

Cabinet

28 January 2020

2020/21 Quarter 3 Budget Monitoring Report

Recommendations

Cabinet are recommended to:

- a) Note the forecast underspend of £9.271m for the 2020/21 financial year on the Council's revenue budget, and the expected impact of £11,526m this will have on the Council's un-ringfenced reserves.
- b) Note there is a forecast shortfall in delivery of the 2020/21 savings requirement with a value of £2.581m.
- c) Note the decreases to the approved 2020/21 capital programme of £29.378m since the programme was last reported in Quarter 2.
- d) Approve the carry forward of the reprofiled spend on the capital programme of £31.996m in 2020/21 into future years.
- e) Approve the request to create a new earmarked reserve to recognise the impact on WCC of funding school deficits resulting from forced academisation; as noted in paragraph 2.5.9.
- f) Acknowledge that at the date of writing this report, the national and local response to Covid-19 is an ever-changing landscape. As such, it is important to note the inevitability of significant changes to the forecast position. This will be driven by changes to Covid-related income and expenditure pressures and also Covid funding changes.

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report outlines the forecast financial position of the organisation at the end of 2020/21 based on the information known at the end of the third quarter. It provides an analysis based on best estimates and assumptions now. It should be noted that there remains significant uncertainty and potential volatility due to Covid which may lead to future movements in the forecast. The current analysis includes:
 - Revenue and capital financial performance;

- Explanations and, where developed, mitigating actions for variations and the impact on service delivery; and
- An indication of those areas where the current forecasts carry a risk of change during the year due to demand volatility and assumptions that could change over the course of the financial year.

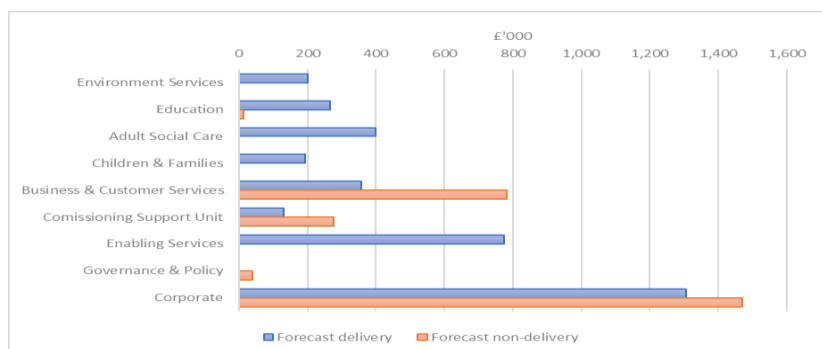
2. Graphical Summary

2.1 Revenue Forecast 2020/21

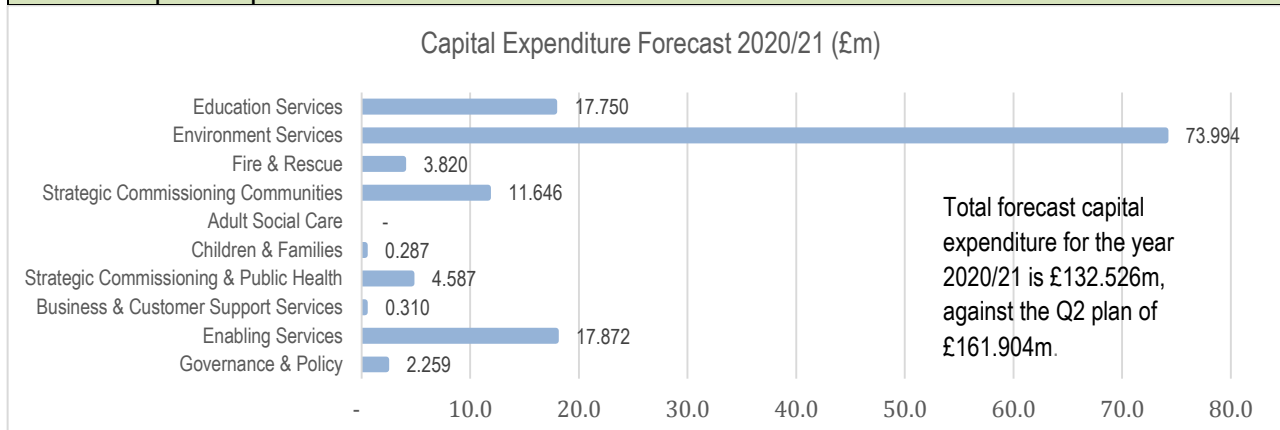
2020/21 Financial Year	£m	Estimate of 2020/21 outturn adjustments	£m
Approved Budget	£298.176	Non-Covid underspend	(£8.269)
Forecast exc. Covid income	£346.278		
Over/Underspend	£48.101	Remove DSG deficit	(£7.647)
Government Covid funding	(£57.372)	Contributions to earmarked reserves	£3.918
Net over/(underspend)	(£9.271)	Anticipated carry forward requests	£1.567
of which		Contributions from reserves	(£1.095)
Covid funding above Covid pressures	(£1.001)		
Non-Covid underspend against core budget	(£8.269)	Non-Covid underspend at outturn	(£11.526)

