such investigation should involve an external body such as the Local Government Association, and that the remit for such an investigation should be established by that external body in consultation with BPCF, senior officers and scrutiny members.

Proposed by Councillor Christine Townsend (Green)

Received 5 October 2022

A New Railway Station for Lockleaze

This council notes:

- The section of track, known as the Filton Bank, has recently been upgraded to four tracks to accommodate both hi-speed express and local services.
- Lockleaze and the surrounding area is set to have 1000 new homes constructed in the next five years.
- The average distance between London Overground Stations is 1.49km. There are 112 stations on a network of 167km.
- A possible location for the new station is south of Constable Road Railway Bridge. This location is 1.25 km from the proposed station at Ashley Down and 1.67 km from Filton Abbeywood. This location is close to significant developments at Bonnington Walk and the Dovercourt Depot.
- Viable alternatives to motor car use must be available to the citizens of Bristol to meet the councils' climate change targets.

This Council resolves to:

- To work with the West of England Combined Authority and Network Rail to conduct a feasibility study and define a business case for constructing a new Railway Station in Lockleaze.

Proposed by Councillor David Wilcox (Green)

Received 5 October 2022

Democracy Motion

This Council notes that the Conservative Government's Elections Act replaced the Supplementary Vote system used to elect Metro Mayors and Police and Crime Commissioners with First Past The Post.

First Past the Post (FPTP) originated when land-owning aristocrats dominated parliament and voting was restricted to property-owning men.

In Europe, only the UK and authoritarian Belarus still use archaic single-round FPTP for general elections. Meanwhile, internationally, Proportional Representation (PR) is used to elect parliaments in more than 80 countries. Those countries tend to be more equal, freer, and greener.

PR ensures all votes count, have equal value, and that those seats won match votes cast. Under PR, MPs, Parliaments, and other bodies better reflect the age, gender mix and protected characteristics of local communities and the nation.

MPs (and other representatives) better reflecting their communities leads to improved decision-making, wider participation, and increased levels of ownership of decisions taken.

PR would also end minority rule. In 2019, 43.6% of the vote produced a government with 56.2% of the seats and 100% of the power. PR also prevents 'wrong winner' elections such as occurred in 1951 and February 1974.

PR is already used to elect the parliaments and assemblies of Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. So why not English Local Government or Westminster?

The Elections Act also brought in compulsory photo ID for people wanting to vote, despite the fact that three and a half million people in this country do not have any photo ID, while those forms of ID that are acceptable have been rigged to disadvantage and deter younger voters.

In contrast the Welsh Senedd passed the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill on 21 January this year which delivered the following:

- The right of Local Councils to scrap First Past the Post and instead elect Councillors using the Single Transferable Vote
- Votes at 16 - extending the franchise to 16 and 17 year olds and to all foreign citizens legally resident in Wales.
- Automatic Voter Registration - The bill also paves the way for an overhaul of Wales' outdated and ineffective system of voter registration. The bill could lead to a new system where registration officers can identify people missing from the register and let them know they'll be added.

English voters are already disadvantaged compared to voters in Northern Ireland, where STV has been used to elect Councils for decades, Scotland, where the same move was made in 2007, and now Wales is making the same changes.

This Council agrees to join the campaign by the Electoral Reform Society to demand the same rights for English voters that are already enjoyed by voters in Northern Ireland where STV has been used for years, Scotland, where STV came in for Council elections in 2007 and in Wales where Councils will, inevitably, make the move to fair voting.

This Council also commits to working with other Councils, Core Cities, and others to amend and if necessary repeal the Elections Act in order to:

- Reverse the scrapping of the Supplementary Vote system that ensures more votes count in Metro Mayor and PCC elections;
- Demand the list of acceptable photo ID for voters in the Elections Act is amended so younger and poorer voters are not excluded; including fully funding the cost of providing voter ID cards for voters with no other valid forms of ID
- Allow:
 - o English Councils to switch to STV if they so chose
 - o Votes at 16 for all UK elections
 - o Automatic Voter Registration enabling registration officers to identify people missing from the register and let them know they'll be added.

Finally this Council acknowledges that British democracy is broken and calls on all UK political parties to embrace electoral reform for all elections so everyone can vote for the candidates or parties they truly believe in, safe in the knowledge that their vote will always count. Council therefore resolves to write to H.M. Government calling for a change in our outdated electoral laws to enable Proportional Representation to be used for all UK elections.

Proposed by Councillors David Wilcox, Fabian Breckels & Andrew Brown

Received 5 October 2022

Mobilise community investments to tackle climate change

Full Council notes:

1. That this council unanimously declared a climate emergency in November 2018 following a Green Motion to Council
2. The motion committed the city to achieve net zero carbon impact by 2030 and there are now 9 years left to this target date
3. The council has been progressing a package of low carbon opportunities called City Leap since May 2018. City Leap is still subject to a procurement process since a new process was started in 2020.
4. A new low risk model called Community Municipal Investments [CMI] has been developed by Leeds University and Abundance Investments platform with UK Government and EU support. This had the support of 4 local authorities including Bristol City Council. [1]
5. This concept is proven to mobilise local and other investment and channels local savings into local projects with low risk and a modest return to investors [2] and after the first issue further calls can be automated.

