



Oversight and Governance

Chief Executive's Department
Plymouth City Council
Ballard House
Plymouth PL1 3BJ

Please ask for Jamie Sheldon
T 01752 668000
E jamie.sheldon@plymouth.gov.uk
www.plymouth.gov.uk

Published 11 January 2021

CABINET – SUPPLEMENT PACK TWO

Tuesday 12 January 2021
2.00 pm
Virtual Meeting

Members:

Councillor Evans OBE, Chair

Councillor P Smith, Vice Chair

Councillors Haydon, Coker, Dann, Lowry, Penberthy, Jon Taylor, Laing and Kate Taylor.

Members are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business overleaf.

Please find enclosed additional information relating to items 13 and 15.

For further information on attending Council meetings and how to engage in the democratic process please follow this link - [Get Involved](#)

Tracey Lee

Chief Executive

Cabinet

- 13. Council Tax Base Setting and Council Tax Support Scheme 2021/22 (Pages 1 - 8)**
- 15. 2021/22 Draft Budget (Pages 9 - 24)**

Cabinet

Date of meeting: 12 January 2021

Title of Report: **Council Tax Base Setting 2021/22 and Council Tax Support Scheme 2021/22**

Lead Member: Councillor Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance)

Lead Strategic Director: Brendan Arnold (Service Director for Finance and Section 151 Officer)

Author: Emma Rose (Strategic Development Manager)
Wendy Eldridge (Principal Technical Accountant)

Contact Email: Emma.rose@plymouth.gov.uk
wendy.eldridge@plymouth.gov.uk

Your Reference: WE/20/21

Key Decision: No

Confidentiality: Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

To recommend the 2021/22 Council Tax base to Council in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012.

Recommendations and Reasons

Cabinet recommends Council approve -

1. the Council Tax Base for 2021/22 of 73,115 equivalent Band D dwellings as set out in the report.
2. the continuation of the current Council Tax Support Scheme for 2021/22 with the following updates:

Recommendation 1 - To allow the Council to increase the levels of incomes within each Band to allow for any changes made by Government to other benefits

Recommendation 2 – To allow the Council to suspend the use of the Minimum Income Floor for the Self Employed in exceptional circumstances

Recommendation 3 - To align the current non-dependant deductions with the lowest non-dependant deductions in the pension age scheme

Recommendation 4 - To amend the scheme to allow for Shared Parental Leave, Parental Bereavement Leave and the Grenfell Tower Residents' Discretionary Fund

Reason for recommendations: to meet the legal requirements to set the Council tax base

Alternative options considered and rejected

Fin	pl.20.21. 161.	Leg	lt/35865 /111220	Mon Off		HR		Asset s		Strat Proc	
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Brendan Arnold (Service Director for Finance)											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 07/01/2021											
Cabinet Member approval: Councillor Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) Date approved: 01/12/2020											

A. Council Tax Base Calculation

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012 make arrangements for the setting of the Council Tax. The arrangements include the determination of the Council Tax Base. A Council resolution is necessary. The decision must be notified to the major precepting authorities.
- 1.2 For the year commencing 1 April 2021, the major precepting authorities will be Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Commissioner and Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority.
- 1.3 The Council must determine its Council Tax Base for 2021/22 during the period 1 December 2020 to 31 January 2021. The Council Tax Base is the measure of the taxable capacity of an area, for the purpose of calculating an authority's Council Tax. It represents the estimated number of Band D equivalent chargeable dwellings for the year. It also takes into account the authority's estimated Council Tax collection rate. The level of Council Tax subsequently set must be determined using the Council Tax Base figure. The Council Tax Base calculation is attached in Appendix B.
- 1.4 The calculation of the Council Tax Base allows for discounts under the Council Tax Support Scheme.

2. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to propose to Council the Council Tax Base of 73,115. The Council Tax Base for 2019/20 was 74,603.
- 2.2 The Tax Base calculation includes the impact of the Council Tax Support Scheme. Tax base calculations include assumptions for a further financial impact from COVID-19 through demand of the Local Council tax support scheme increasing .