2.2 Savings Achievement

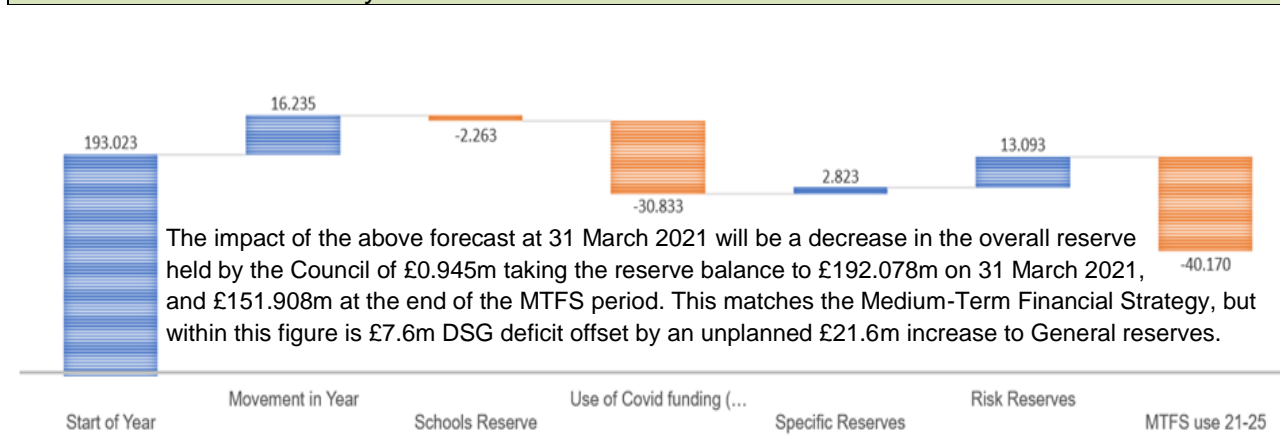
The savings plan for 2020/21 requires the delivery of £6.2m of savings from 19 individual savings initiatives. £3.6m (58%) are forecast to be delivered in line with the plan with £2.6m remaining unachieved mainly due to Covid.



2.3 Capital Expenditure Forecast 2020/21



2.4 Reserves Summary



2.5 Key Risks – Revenue

Covid-19

- 2.5.1 Covid expenditure and income pressure forecasts for 2020/21 currently total £56.371m (£36.838m at Q2).
- 2.5.2 Covid related Government grants and NHS funding totals £57.372m, which offsets the identified £56.371m Covid response pressures, leaving £1.001m to be allocated to Covid related activity.
- 2.5.3 The increase in Covid related grants from the previous Quarter 2 report to Cabinet is due to grant announcements or further grant information received since the Quarter 2 report was collated. Appendix C provides further details of Covid related grant funding and the changes in funding since the Q2 report. Further grant announcements, information or adjustments will result in further changes to the forecast Covid position.
- 2.5.4 In order to present the gross Covid pressures, the net underspend or overspend for each service area does not include specific grants that Services will receive that offset Covid pressures in their areas. The total of these grants is within the £57.372m that is presented as being available to offset Covid pressures. Where grant funding is received but “passported” directly to third parties or providers/suppliers, and there is a net zero impact on WCC for acting as an ‘agent’, this is not included in the Covid gross pressure and funding figures.
- 2.5.5 Appendix C also provides an indication of where Covid funding is likely to be carried forward into the next financial year to enable continued Covid recovery and response.

Key variances

- 2.5.6 £19.089m of currently forecast underspends relate to reduced spend against the delivery of services, primarily due to short term reductions in demand or paused services over Spring 2020, both due to Covid, and there is a risk that demand and consequently the cost of delivery may accelerate again through the remainder of this financial year, effectively reducing the current forecast underspends if this occurs.
- 2.5.7 After notionally removing the Covid related pressures within the revenue forecasts, the largest variances not mitigated within the service are below and details of the variances are provided in Appendix D:

Overspends

- Dedicated Schools Grant, High Needs Block: £10.716m
- Children with Disabilities Care Placements: £3.914m
- Children and Families Placements: £4.422

Underspends

- Adult Social Care £8.000m
- Corporate Services £4.801m
- Enabling Services £3.076m

Changes from Quarter 2

- 2.5.8 The forecast outturn position has reduced by 1.5% (£4.487m) since quarter 2, predominantly as a result of increased Covid grant funding from Government and reduced DSG overspend against in year, and continuing growth in demand and cost for child placements in Education and Children and Families services.