Full Council believes:

1. That offering local savers a way to support the city's journey to carbon neutrality mobilises community engagement in the process of change, attracts significant sums for named projects, and should be developed. 72% of people want to lend savings to help councils develop Climate Emergency Plans [3]
2. That offering security and a modest rate of interest through municipal bonds is an established way to develop local infrastructure [4]. This could complement other projects such as the successful Bristol Energy Cooperative.
3. That CMIs can help us develop a series of practical projects for a low carbon transition now in partnership with others which will be popular with local savers.
4. The Mayor should prioritise CMIs as part of the package of investments that will create positive economic opportunities and carbon neutrality while building community wealth.
5. Bristol should join the other 3 pioneers of CMI in developing local opportunities for local investors [e.g. 5]

Full Council resolves:

1. To call on the Mayor to begin development of Community Municipal Investments for the city.
2. That the Mayor promote CMI as a way residents and institutions can be engaged and actively involved in contributing to a zero carbon city.
3. To request officers to identify carbon saving projects suited to CMI investment in conjunction with city partners.

References:

1. The report supported by Bristol: <https://baumaninstitute.leeds.ac.uk/research/financing-for-society/>
2. Initial proposed interest rate is 1.2%. See: Your questions answered on Green Community Bonds | Abundance Blog
<https://medium.abundanceinvestment.com/community-municipal-investments-your-questions-answered-25218ed4d2cb>
3. Survey by One Poll, 2020, cited by the Local Government Association.
4. https://medium.abundanceinvestment.com/community-municipal-investments-the-new-option-for-your-low-risk-money-a9cc5d72e03a?source=post_internal_links-----1-----

5. These are: Leeds Council, Warrington, and West Berkshire. Eg Invest now:
<https://info.westberks.gov.uk/wbcmi>; <https://www.abundanceinvestment.com/invest-now/warrington-2025>

Proposed by Councillor Martin Fodor (Green)

Received 5 October 2022

Plant Based solutions Motion

A motion for a debate at Bristol City Council on plant-based solutions.

This council:

Notes:

- A recent study found that it will be impossible for the EU to cut its methane emissions in line with what the science says is needed (45% reduction by 2030) without cutting emissions in the meat and dairy sector.[1]
- Producing a kilo of beef creates, on average, 12 times more CO2e than a kilo of tofu or other soya based proteins; [2]
- Producing a litre of dairy milk uses, on average, at least four times as much land as producing a litre of plant milk. [3]
- Savings to the NHS will come from healthier, plant-based diets. Sustain estimates that meat over-consumption costs the NHS directly £1.2 billion, and 45,000 deaths annually. [4]
- A 2018 Oxford University study concluded that adopting a plant-based diet is the single biggest thing we can do to reduce emissions.
- Henry Dimbleby, in the National Food Strategy concluded that a 30% reduction in meat consumption is necessary for future food security. The National Food Strategy also states that obesity alone accounts for 8% of annual health spend in the UK, or £18bn. [4]
- In June 2021, the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) recommended that the consumption of beef, lamb and dairy should be reduced by at least 20% by 2030.
- Sir David Attenborough has said that we ‘must reduce our meat & dairy consumption for the sake of the planet’, & that the planet ‘simply cannot sustain billions of meat eaters’.
- That a growing number of councils have made a commitment to plant-based catering or a shift away from meat:
 - o Lewisham Borough Council - fully plant-based in all corporate events
 - o Enfield Borough Council - does not serve meat at any meetings or events
 - o Faversham Town Council - fully plant-based at events
 - o Hythe Town Council - fully plant-based at all council functions
 - o Leeds City Council - two meat free days per week in schools
 - o Oxfordshire County Council - fully plant-based in all meetings & events
 - o Cambridge City Council - fully plant-based at meetings & promoting PB at events

Believes:

- We should act in line with the One City Climate Strategy which identifies consumption in the city as the leading source of global heating emissions to be tackled;
- Without meat and dairy consumption, global farmland use could be reduced by more than 75% – an area equivalent to the US, China, European Union and Australia combined – and still feed the world. Loss of wild areas to agriculture is the leading cause of the current mass extinction of wildlife. [5]
- What we do with land is important from a climate perspective because of its ‘opportunity cost’. If land wasn’t being used for livestock farming it could be used for something that is beneficial for the climate, like reforestation, which removes carbon from the air.