3. TAX BASE CALCULATIONS

- 3.1 Council Tax base figures are calculated by the billing authority as the aggregate of the "relevant amounts" calculated for each property valuation band multiplied by the estimated "collection rate" for the year.
- 3.2 Relevant amounts are:
 - (a) The number of chargeable dwellings in that band shown in the valuation list as at 14 September 2020 (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) return – Council Tax Base (CTB));
 - (b) The number of discounts, disabled reductions and exemptions which apply to those dwellings;
 - (c) Estimated changes in the number of chargeable properties between 14 September 2020 and 31 March 2022;
 - (d) Impact of the Council Tax Support scheme;
 - (e) The number of Band D equivalents within each different band.
- 3.3 The collection rate is the billing authority's estimate of the total amounts of 2020/21 Council Tax which will ultimately be paid or transferred into the Collection Fund.

3.4 This report assumes a collection rate for Council Tax of 97.5%. This rate reflects recent arrears collection performance, the pattern of write offs and the impact of Universal Credit. Analysis of collection rates across the age profile of debts suggests that an eventual collection rate of 97.5% is realistic and prudent in the current economic climate.

3.5 Appendix C shows the tax base used for the previous three years for comparison.

4. EMPTY HOMES PREMIUM

4.1 Change was legislated under the Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 which amends Section 11B of Local Government Finance Act 1992 (higher amount for long-term empty dwellings: England), as follows:

From 1 April 2021 an additional premium can be charged of up to:

- 100% for any dwelling empty between 2 and 5 years.
- 200% for any dwelling empty between 5 and 10 years.
- 300% for any dwelling empty for 10 years or more.

Plymouth City Council introduced charging a maximum premium from 1 April 2019 as part of a strategy to encourage empty properties back into use. Approval was given to charge the additional premium changes from 1 April 2021 as part of 2020/21 Council Tax Base Setting approved at Council on 27 January 2020.

4.2 The Housing Delivery Team recommends an increase to the council tax premium attached to empty homes to the fullest extent possible as the legislation allows. This will provide a further disincentive for keeping properties empty. We envisage that returning empty homes to use will:

- Help to alleviate pressures on the housing waiting list through increased availability of rental properties
- Improve the visual appearance of empty properties that may blight neighbourhoods;
- Address problems that may be associated with living next door to an empty home for example damp ingress, vermin, anti-social behaviour and loss of property value;
- Generate New Homes Bonus funding for the city (subject to changes to the NHB scheme).

4.3 The legislation relating to the new premium can be found at the following link;

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/25/contents/enacted>

5. COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT

5.1 In April 2013 the National Council Tax Benefit scheme was abolished and replaced by local assistance schemes, developed and administered by local Councils. Plymouth City Council introduced two schemes from 1 April 2013; Council Tax Support and a discretionary Exceptional Hardship Scheme. The main Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme requires all working age claimants to make a minimum 20% contribution towards their Council Tax bill.

5.2 The qualifying criterion for the CTS scheme follows the basic calculation for Housing Benefit. This is based on a 'means test' with those on a basic qualifying benefit, known as a passported benefit, receiving a maximum 80% payment towards their Council Tax with a sliding qualification scale applied to all other claimants in order determine entitlement.

5.3 All Councils are required to annually review their local CTS schemes. Significant changes were agreed to the Plymouth CTS to implement a banded scheme in 2020/21 to support Universal Credit

(UC) customers from the frequent changes to their awards. As part of the review for the 2021/22 CTS scheme a number of factors were considered:

- A small number of administrative issues have arisen from the new banded scheme that should be addressed
- The Council's ability to collect council tax from individuals previously awarded council tax support
- Future increases in council tax that may affect the cost of the scheme.
- The increased CTS caseload resulting from COVID19
- The continuing roll-out of Universal Credit

5.4 Current caseload figures confirms that the number of residents claiming Council Tax Support increased by 12.7% in the last 12 months (October 2019 vs October 2020) and the associated expenditure increased by 11.94%. This was an impact of COVID-19 and the resulting loss of income for many households in the city. It is expected that the caseload and scheme cost within 2021/22 can be funded within the available financial envelope.