Financial Impact of Academisation

- 2.5.9 Where schools are forced to academise and have a deficit at the point of forced academisation, there is a financial impact on WCC as a result of funding the deficit. In order to recognise this financial impact, Members are asked to approve the creation of a new reserve to enable the funding of these liabilities. This reserve is separate to the existing Schools in Financial Difficulty reserve which is to fund additional resource and capacity to help the financial projections of schools in financial difficulty through school improvements.
- 2.5.10 It is currently estimated that the required reserve value will be £2.137m for the duration of the refreshed MTFs period up to and including 2025/26. The actual value will be confirmed as part of the 2020/21 year end report to Cabinet and both the value and the required period of time the reserve is required for will be reviewed regularly as part of annual reserve reviews.

3. Revenue Outturn

Revenue forecast by service

Service Area	2020/21 Approved Budget	2020/21 Quarter 3 Forecast	2020/21 (Under)/ Over spend	Change from Quarter 2 Forecast	Covid-19 Pressures	Non-Covid- 19 Pressures
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Communities						
Education Services - Non-DSG	34.818	40.631	5.813	(1.600)	3.915	1.898
Environment Services	26.559	28.136	1.577	(0.089)	3.051	(1.474)
Fire & Rescue	21.557	21.832	0.275	(0.265)	0.277	(0.002)
Strategic Commissioner for Communities	22.573	29.188	6.615	2.509	6.889	(0.274)
Subtotal Communities	105.507	119.787	14.280	0.555	14.132	0.148
People						
Adult Social Care	155.068	160.769	5.701	3.041	13.701	(8.000)
Children & Families	64.061	68.697	4.636	0.887	3.559	1.077
Strategic Commissioner for People	34.880	38.230	3.350	4.725	4.084	(0.734)
Subtotal People	254.009	267.696	13.687	8.653	21.344	(7.657)
Resources						
Business and Customer Services	17.732	22.616	4.884	2.059	5.419	(0.535)
Commissioning Support Unit	6.520	13.815	7.295	5.321	7.288	0.007
Enabling Services	26.171	24.343	(1.828)	(1.052)	1.248	(3.076)
Finance	6.346	6.646	0.300	0.410	0.673	(0.373)
Governance & Policy	2.770	3.767	0.997	0.239	0.428	0.569
Subtotal Resources	59.539	71.187	11.647	6.977	15.056	(3.409)
Corporate Services and Resourcing	(120.879)	(120.039)	0.840	(2.534)	5.641	(4.801)
DSG expenditure	235.162	242.809	7.647	(2.243)	0.198	7.449
DSG income	(235.162)	(235.162)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Subtotal Corporate Services and DSG	(120.879)	(112.392)	8.487	(4.777)	5.839	2.648
Sub-total	298.176	346.278	48.101	11.407	56.371	(8.269)
Covid-19 related grants (including NHS funding)		(57.372)	(57.372)	(15.894)	(57.372)	0.000
Total	298.176	288.906	(9.271)	(4.487)	(1.001)	(8.269)
Remove DSG deficit						(£7.647)
Contributions to/from earmarked reserves						2.823
Anticipated carry forward requests						1.567
Adjusted Non-Covid Underspend at Outturn						(£11.526)