Therefore Council Calls on the Mayor to:

- Write to the government supporting UK endorsement of the Plant Based Treaty and invite all Party Group Leaders to sign the letter

And asks Council officers to explore options to:

- Ensure that food provided at all council catered events and meetings is entirely plant-based, preferably using ingredients sourced from local food surplus organisations.
- Ensure that Council school meals services have plant-based menus available as part of their regular offer on at least two days per week
- Work on outreach to schools and young people to actively influence and inform of food choices and their impact on the environment, health and animal welfare.
- Encourage and empower students to make informed decisions about the food available in their school.
- Inspire, promote and support initiatives surrounding food growing, preparation and waste avoidance, especially as part of school and community projects.
- Recognise the benefit of sourcing food locally from producers who follow sustainable principles.
- Use City Council Civic events to promote and showcase plant-based food options, alongside displayed information about the climate benefits and relative cost of different protein/food sources.
- Ensure that there are plant-based food options available at all City Council run events which involve catering (ie minimum from at least one caterer), where reasonably possible.
- Ensure that when events occur on City Council open spaces, and where catering is provided, that plant-based options are available (ie minimum from at least one caterer), secured through the use of terms and conditions of hire (where reasonably possible).
- Secure through a contract specification when re-tendering for suppliers that plant-based food and drink options are to be available at kiosks on City Council open spaces and Council run cafes (where reasonably possible). Similarly when possible via future contract specification when re-tendering for suppliers for Council run cafes, specify that vegetable/legume rich plant-based options are listed prominently on menus, above non plant-based options in line with Flexitarian principles.
- Report back to Full Council regarding progress on the actions above.

Footnotes

1. http://changingmarkets.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/CE_Delft_210502_Methane_reduction_potential_in_the_EU_Def.pdf
2. www.ethicalconsumer.org/food-drink/climate-impact-meat-vegetarian-vegan-diets
3. www.ethicalconsumer.org/food-drink/plant-vs-dairy-comparing-their-climate-impacts
4. <https://www.foodfortheplanet.org.uk/faqs>
5. National Food Strategy (published July 2021) - <https://www.nationalfoodstrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/National-Food-Strategy-Recommendations-in-Full.pdf>
6. <https://josephpoore.com/Science%20360%206392%20987%20-%20Accepted%20Manuscript.pdf>

Proposed by Councillor Martin Fodor (Green)

Received 5 October 2022

A citywide ban on digital billboards

This Council notes:

- There is a growing pressure from commercial advertisers for new digital advertising screens across the city alongside highways, on footpaths, and on walls of prominent or vacant sites.
- There is also a switch to digital advertising on phone boxes (advertising is their main source of income - not the phone calls in the age of mobile phones) and bus shelters.
- Despite the revenue provided by Bus Shelter advertising in providing a public amenity in support of sustainable transport, the impact of illuminated and digital adverts on bus shelters is out of place in residential streets.
- Existing billboards may not have planning permission but there has been no consistent approach to removing them via enforcement.
- Many advertising companies are switching to digital billboards which allow them to sell many more advertising slots and increase profits as well as reducing the cost of changing advertising. These digital screens show static but alternating digital adverts which can be updated remotely.
- The law governing display advertising restricts objections to ground of highway safety and amenity only.
- Recent planning appeals have been made in response to rejection of digital advertising on some sites, and with stronger declared policies the planning response could be clearer and some of the initial applications and appeals could be avoided.
- That the Council adopted a new Advertising & Sponsorship Policy in 2021 for advertising sites it controls which restricts ads for High Fat Sugar Salt products, gambling, alcohol and payday loans. (1)
- The high energy consumption of digital billboards adds a growing impact to the city's carbon footprint, (2) The Council's One City Climate Strategy from February 2020 resolved to "[Develop] a citywide shared understanding and commitment to responsible consumption (including lower carbon food and reduced flying), which acknowledges the generally lower impact of lower income households; and [Create] advertising standards and restrictions to support responsible consumption."
- The bright illumination from digital billboards at all hours can also affect local wildlife and local residents, including severe mental health impacts. (3)
- Billboards are subject to objections and controversy every time an application is made, local residents do not want such billboards in their neighbourhoods"
- That many outdoor advertising spaces (both council-controlled and private) contain adverts for high carbon industries such as airlines, airports, SUVs and fossil fuel companies.
- That the French city of Grenoble removed over 326 advertising spaces from its city from 2015 onwards. (4)

This council believes:

- New digital advertising screens are unpopular with Bristol residents as evidenced by the high volume of objections received to planning applications for new digital advertising screens. (5)
- Advertising drives consumption and predominantly represents major consumer goods companies; most adverts are for national and international brands not local businesses so this is limited benefit to the local economy.
- Billboard advertising is a danger to road safety; its purpose is to distract attention. (6)
- Envy and body shame are a phenomenon associated with the prevalence of corporate advertising
- Mental health issues relating to body image are a growing and persistent issue affecting many young people and adults. (7)