5.5 Taking the factors in the above paragraphs into account, it is recommended that the following changes are made to the CTS scheme for implementation in 2021/22:

Recommendation 1 - To allow the Council to increase the levels of incomes within each Band to allow for any changes made by Government to other benefits

Under the current scheme, the Council is only able to increase the income levels within each discount band annually by inflation. This change would allow the Council increase the income levels within each band to counter any increase in welfare benefits. The change would only be made where Government takes emergency action, such as in the current COVID-19 crisis. The change would only increase income levels within each discount band not decrease the levels. The change would not vary the percentage of discount in each band.

Benefits:

- It would more flexibility within the scheme; and
- It would prevent applicants having a reduction in support when Government increases any welfare benefits.

Drawbacks:

- There may be a slight increase in cost of the scheme should the change be made.

Recommendation 2 – To allow the Council to suspend the use of the Minimum Income Floor for the Self Employed in exceptional circumstances

The Minimum Income Floor is a provision within both Universal Credit and Council Tax Support which assumes a level of income for self-employed applicants after they have been in business for one year or more. Due to the COVID-19 crisis, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) suspended the use of the Minimum Income Floor in Universal Credit, but the Council was unable to change the Council Tax Support scheme in the same way. This option would allow the Council flexibility to 'suspend' the Minimum Income Floor in exceptional circumstances, such as the COVID-19 crisis. The Council feels that this would be fairer to applicants who are self-employed and unable to trade normally due to the crisis.

Benefits:

- It would allow the Council more flexibility in dealing with self-employed applicants in exceptional circumstances such as the COVID-19 crisis; and
- The change would allow the Council to make the change automatically for all cases affected.

Drawbacks:

- Where the Minimum Income Floor is suspended, there may be a small additional cost to the scheme

Recommendation 3 - To align the current non-dependant deductions with the lowest non-dependant deductions in the pension age scheme

The current scheme has a standard non-dependant deduction of £4 per week. This is slightly lower than the equivalent (or lowest) non dependant deduction in the pension age scheme (currently £4.05). This option would allow the Council to align the non-dependant deduction for working age applicants with the lowest non-dependant deductions for pension age applicants.

Benefits:

- It would make the scheme fairer ; and
- It would assist in the administration of the scheme.

Drawbacks:

- There may be a slight adjustment to the entitlement of applicants with non-dependants.

Recommendation 4 - To amend the scheme to allow for Shared Parental Leave, Parental Bereavement Leave and the Grenfell Tower Residents' Discretionary Fund

Government has introduced a number of changes into the scheme for pension age applicants to cater for the new Shared Parental Leave, Parental Bereavement Leave and the Grenfell Tower Residents' Discretionary Fund. Shared Parental Leave, Parental Bereavement Leave payments would be treated as earned income, and could allow for child care disregards to be given. The Grenfell Tower Residents' Discretionary Fund payments would be totally disregarded for Council Tax Support purposes. These changes would align the working age scheme with the pension age scheme.

Benefits:

- All of the changes made would treat all working age applicants the same way as pensioner applicants; and
- The change would make the scheme simpler to administer.

Drawbacks

- There are no drawbacks to this change

5.6 These factors have been taken into account in establishing the proposed Council Tax Base and the impact will be closely monitored throughout the year.