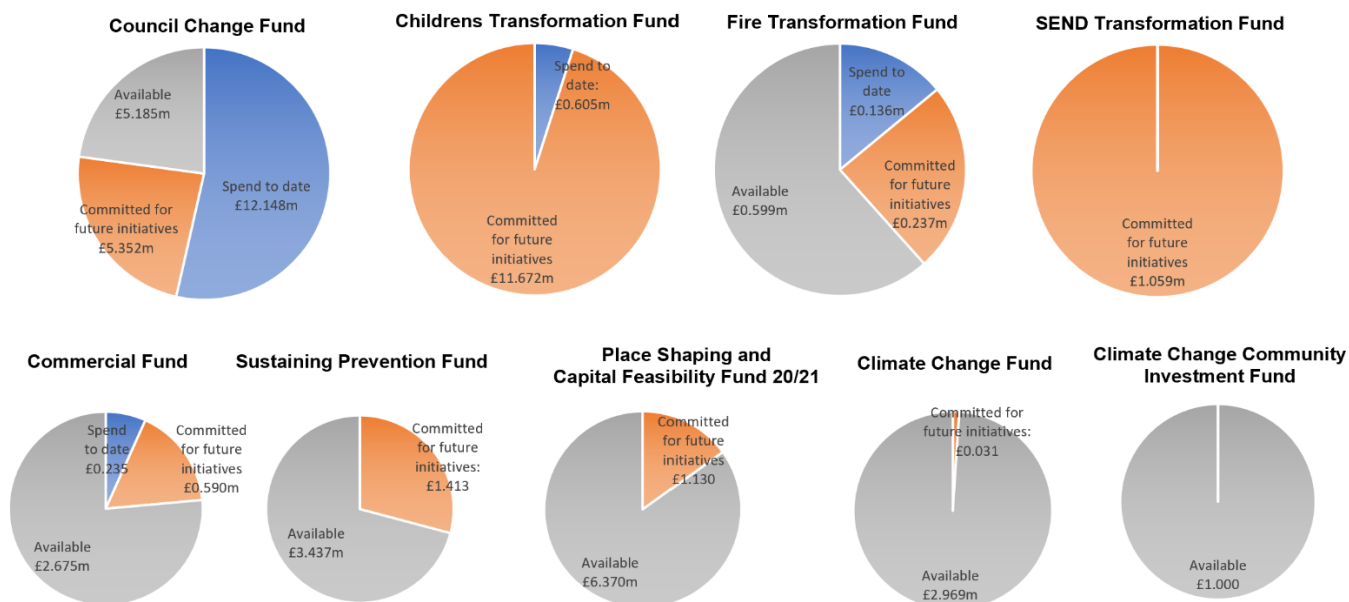
- 3.1 The table above shows the approved budget against the forecasts, including gross Covid pressures, to show the pressure before Covid related Government funding is applied. This gives a forecast overspend of £48.101m against the approved budget. This variance is then separated into costs relating to Covid response and those relating to non-Covid pressures. Covid funding from government grants and NHS discharge claims offsets £57.372m of this overspend, leaving £1.001m forecast Covid-19 funding for ongoing Covid pressures in the current and future years alongside a £8.269m non-Covid underspend.
- 3.2 After allocating the Covid grant funding, the position is balanced, but within this are services with material overspends: Education Services (both DSG and non-DSG funded) and Children & Families, offset by services with material underspends: Adult Social Care, Enabling Services and Corporate Services and Resourcing. Further details of the causes of the variation and mitigating actions are listed by service in Appendices A and C.
- 3.3 Several variations in the services shown in the table above impact on specific ringfenced reserves, either underspends transferred to these reserves (£3.918m) or overspends funded from them (£1.095m). Although the net £2.823m does impact on the overall reserve position of the Council, the reserves are held for this specific purpose and it does not impact on the funds available for general use within the General Reserve. See Section 4.
- 3.4 The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) has a pressure of £7.647m forecast over the period April 2020 to March 2021. This pressure cannot be funded by Council funds outside of the DSG grant, and the DSG blocks cannot fund each other. The pressure on the High Needs Block must be mitigated by future years' underspend in the High Needs Block. Plans to start to reduce the structural deficit have been approved by Cabinet and investment funds allocated to begin work to bring this into effect.

DSG deficit forecast to be carried into 2021/22	£m
Central Block	(0.034)
Early Years Block	(0.583)
High Needs Block	10.716
Schools Block	(2.452)
Total Impact	7.647

- 3.5 There is an £11.526m forecast net underspend across the services which will increase the amount of available funds in the General Reserves. This is made up of £19.381m pressures and £31.189m underspends and will be discussed at Directorate Leadership Team meetings throughout the year. The largest of these are:
- £3.914m overspend in Education, related to Children with Disabilities in Care Placements, with increased numbers and complexity (affecting average unit cost);

- £3.323m overspend in Children & Families due to placements driven by increased demand;
- £3.508m underspend in Other Services due to borrowing cost of projects not yet delivered.
- £8.000m underspend in Adult Social Care due to various factors (see Appendix A for detailed breakdown)

Corporate Change Funds



3.6 £4.954m has already been allocated from the funds for projects covering all four areas of focus, including scoping the Warwickshire Property and Development Company, supporting the Dedicated Schools Grant recovery, developing Integrated Care Records across the care sector and a number of projects to support high streets and businesses through the pandemic. The use of the investment funds is strongly influenced by any recommendations accepted by Cabinet from the Cross Party Covid Recovery working groups.