- The greatest climate impact in our city is the impact on consumption of goods and services; constant pressure to consume is driven by continuous, pervasive advertising. Extra emissions resulting from advertising products is calculated to have added 186million tonnes of CO2e in 2019 (8)
- When travelling or relaxing outdoors residents have no choice if confronted by digital billboards; the council does not have to enable this negative experience
- There are unequal standards of amenity across the city and some areas have traditionally been better protected than others; the council could set a uniform, high standard of amenity to redress this unequal amenity and ensure fairer standards across the whole city.
- While there are pressures for commercialising council assets the council need not be either a driver of digital advertising through its own walls and structures, nor an enabler through weak policies.

This council therefore calls on the Mayor:

- To introduce a new, high standard of amenity across the whole city, excluding digital billboards and taking enforcement action against unlawful billboard sites.
- To set the highest road safety standards across the city with a declared presumption against distracting digital billboards on the whole road network.
- To end council-initiated billboard sites on walls or other structures.
- To introduce these changes through the local plan and public announcements on property policies.
- To enforce existing restrictions in its Advertising & Sponsorship Policy regarding excludes on ads for junk food, alcohol, payday loans and gambling across council-owned advertising sites.
- To update the Council's Advertising & Sponsorship Policy to include restrictions on highly polluting products including as airlines, airports, fossil fuel companies, SUVs, petrol diesel and hybrid vehicles.
- To work towards Bristol becoming a billboard free city, with space left purely for local noticeboards, signage or public information and creative arts and flags.
- Until that time, commit to ensuring the use of renewable energy in all City Council contracts.
- To report back on progress within a year.

Notes:

1. <https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/documents/s58004/Appendix%20Ai%20-%20Advertising%20and%20Sponsorship%20Policy.pdf>

2. A large digital advertising screen requires the same electricity as 32 average UK households. A double sided bus stop advertising screen requires the same electricity as three UK households (Source: Energy Consumption in the UK 2021 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/energy-consumption-in-the-uk-2021>)

3. Living Next to Digital Billboards report, 2021: <https://adfreecities.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/living-next-to-digital-billboards-M32.pdf>)

4. The Daily Telegraph:

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/france/11250670/Grenoble-to-replace-street-advertising-with-trees-and-community-spaces.html>

5. A 2021 survey of residents living or commuting past the new large advertising screens on the M32 in Eastville show a high level of concerns with the advertising screens including degradation of their

neighbourhood and social cohesion, a feeling that the commercial interests of advertisers were being prioritised over residents' mental health and wellbeing, impacts of light pollution from the digital screens including through people's bedroom windows, climate impacts of the consumerism model promoted on billboards and distractions to drivers with road safety implications. (Adblock Bristol (2021) Living Next to Digital Billboards report, <https://adfreecities.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/living-next-to-digital-billboards-M32.pdf>)

6. Oviedo-Trespalacios et al. (2019), The impact of road advertising signs on driver behaviour and implications for road safety: A critical systematic review. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tra.2019.01.012>)

7. How outdoor advertising impacts health and wellbeing, Adblock Bristol (2022) <http://adfreecities.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/How-outdoor-advertising-impacts-health-and-wellbeing.pdf>)

8. Advertised Emissions report, 2021 - <https://www.purposedisruptors.org/advertised-emissions>

Proposed by Councillor Martin Fodor (Green)

Received 5 October 2022

Ending investment in fossil fuels by Avon Pension Fund

This council notes:

1. In 2015, Full Council supported a Green motion and resolved that the Avon Pension Fund (APF) should consider divestment from fossil fuels and diversification into clean technologies like renewable energy, energy efficiency and energy storage; Council agreed that the Mayor should contact Avon Pension Fund and ask for a report on the issue;
2. There is widespread and heightened concern from scientists that declared worldwide fossil fuel reserves, if exploited, constitute a threat to the stability of the global climate; there is growing recognition that fossil fuel reserves are therefore a class of asset held by investors which have growing risks of being 'stranded' i.e. left with reducing value due to the fact not all claimed reserves now have the value being imputed to them, due to the need for them to remain in the ground;
3. An ever growing number of public and private sector funds, endowments and investment portfolios are choosing to divest from fossil fuels worldwide, including several local government pension funds. MPs called for their own funds to be divested.
4. Clarifications of the fiduciary duty of fund managers confirms that they should take into account a range of environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues and have a clear statement of investment policies;
5. The Avon Pension Fund uses investment provided by the Brunel Pensions Partnership, which is a leading local government pension partnership offering low carbon investment opportunities. This fund is only seeking to meet the 2015 Paris climate targets which are now known to be inadequate to secure climate stability.
6. Staff union Bristol Unison have given their clear support for divestment of the funds from fossil fuels, in a motion seconded by the Branch Secretary and presented to the Avon Pension Fund, as have other Unison branches also in the same fund.
7. Since 2016, the APF has enhanced its environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG) to recognise and assesses climate change risks, undertake annual carbon footprinting studies, and review low carbon indices and the sustainability of assets; in 2017, the APF increased its allocation towards renewable energy infrastructure; in 2019, Councillor Pearce (who sits on the APF committee for the council) is already arranging a briefing on APF's ESG, divestment, and exposure for members.
8. In 2020 the Bristol Mayor declared the city would seek to promote divestment of the pension fund through signing the international C40 cities' declaration that we are "taking Divest/Invest action for a fairer, fossil-fuel-free green recovery. This commits to:
"Take all possible steps to divest city assets from fossil fuel companies and increase investments in climate solutions"
"Call on pension funds to divest from fossil fuel companies and increase financial investments in climate solutions."