B. Council Tax Base Calculation Table 2021/22

	BAND A with disabled relief	BAND A	BAND B	BAND C	BAND D	BAND E	BAND F	BAND G	BAND H	Total
Number of dwellings in valuation list as at 14th September 2020	-	47,670	33,048	23,318	10,066	5,136	1,805	606	57	121,706
Number of exempt dwellings (including demolished)	-	3,210	1,445	977	671	187	33	35	18	6,576
Reductions to lower band due to disabled relief	-	147	172	156	119	66	27	27	13	727
Additions to band due to disabled relief	147	172	156	119	66	27	27	13	-	727
CHARGEABLE DWELLINGS FOR BAND	147	44,485	31,587	22,304	9,342	4,910	1,772	557	26	115,130
Total discounts at 25%	63	22,962	11,106	6,089	2,271	948	273	83	1	43,796
Total discounts at 50%	1	60	58	32	22	15	30	27	14	259
Total discounts at 100%	-	83	51	21	8	2	-	-	-	165
TOTAL DISCOUNTS - shown as whole dwelling equivalent	16	5,854	2,857	1,559	587	247	83	34	7	11,244
Long Term Empty Premium 2 - 5 years at 100%	-	82	18	11	5	5	2	2	-	125
Long Term Empty Premium 5 - 10 years at 200%	-	30	7	6	1	-	-	-	-	44
Long Term Empty Premium +10 years at 300%	-	7	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	10
LONG TERM EMPTY PREMIUM - impact of premium	-	163	38	26	7	5	2	2	-	243
Estimated number of dwellings not listed but which will be listed in the band for the whole or any part of the financial year	-	77.0	78.0	68.0	25.0	22.0	9.0	2.0	-	281
Estimated number of reductions to lower band due to successful appeals	-	-	9	2	1	4	3	1	-	20
Estimated number of additions to lower band due to successful appeals	-	9	2	1	4	3	1	-	-	20
TOTAL ADJUSTMENTS	-	68	85	69	22	23	11	3	-	281
LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME REDUCTIONS	41	9,367	3,218	1,038	242	64	19	4	-	13,993
Estimated impact Local Council Tax Support demand		534	183	59	14	4	1			795
Family annexes discount at 50%	-	19	12	17	13	6	12	1	-	78
FAMILY ANNEXES	0	9	6	8	7	3	6	1	-	39
TOTAL DWELLINGS	90	28,952	25,447	19,735	8,522	4,620	1,676	523	19	89,583
RATIO TO BAND D	5	6	7	8	9	11	13	15	18	
	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	
RELEVANT AMOUNTS FOR 2020/21	50	19,302	19,792	17,542	8,522	5,647	2,421	872	38	74,185
COLLECTION RATE										97.50%
ADJUSTED RELEVANT AMOUNT	49	18,819	19,297	17,103	8,308	5,506	2,361	850	37	72,330
MOD CONTRIBUTION										785
TAX BASE										73,115

C. Council Tax Base - Previous Years

	2018/19			2019/20			2020/21		
Band	Number of properties	Estimated Collection Rate	Adjusted Band D Equivalent	Number of properties	Estimated Collection Rate	Adjusted Band D Equivalent	Number of properties	Estimated Collection Rate	Adjusted Band D Equivalent
A	47,211	98.5%	18,573	47,750	98.0%	19,359	47,747	98.0%	19,785
B	32,347	98.5%	18,972	32,674	98.0%	19,307	32,932	98.0%	19,729
C	22,709	98.5%	16,890	22,947	98.0%	17,006	23,207	98.0%	17,270
D	9,622	98.5%	8,130	9,752	98.0%	8,155	9,939	98.0%	8,312
E	4,913	98.5%	5,340	4,950	98.0%	5,332	5,057	98.0%	5,470
F	1,738	98.5%	2,308	1,755	98.0%	2,308	1,786	98.0%	2,352
G	596	98.5%	835	601	98.0%	834	603	98.0%	846
H	58	98.5%	36	58	98.0%	36	56	98.0%	36
Total	119,194		71,084	120,487		72,336	121,327		73,800
MOD			848			836			803
Tax Base			71,932			73,172			74,603

Cabinet



Date of meeting:	12 January 2021
Title of Report:	Budget 2021/22 – Draft Budget
Lead Member:	Councillor Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance)
Lead Strategic Director:	Brendan Arnold (Service Director for Finance & S151 Officer)
Author:	David Northey (Head of Integrated Finance)
Contact Email:	David.northey@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	PL/Bud/2021/2022
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

To provide an update on progress on the development of the 2021/22 budget.

Under the Council's Constitution, Cabinet is required to recommend the 2021/22 Budget to Council. This report sets out the latest information available for the 9 February 2021 Cabinet to enable Cabinet to consider what recommendations to make to Council in respect of the 2021/22 budget. The budget complements the overarching vision, values and priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Plan.

The draft budget has been prepared during a period of national uncertainty arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, and before the country moved into the current national lockdown. The Council was quick in its initial response to the pandemic and learned how agile it could be in adapting quickly to changing circumstances with strong political and managerial leadership and established patterns of partnership working.