3.7 Cabinet has agreed to the allocation of £1.0m from the Climate Change Fund to a new Community Climate Change Investment Fund. The aim of the new fund is to progress the Council's objectives on climate change mitigation included in its adopted Council Plan 2025, in response to declaring a climate emergency in July 2019. The new Fund has just completed its engagement with stakeholders in the community with 178 responses received. They will be evaluated during the scheme design phase before the Fund is launched in Spring 2021.

Savings Performance

3.8 Performance against individual savings targets are listed in Annexes A to M.

2020/21	No. of Savings Options	Saving Delivered £m	Savings Not Delivered £m
Savings target achieved/overachieved	11	2.174	0
Savings target partially achieved	3	1.454	2.344
No saving delivered against target	5	0	0.237
Total	19	3.628	2.581

3.9 Below are details of those savings which are highlighting forecast under-achievement:

Description	Target £m	Forecast £m	Reason for variance and associated management action
Corporate Services and Resourcing - Material receipts from the sale of strategic sites. Reinvestment of the capital receipts will reduce the Council's borrowing costs.	2.523	1.237	Delays on the sale of two sites as a result of preferred bidders withdrawing offers at the start of the Covid lockdown has impacted on the ability to reduce borrowing costs in line with targets.
Business support - Service wide restructure of business support, including delayering of the entire model and reductions in levels of agency spend.	0.880	0.097	The delay in implementing the Business Support FOM has impacted the Service's ability to deliver the savings this year. A request has been made to reprofile the savings pending the re-engineering of Business Support Service processes coupled with the implementation of digital solutions as appropriate.
Project and programme management - Organisation-wide restructure of programme and project support.	0.395	0.120	The PMO operating model is based on the ability to recharge for a large proportion of project resources deployed, and this was increased by £275k when it was restructured. The impact of Covid has meant that significant project resources have been deployed on pandemic response projects and not rechargeable projects. As a result of this reprioritisation it is unlikely that the recharging target will be met. The situation may improve to some lesser extent during Q4.
Contract Management - Reduction in the cost of contracted services and third party spend through improved	0.500	-	Delays in implementation due to impact of Covid response. This saving plan has been reprofiled to future years; this means the under delivery

contract management at all stages of the procurement process.			in 20/21 will be mitigated from reserves funding.
Legal Services additional surplus - Additional surplus from external trading with other local authorities and public sector bodies	0.030	-	Unlikely at this stage due to current pressures on income.
Review of provision of passenger transport assistants - Reduced cost of passenger assistants as a result of their withdrawal from routes except for cases where a learner has an Education and Health Care Plan.	0.012	-	Demand has outstripped the budget leading to an overspend and prohibiting the delivery of the saving target.
Electronic record keeping - Reduced storage requirements as a result of the move to electronic record keeping.	0.010	-	Project delayed due to Covid – work will be recommencing shortly but may delay full recovery in year 1.
Optimism bias - Provision for a 10% optimism bias for the benefits from the transformation programme.	(0.315)	-	Partially offsetting savings not delivered this year.
Total	4.035	1.454	

Medium Term Implications

- 3.10 Levels of income and suppressed demand through Covid create one-off relief, while growth in demand and cost for child placements in Education and Children & Families services has an ongoing impact. The impact of these and other pressures and reductions flagged in budget monitoring will be modelled and the need to adjust future years' budgets evaluated as part of the ongoing MTFS refresh.
- 3.11 The impact of the current forecast at 31 March 2021 will be a decrease in the overall reserves held by the Council of £0.945m, taking the reserve balance to £192.078m on 31 March 2021, and £151.908m at the end of the MTFS period. The impact on the general and risk reserves, however, is an increase of £21.623m. All but £3m of this increase has already been factored into the MTFS proposals currently being considered.
- 3.12 Alongside the one-off underspend, one-off funding and ongoing pressures, the MTFS will be modelling the impact on the tax-base of the delays in development, the potential rise in unemployment and reduction of interest rates which are all anticipated as a medium term impact of the Covid response.

4. Reserves position

£m	Start of Year 20/21	Movement up to Q3	Effect of Outturn	Closing Balance	21-25 Planned Use	Remaining
Schools Reserves	12.142	0.000	(2.263)	9.879	(29.949)	(20.070)
Earmarked Reserves	111.225	(10.058)	2.823	103.990	0.000	103.990
Covid Funding	14.071	17.763	(30.833)	1.001	(1.001)	0.000
Risk and General Reserves	55.585	8.530	13.093	77.208	(9.220)	67.988
Total	193.023	16.235	(17.180)	192.078	(40.170)	151.908

- 4.1 The reserves closing balance includes all approved use of reserves so far during the year, including carry forwards from 2019/20, use of change funds and use of specific or earmarked reserves up to Quarter 3. Alongside this the Effect of Outturn shows the impact of the current forecast revenue position on the Council's funds including any anticipated carry forward requests at this point.
- 4.2 The longer-term impact of Covid on the Council Tax and Business Rates (estimated at £11m) is not reflected in the reserves journey above but provision to cover this anticipated impact will be built into the refreshed MTFS.