This council believes:

1. The long term future of the APF is as a fund that is divested from fossil fuels and one that ensures a wide range of investments in renewable energy, energy efficiency technologies, energy storage and smart energy technologies, and other types of investments that will benefit the city and its future residents;
2. Council recognises that a carbon neutral city will create substantial, valuable new jobs in the future sustainable economy.
3. That the investment strategy and policies of the APF should rapidly be brought into line with this vision of the future inclusive prosperity and sustainability of the city and should not be bound by the 2015 Paris targets;
4. The council should actively call on APF to commit to move funds over the next five years from any holdings that are not seen to be ending fossil fuel exploration, production and processing

5. Bristol's participation in the C40 group of cities, where pension divestment is a headline commitment, mandates the City Council to take a regional lead on this issue;
6. The process of divestment and diversification is also important and should be managed in a way that ensures just transition to new employment, supporting skills development for new sectors and a range of opportunities - with backing from WECA.
7. Now is the time for action; the current strategy of 'engagement' with high emission companies, is not showing to be swift, or effective enough.
8. The council should work with staff to debate and explain the need for funds to support new investments meeting commitments to social and environmental justice, learning from the successful engagement of the Environment Agency Pension Fund, which is also part of the Brunel Pensions Partnership.

This council therefore resolves to:

1. Ask the Mayor and Councillor Pearce to meet with the head of the Avon Pension Fund to discuss the divestment of funds over the next 5 years and the review of the fund's ESG policies;
2. To support the promotion of investment in clean technologies that support renewable energy, energy efficiency, smart energy and energy storage among other investments that are in line with such policies, the City Leap agenda, and the city's goals for 2030;
3. Use its full influence and voice on the Avon Pension Fund committee, and its relationship with the representatives of the other authorities which are the core members of the fund (Bath and North East Somerset Council, South Gloucestershire Council, and North Somerset Council, plus WECA) to advocate urgently for divestment from all fossil fuel stocks in the existing pension fund over a three year period
4. To liaise with fund members in the city and council unions about the case for changes to their pensions while ensuring a just transition for workers in sectors that will change, and how this helps achieve a carbon neutral city by 2030.

Proposed by Councillor Martin Fodor (Green)

Received 5 October 2022

RE-ESTABLISHING GOOD MEDIA RELATIONS

“This Council is concerned over the continuing strained relations between the current Labour Administration and numerous local news outlets.

The recent unilateral decision taken by the Authority to change the way corporate information is shared with the media – by growing its own digital platform – represents an unwelcome deterioration or escalation in this breakdown between the press and the Mayor. Moreover, Council is unconvinced by the purported justification for this move, supposedly to ‘reach more people with vital messages’ than might otherwise be achieved through traditional means, methods and mediums.

Council acknowledges that freedom of the press still represents the so-called fourth pillar of democracy. It is a fundamental safeguard which depends upon the right of journalists to question decision-makers in challenging ways. This is how politicians and the powerful are held to account for their words and actions.

In order to mend the rift which has been allowed to develop with Bristol-based news organisations, Council calls on the Mayor to immediately (i) Reinstate access previously accorded to Local Democracy Reporting Service (LDRs) journalists to his fortnightly briefings; (ii) Reach out to the Bristol Post, Bauer Media, the BBC, Bristol 24/7, the Bristol Cable, Bristol World and ITV West with a conciliatory statement to build broken bridges and end the present boycott; and (iii) Ensure that there is no perception that Corporate Communications is being used in a potentially politicised manner.”

Proposed by Councillor Mark Weston (Conservative)

Received 5 October 2022

A FAIRER DEAL FOR INVESTING IN BRISTOL'S SUBURBS

“This Council welcomes the Conservative Government’s ‘Levelling Up’ initiative which seeks to address long-standing economic and social disparities across communities, counties and within cities.