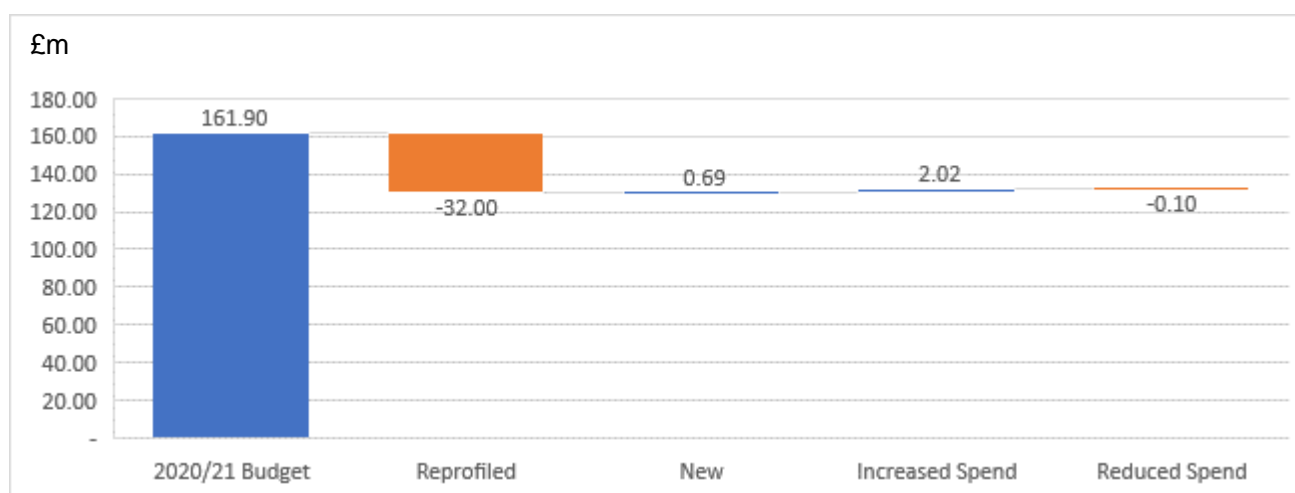
5. Capital

- 5.1 The latest forecast of 2020-21 capital payments is £132.526m, with a further £262.100m of payments forecast over the medium term. The 2020-21 forecast is a reduction of £29.378m on the Quarter 2 budget.
- 5.2 This decrease is made up of £31.996m (19.8%) of planned spend for 2020/21 now reprofiled into future years, an increase in newly approved capital schemes of £0.695m being brought into the programme and a net increase in the overall cost of capital schemes of £1.919m.
- 5.3 The remaining balance on the Capital Investment Fund (CIF) over the term of the MTFS of £82.465m.

Capital Forecast by Service

	2020/21	2020/21	2020/21	2021/22 to	2021/22 to	2021/22 to	Total
	Approved	Forecast	Variance	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	
	Budget	£m	£m	Approved	Forecast	Variance	Variance
	£m			Budget	£m	£m	£m
Education Services	18,237	17,750	- 488	21,861	40,578	18,717	18,229
Environment Services	90,397	73,994	- 16,403	93,055	112,644	19,589	3,186
Fire and Rescue	4,406	3,820	- 586	3,727	4,111	384	- 202
Strategic Commissioning Communities	20,581	11,646	- 8,936	44,063	86,291	42,228	33,293
Communities	133,622	107,210	- 26,412	162,705	243,624	80,918	54,506
Adult Social Care	0	-	-	313	313	-	-
Children and Families	257	287	30	172	424	252	282
Strategic Commissioning & Public Health	4,587	4,587	- 0	63	63	-	- 0
People	4844.221	4,874	30	549	801	252	282
Business and Customer Support Services	180	310	130	1,770	1,640	- 130	-
Enabling Services	18,756	17,872	- 884	12,907	13,786	878	- 6
Governance & Policy	4,502	2,259	- 2,243	17	2,250	2,233	- 9
Resources	23,438	20,442	- 2,997	14,694	17,676	2,981	- 15
Total	161,904	132,526	- 29,378	177,948	262,100	84,152	54,773