Council further endorses the two schemes for inclusion in the latest round of the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) concerning the commercial regeneration of Filwood (South Bristol) and the bid to build the Bristol Cycling Centre (Bristol North West). Locating a major sporting facility in a part of the city (Avonmouth/Lawrence Weston) will raise the status of a very deprived area and reverses a trend in recent years to divest these places of important public amenities.

However, Council believes that much more needs to be done to invest in the city’s suburban Wards. To this end, Council calls on the Mayor to give a commitment that for the remainder of his term in Office, he will seek to prioritise future national, regional and local funding applications for more projects based in and around the periphery of the city.

Council recognises that real change and the delivery of thriving, local neighbourhoods is dependent upon greater capital investment in our secondary retail centres. Echoing the primary objective of the Levelling Up agenda, if we are to ensure that all Bristolians live healthier, happier lives and are enabled to fulfil their potential, there must be a genuine, more equitable or fairer distribution of resources than has previously been the case under the current Labour Administration.”

Proposed by Councillor Graham Morris (Conservative)

Received 5 October 2022

PROMOTING BETTER FINANCIAL EDUCATION

“This Council notes the concern which has been expressed by many professionals and finance institutions over the standard of financial education given under the National Curriculum or through Academy schools.

Critics of the existing system of training have argued that much more comprehensive, ‘bespoke’ and relevant material needs to be given to all age ranges. They maintain that children and young people should be taught more than the basic mathematics involved in understanding different forms of credit and debt.

As citizens of a highly competitive consumer society, with easy access to all kinds of complicated investment and saving instruments, the next generation must also be equipped with the tools or methodologies required to evaluate risk.

Council is aware that various schemes for teaching these essential skills have been run by individuals like the moneysaving expert Martin Lewis and some of the high street banks. However, much more systematic work is required.

Accordingly, the Mayor is asked to liaise with his Director of Education & Skills to establish, examine, and evaluate the current level of financial literacy being taught in state-funded schools. Following such an audit, Headteachers should be consulted on how this provision can be improved and built upon.”

Proposed by Councillor John Geater (Conservative)

Received 5 October 2022

Taking back public control of our buses

Full Council notes that:

1. A comprehensive Bus Service, providing a reliable and economical means of travel to all parts of the city for work, child support, health care and leisure is of vital importance to the city's residents.
2. There are multiple economic and social benefits of maintaining an effective and accessible bus service including
 - a. providing a reliable means of travel for commuters and consumers contributing to the local economy.
 - b. allowing those who would otherwise be isolated safe and social ways to participate in their communities more freely, improving their wellbeing.
3. Innovation on fares, routes, and bus quality are key to achieving modal shift of people switching from using cars to buses
4. Bus Franchising offers the opportunity for publicly direction of innovation of fares, routes, and bus quality.
5. Bus Franchising is being implemented or explored by a number of city and regional authorities across the country.

Full Council believes that

1. There are significant speed and cost advantages to developing a more comprehensive mass transit solution based on buses, or trams, as opposed to alternatives that are dependent on major costly and disruptive infrastructure.
2. The Bus Services Act 2017 provides opportunities for alternative models to the provision of bus services where these were previously required to be operated solely by private companies whose working relationship with local authorities was strictly limited.
3. Implementing bus franchising would provide the opportunity to comprehensively re-think and re-design how the bus service can best serve our citizens and the whole city.
4. Services provided under a franchising model would be better designed to meet the needs of the city rather than those of the bus operator(s).
5. Bus Franchising would strengthen the West of England Combined Authority's position in discharging its responsibilities for planning and transport across the region.

Full Council resolves to

1. Instruct the Chief Executive to write to the WECA Mayor requesting that he commissions a feasibility study of all aspects of adopting and financing a system of franchising bus services in the region. The commission should also consider how the existing knowledge and experience of each member Authority could also be maximised in the consultation and design of such an approach.
2. Request that the Mayor seeks consensus from the leaders of the other WECA authorities, and the WECA Mayor, in order to facilitate the delivery of a feasibility study as soon as possible.

Proposed by Councillor Andrew Brown (Liberal Democrats)

Received 6 October 2022

Bristol Parent Carer Forum

Full Council notes that:

1. The continued poor performance regarding the processing, writing, and issuing of Education and Health Care Plans (EHCPs) within 20 weeks and that latest data from Bristol City Council shows just 30% are completed within 20 weeks (Jan 2022).
2. In 2021 609 EHC Plans were made compared to 931 requests received.
3. The Bristol Parent Carer Forum (BPCF) have provided a vital voice for parents within the SEND process
4. On 21st July the administration wrote to BPCF, other SEND groups, the Department of Education, and Contact informing them that they would not support the continued funding of BPCF with the parent participation grant of £17,500.
5. A new Community of Groups has been created for consultation by the administration.