Capital Variance Analysis



5.4 2020/21 Budget – This is set according to the forecast spend in 2020/21 on 31st March 2020. The forecast shows the changes in capital programmes since then, made up of:

- i.) Reprofiled projects – these are schemes where there has been a slip in the time scale for delivery. The project is still being delivered and with no material change in cost, but the impact is that the benefits of projects are not realised and available to the taxpayers of Warwickshire in the timeframe originally anticipated. There is £31.996m of project expenditure which has slipped into future years, and work is ongoing to make initial estimates of planned delivery more realistic to ensure slippage only occurs where uncontrollable delays occurs.
- ii.) New projects – these are projects recently added to the capital programme or projects where costs have risen as a result of a substantial change in scope. These schemes have been added through formal governance, with financing made available from Capital Investment Fund or Corporate grants.
- iii.) Projects with Increased Spend – these are schemes where project costs have risen above the level previously expected. This means additional funding has had to be arranged. This may be in the form of a revenue contribution to capital from a Service’s revenue budget, the use of basic need funding for education projects or through the collection of additional S278 money from developers. Apart from S278 projects the impact of this is that there is less funding available for other projects/activity.
- iv.) Underspent projects – these are schemes which have been delivered under budget. The impact of this is that funds are no longer required for a specific scheme. This may mean the authority will be able to recycle funds to alternative projects or will borrow less.

5.5 The additional funding available should be noted. For 2020-21, £0.695m of forecast spend has been added to the capital programme, with an additional £52.044m available in 2021-22 onwards. This is as a direct result of new funding from grants, capital investment fund borrowing and S278 contributions.

5.6 Across all years supplementary funding of an extra £2.024m has been added to capital projects where additional funding is required to deliver schemes already in progress.

5.7 Analysis of 2020/21 highlights:

- £3.655m delay on the A46 Stoneleigh due to the approval process with Highways England being protracted. The timescale around gaining Highways England approvals was a known risk at the outset of the project and as such costs associated with it have been allowed for in the risk budget. The shift in spend from 20/21 to 21/22 presented here will not result in any increased costs that cannot be managed in the available budget.
- £1.315m delay on Rugby Parkway. The submission of the planning application has been delayed due to a change in the scope. Due to land ownership issues, only part of the land has been acquired. The remainder will be acquired in the next financial year.

- £0.450m delay on Bermuda connectivity. Further programme slippage (delay to start of construction) arising due to tender prices coming back outside of tolerance levels and the need to gain member approval to award the contract and identify a source of funding for the shortfall.
- £1.328m slippage on Strategic Site Planning applications due to site conditions for one priority land asset, legal complexities around remediations, and uncertainty around plans resulting from the creation of the Warwickshire Property Development Company.
- £0.844m delay on maintaining the smallholdings land bank project due to Covid.
- £9.856m relates to S278 projects. The time frame for undertaking these is reviewed based on progress around each development.
- £1.983m of area delegated schemes have been pushed back as a result of changes to the use of these funds (see Cabinet report dated 11th June 2020)

Delays in Projects – the £31.996m delays and re-profiling of projects is caused by slippage. The slippage on individual projects is detailed in Appendix B and above.

This quarter 31% of slippage has been directly attributable to issues arising from the Covid-19 Pandemic. This comprises varied issues, from the initial national lockdown to the impacts of the consequences of the Pandemic on project delivery, including social distancing and material and labour shortages.