Full Council believes that:

1. There is a lack of progress in improvement in issuing EHC Plans and is concerned that some children now see delays of well over a year before their plan is completed.
2. Consultation is different from co-production and that an expectation of high-level co-production is set down in best practice.
3. Unsubstantiated opinions about BPCF Officers and their commitment to partnership working with the council have been treated as factual when no evidence has been presented to substantiate this by the Council against BPCF or its officers.
4. The revelation of social media monitoring of some officers of BPCF by Bristol City Council to have been a breach of trust.
5. The new arrangements with the Community of Groups are a welcome addition but are not and cannot be coproduction.
6. The letter sent on 21st July stating that Bristol City Council would not support another year of funding for BPCF should not have been issued.

Full Council resolves :

1. to call on the Chief Executive to issue a new letter to the Department of Education, Contact, and BPCF making it clear that Bristol Full Council has confidence in BPCF and will sign the new contract.
2. to request that The Chief Executive to ensure that BPCF are included in all coproduction, as previously, so that the council and BPCF can work to build trust and cooperation .

3. That Bristol City Council remains committed to excellent levels of consultation and co-production with parents and stakeholder groups and will renew efforts to build trust and cooperation.

Proposed by: Cllr Tim Kent (Liberal Democrat)

Received 1 September

Endorsement of the Plant Based Treaty

Full Council notes that:

1. In November 2018 Full Council declared a Climate Emergency and Bristol committed to becoming carbon neutral and climate resilient by 2030. [\[1\]](#)
2. The sixth Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reported in 2021 in its Working Group 1 Assessment Report [\[2\]](#) that it is “virtually certain” that heat waves have become more frequent and more intense since the 1950s, with human-caused warming being “the main driver” and some of the heat extremes seen over the past decade would have been “extremely unlikely to occur” without the climate crisis.
3. The earth's average surface temperature is projected to hit 1.5C above pre-industrial levels around 2030, a decade earlier than the IPCC predicted just three years ago.
4. Between 2014 and 2021 there has been faster growth of atmospheric concentrations of methane. Growth since 2007 is largely driven by emissions from fossil fuels and agriculture, with 32% of methane emissions attributed to animal agriculture.
5. The UN recommends 45% cuts to methane by 2030 [\[3\]](#) in order to limit temperature rises to 1.5 degrees Celsius.
6. Data derived from the IPCC 2014 5th assessment [\[4\]](#) reveals animal agriculture emissions as 35% of energy production, a figure which excludes deforestation emissions attributed to the growing of crops for farmed animals.
7. The Amazon rainforest is now a carbon source rather than a carbon sink as a direct result of deforestation, with around 80% of the deforestation caused by animal agriculture. [\[5\]](#)
8. The 2019 *Land Use* report by Ritchie, H. and Roser, M. (2019)[\[6\]](#), calculated that 78% of farmland is used to farm animals yet supplies just 18% of global calories and 37% of protein.
9. A global initiative is underway calling for a Plant Based Treaty [\[7\]](#) that through its three Rs, *Relinquish, Redirect and Restore* aims to halt the accelerating expansion of animal agriculture, incentivise and promote a plant-based food system, rewild critical ecosystems in line with the global commitment to limit warming to 1.5°C, and work to mitigate the climate crisis with fair, equitable transition plans.
10. The Plant Based Treaty has been welcomed by 20 Members of the UK Parliament through EDM 434 [\[8\]](#) which calls on the Government “to be a world leader in recognising the negative impact of industrial animal agriculture on climate change and commit to developing a global strategy to transition towards more sustainable plant-based food systems.”
11. Several local authorities across the UK have already made a commitment to move towards a plant-based future, including Lewisham Borough Council (fully plant-based in all corporate events), Enfield Borough Council (does not serve meat at any meetings or events), Faversham Town Council (fully plant-based at events), Hythe Town Council (fully plant-based at all council functions), Leeds City Council (two meat free days per week in schools), Oxfordshire County Council (fully plant-based in all meetings & events), and Cambridge City Council (fully plant-based at meetings & promoting PB at events).

Full Council believes that:

1. The rapid, strong, and sustained reduction in the three greenhouse gases, namely Carbon Dioxide, Methane and Nitrous Oxide and zero deforestation is a climate imperative.
2. The Paris Climate Agreement is silent on the impact of animal agriculture, one of the largest sources of greenhouse gases, and that needs to be collectively addressed by other means.

Full Council resolves to:

1. Formally endorse the call for a Plant Based Treaty and write to the UK government to call for a global Plant Based Treaty.
2. Help mitigate the climate, ocean, and biodiversity crisis by addressing our food system, including promoting the benefits of locally grown, plant-based foods. For example, encouraging council-run schools to have regular, meat-free days.
3. Lead by example and follow other local authorities in making a commitment to plant-based food at all council meetings and events, where food is served.