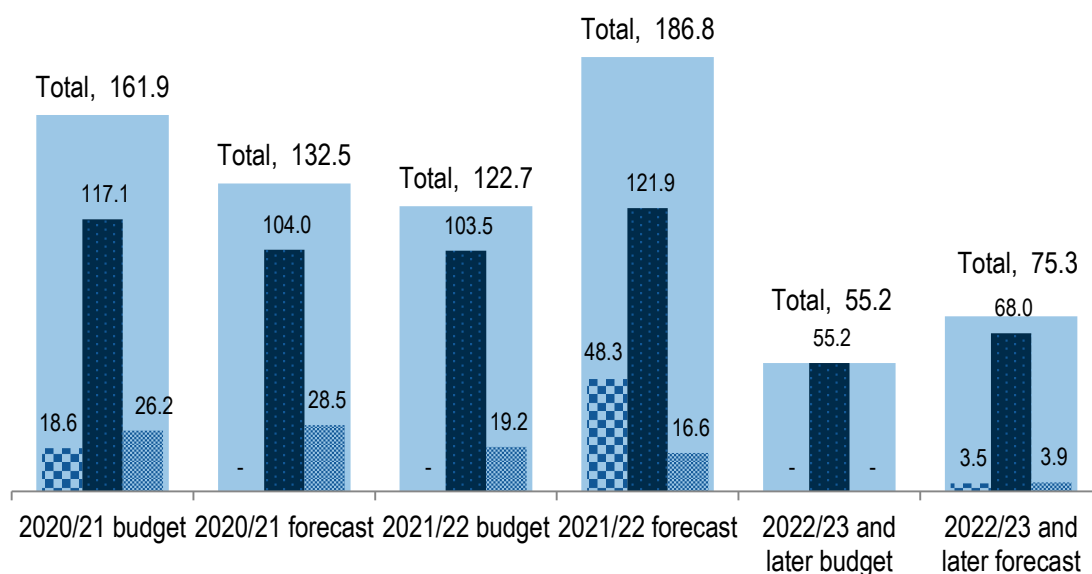
Capital Financing

5.8 As well as approving the revised spending in the capital programme, Council must also ensure it has funding available to meet its capital payments in each financial year. The chart and table below show how the planned and forecast capital expenditure is to be financed. These figures exclude the remaining unallocated Capital Investment Fund.

	2020/21 budget £m	2020/21 forecast £m	2021/22 budget £m	2021/22 forecast £m	2022/23 and later budget £m	2022/23 and later forecast £m
Corporate Borrowing	18.614	-	-	48.252	-	3.454
Self-financed Borrowing	- 1.692	- 1.919	0.995	0.995	-	-
Grants and Contributions #	117.099	104.022	103.500	121.912	55.201	67.963
Capital Receipts	25.075	28.612	18.246	14.484	0.000	3.907
Revenue	2.808	1.811	0.005	1.133	-	-
Total	161.904	132.526	122.747	186.776	55.202	75.324

Estimated Financing to 2022/23 & Later Years (£m)

■ Borrowing
■ Grants and Contributions
■ Revenue, Capital Receipts & Self Financing



The income from grants and contributions includes grants from Government and contributions from developers and other third parties.

WCC manages cash as a whole, so even where borrowing is shown as a form of financing in this graph it does not mean new borrowing will be necessary. The borrowing figure shown is the gap between our spending and the funding available to us which is called the CFR (Capital Financing Requirement).

5.9 In addition to the forecast spend in the table the Council has additional spend commitments resulting from Education basic need grants which have been earmarked

for educational provision. The grants received for previous years have been used to support other capital spending in earlier years to avoid borrowing in advance of need. These future commitments equal £16.840m and when they occur, they will increase the Council's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). The CFR is the annual the gap between our spend and available funding for capital projects. At present the exact profile of the Education spending is unknown as it has not yet been allocated to named or approved projects. It could necessitate additional borrowing to finance the capital programme over the period of the MTFS, however the need to undertake any future borrowing would depend on cash balances at that time.

- 5.10 The most significant variable in financing the capital expenditure is forecasting the timing of the delivery of capital receipts. Forecasts are determined by the Council's programme of disposals and subsequent income from capital receipts is used to avoid the need to incur additional borrowing. Any shortfall in the level of expected receipts will increase the CFR and may require the Authority to borrow sooner than expected.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 The report outlines the financial performance of the authority in the year 2020/21. There are no additional financial implications to those detailed in this report.
- 6.2 The key financial issue remains the need for the MTFS to reflect: the need to put sustainable solutions in place for those services reporting material demand-led overspends; the need to ensure the ambitions of the capital strategy are aligned to the capacity to deliver; and that any plans developed to balance the budget going forward are robust so any decisions can be taken promptly.

7. Environmental Implications

- 7.1 There are no specific environmental implications as a result of the information and decisions outlined in the report.

8. Background Papers

None

9. Appendices

- a. Appendix A – Commentary on service revenue forecasts
- b. Appendix B – Commentary on service capital forecasts
- c. Appendix C – Details of Covid grant funding
- d. Appendix D – Service level narrative, reserves, savings and forecasts

	Contact Information
Report Authors	Andrew Healey, Lead Commissioner – Finance Strategy; andrewhealey@warwickshire.gov.uk Purnima Sherwood, Service Manager – Finance Delivery; purnimasherwood@warwickshire.gov.uk
Assistant Director	Andy Felton, Finance; andrewfelton@warwickshire.gov.uk
Strategic Director	Rob Powell, Strategic Director for Resources robpowell@warwickshire.gov.uk
Portfolio Holder	Cllr P Butlin, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Property; cllrbutlin@warwickshire.gov.uk

No elected members have been consulted in the preparation of this report.