Proposed by: Cllr Andrew Varney (Liberal Democrat)

Received 1 September

Bristol Airport Expansion

Full Council notes:

1. The Planning Inspectorate's decision, at appeal, to allow the expansion of Bristol Airport by 2 million passengers a year, up to 12 million.
2. North Somerset Council refused planning permission for expansion on environmental and traffic congestion grounds and that both local elected representatives and those in neighbouring Councils, as well as the WECA Mayor, objected to the application.
3. That the Full Council of 8 December 2020 passed a motion supporting the decision by North Somerset's Planning Committee's decision to refuse planning permission.
4. The forthcoming High Court challenge by campaign group Bristol Airport Action Network (BAAN), which has been supported by public crowdfunding and which will be heard in Bristol on 8 and 9 November 2022.
5. The Climate Emergency Declaration adopted by Full Council on 13 November 2018.
6. Bristol Airport Ltd.'s published expansion strategy, to more than double in size to serve 20 million passengers a year, and 'Carbon Roadmap' policy, which does not include emissions from aircraft.

Council believes:

1. Airport expansion is incompatible with the action being taken by this Council to tackle the Climate Emergency, the UK Government's legally binding climate targets, and advice from the Government's own Climate Change Committee.

Council therefore:

1. Calls on the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State, the aviation minister, and local MPs to inform them of Council's position and to:
 1. 'Call in' the expansion of Bristol Airport for an inquiry, due to the climate impact of airport expansion and the negative impact on neighbouring communities.
 2. Consider all airport expansion applications on a national rather than an individual basis. Make decisions in line with the advice from the Climate Change Committee, which has said there should be 'no net expansion of airports' and also taking the cumulative impact of CO₂ emissions and their impact on the UK's legally binding journey to net zero into account.

Proposed by: Cllr Andrew Brown (Liberal Democrat)

Received 6 October

Increase Publicly Available EV Charge Points

Full Council notes that:

1. Sales of new petrol, diesel and “mild-hybrid” cars are due to be banned from 2030.
2. Sales of new “plug-in hybrid” cars are due to be banned from 2035.
3. Bristol has a lack of publicly accessible electric vehicle charging points.
4. Much of the housing stock of Bristol does not have private off-road parking provision where residents can instal their own charging facilities.
5. The EV chargepoint scheme provides grants towards the costs of installing charging points for private use for those who own flats or are in rented accommodation – but requires that the applicant(s) has/have sole use of a private parking space.
6. The Government amended Building Regulations in June 2022 so all new build residential and non-residential property and those undergoing major renovation must provide an electric vehicle charge point.
7. Figures from Friends of the Earth suggest that Bristol currently has only 125 publicly accessible Electric Vehicle Charging Points – against a target of 1,627 (derived from the national target of 300,000.)
8. The council has installed – or facilitated the installation of – 84 public charge points, and currently have planned projects to provide a) 150 charge points distributed across 15 wards/10 streets, and b) 10 “ultra-rapid” charging bays as part of the eVan hire scheme. Both these projects are due to be completed in 2023/24.
9. Council notes the funding received by other authorities to develop their EV infrastructure. For instance, in March 2020 Nottingham City with Nottinghamshire and Derby City Councils were granted over £16m funding by the Department for Transport. The Department of Transport recently announced a pilot project to fund 1,000 public charging points across 9 council areas – but that this does not include Bristol.

Full Council believes that:

1. The lack of a substantial network of public charging points imposes a barrier to people switching from petrol and diesel vehicles to electric vehicles.
2. That the provision of public charging points will speed the transition to electric vehicles, and that this will help meet climate change objectives as well as improve air quality within the city.
3. The impact of the lack of a public charging infrastructure is most acute in areas of the city which have terraced or flatted housing and/or higher proportions of rented accommodation, where installation of private charging points is not practical. This is likely to most disadvantage those who are younger or on lower incomes.
4. It is unreasonable for government to expect councils to fully fund the required infrastructure costs, but that the council should be more ambitious in their ambitions given the relevant imminency of the ban on fossil-fuelled cars.
5. Re-affirms its commitment to encourage the use active travel or public transport wherever possible irrespective of the power-source of private vehicles.

Full Council resolves to:

1. Set a target of providing 750 public charging points – in addition to those already in place or planned - by 2030, to support our efforts in tackling the climate emergency.

2. Require the Mayor to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and other relevant Ministers, to seek further funding towards achieving this target, and meeting the higher target of 1,627.
3. Requests the Local Plan Working Group review the existing local EV charging points policy and consider whether it needs further revision.
4. Establish a cross-departmental working group to identify potential locations, funding streams and supply chains of public EV charging points with a focus on areas of high-density housing where private provision would be excessively difficult. This group should also engage with major landowners to develop their provisions (for instance supermarkets, large private car parks, retail centres). This group should have a focus on delivery in accordance with the Energy Savings Trust's best practice guides.

Proposed by: Cllr Jos Clark (Liberal Democrat)

Received 6 October