The Cabinet endorsed the reset framework at Appendix 6 in May 2020, which set out six priority areas of focus for renewal and recovery, and which best summarise the areas of focus for our strategic narrative.

This budget builds on those priorities

Recommendations and Reasons

Cabinet are recommended to:

1. Note this report is based on the Provisional Settlement and subject to change in line with any Final Settlement adjustments
2. Recommend the savings options as set out in Appendix 3 to Budget Scrutiny for review;
3. Recommend the use of limited local resources including a limited use of reserves;
4. Consider the level of council tax and adult social care precept to be applied for 2021/22.

Alternative options considered and rejected

The approval of Council's budget is a statutory requirement so there are no alternative options.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

The development and approval of the annual budget and the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) is fundamentally linked to delivering the priorities within the Council's Corporate Plan. Allocating limited resources to key priorities will maximise the benefits to the residents of Plymouth.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

The resource implications are set out in the body of the report.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

The budget proposals are cognisant of the key implications and issues as set out within the Corporate Carbon Reduction Plan and the Climate Emergency Declaration as approved by Council on 16 December 2019. Budget provision has been made as part of the proposals for 2021/22 and future years.

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

** When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

The reducing revenue and capital resources across the public sector has been identified as a key risk within our Strategic Risk register. The ability to deliver spending plans is paramount to ensuring the Council can achieve its objectives to be a Pioneering, Growing, Caring and Confident City.

Appendices

**Add rows as required to box below*

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Additional Expenditure							
2	COVID Costs							
3	Savings Proposals							
4	Draft 2021/22 Plymouth City Council General Fund Budget							
5	Plymouth's COVID-19 recovery and renewal framework priorities							

Background papers:

*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable)						
	If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

Fin	ba.20. 21.21 3	Leg	It/35 926/ 0401 20	Mon Off		HR		Asset s		Strat Proc	
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Brendan Arnold (Service Director for Finance)											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 08/01/2021											
Cabinet Member approval: Councillor Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) approved by email.											
Date approved: 11/01/2021											

Introduction

- 1.1 The preparation of the budget and the Medium Term Financial Plan will always present challenges for local authorities. In recent years the background of political uncertainty and the ongoing Brexit negotiations have impacted upon local government. Delays to the comprehensive three year funding settlement and the Fair Funding Review have resulted in a period of limited direction from central government and the inability for local government to plan in detail at this stage beyond a one year planning horizon.
- 1.2 The impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic has created a further layer of complexity for local government and uncertainty with regard to funding. Local authorities have risen to the challenge to ensure vital services have been maintained, grants allocated to local businesses and financial support provided to the most vulnerable members of our society.
- 1.3 The Council was quick in its initial response to the pandemic and learned how agile it could be in adapting quickly to changing circumstances with strong political and managerial leadership and established patterns of partnership working. The Cabinet endorsed the Reset framework in May 2020, which set out six priority areas of focus for renewal and recovery. These are set out in Appendix 5 and summarise the areas of focus for our strategic planning and delivery.

- 1.4 It is inevitable that recent events have had an impact of the council's resources and expenditure and this will continue for some time yet. One of the key challenges will be understanding and monitoring the financial impact, in particular the impact upon the resources Plymouth will receive from its main sources of income i.e. Council Tax and Business Rates.
- 1.5 The Government published its Spending Review on 17 December 2020 and this set out some headlines for local government. It also confirmed that, once again, local government would only receive a one year funding settlement for 2021/22.
- 1.6 This report sets out the main financial information from the Provisional Settlement, announced on 17 December 2020. Due to the lateness of the announcement the Provisional Settlement will continue to be reviewed and any further updates will be provided to Cabinet at its meeting on 9 February 2021.
- 1.7 This report will form part of the key budget papers that will be made available to the Scrutiny Select Committee which is meeting on 18 and 19 January 2021. These include:
- The draft 2021/22 Budget by service;
 - A list of savings proposals;
 - Treasury Management Strategy as approved by Audit Committee on 30 November 2020;
 - Capital Strategy as approved by Audit Committee on 30 November 2020.

2. Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement

- 2.1 The late timing of the announcement has not been helpful with regard to preparing the Council's budget. At the time of writing this report the Provisional Settlement confirmed the key announcements made as part of the Spending Review in September 2020.
- 2.2 The details from the Provisional Settlement (where received) have been incorporated within the planning assumptions below, however further analysis is being undertaken to ensure that the final budget proposals can be delivered with no detriment to the Council's overall financial position. At the time of writing this report the council was still awaiting formal notification of some grants; these will be reported as soon as confirmed by government.

A summary of the key headlines from the Provisional Settlement are outlined below:

- The Government's announcement states core spending on local services has the potential to increase by £2.2 billion in 2020/21 which is an increase of 4.5%. This includes the assumption that where relevant, all local authorities will increase their Council Tax by the maximum 1.99%; the Adult Social Care precept will be maximised at the 3% cap for 2021/22. Given that for Plymouth over 90% of our core resources of council tax and business rates are locally generated, this headline 4.5% includes the assumed additional burden on Plymouth residents and businesses.
- Additional resources have been allocated to meet COVID-19 costs; new funding for adult and children's social care and for councils with responsibility for services such as homelessness, planning, recycling and refuse collection will help meet cost and demand pressures next year.
- The Provisional Settlement did not include details of the Public Health Grant which is essential as local government continues to be at the forefront in responding to the Pandemic. This is expected later in 2021.

- Changes have been made to New Homes Bonus resulting in lower allocations. The Government intends to consult on a new scheme for 2022/23. The Council's allocation is reduced by £1.802m from the 2020/21 allocation.
- The Government has once again delayed major reforms to the system of local government finance i.e. Fair Funding and Business Rates reform.
- As part of a package of support to local authorities in England for COVID-19 pressures in 2021/22, the Government confirmed allocations of the £1.55 billion of unringfenced funding. This was previously announced as part of the Spending Review. For planning purposes at this stage it is reasonable to assume that there will be no further allocations. Plymouth City Council's allocation is confirmed as £7.854m
- The Government outlined the scope of a scheme to compensate for 75% of irrecoverable 2020/21 business rates and council tax losses.
- The Government confirmed the Income Compensation Scheme will continue up until the end of June 2021.
- The Government is consulting on how it intends to distribute £670 million to support households least able to afford council tax payments in 2021/22 based on the proportion of working-age local council tax support caseload.
- As expected the Better Care Fund will continue but disappointingly has been frozen.
- The Government announced a new £111 million 'lower tier services' grant. Included in this report is Plymouth's allocation of £0.398m.
- The Government announced a £254m grant for homelessness and rough sleeping. Plymouth's total allocation is £1.004m.
- There will be a new domestic abuse grant, to support implementation of the Domestic Abuse Act 2020. Specific allocations have not been announced.

3 Budget Planning Assumptions – Income

Council tax

- 3.1 The council tax base for 2021/22 has been set at 73,115 properties, a decrease of 1,488 on 2020/21 which is due to lower growth in new homes and an increase in council tax support claimants resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The council tax base for 2021/22 is included within this Cabinet agenda and will be presented to Council on 25 January 2021 for approval. The average band D council tax base is set out in the table below.

Council Tax Base (Band D Properties)	
2020/21	74,603
New Homes Growth	250
Council Tax Support Claimants	(1,209)
Collection Rate Reduction	(372)
Lower 2020/21 forecast	(157)
2021/22	73,115

- 3.2 The fall in the council tax base for 2021/22 primarily reflects the impact of an increased number of local residents who are claiming council tax support due to the current economic climate which has arisen from COVID-19. This has resulted in a £1.9m reduction in council tax income. The collection rate is also assumed to fall next year due to the Pandemic and subsequent economic downturn. This results in a £0.6m reduction.
- 3.3 As set out above, the Provisional Settlement set the council tax referendum limit at 1.99% and an adult social care precept of 3.0%. As part of developing the 2021/22 budget, Cabinet are recommended to consider adopting a 1.99% increase for Council Tax and a 3.00% level of ASC precept in order to present a balanced budget. These increases would provide an additional £2.291m in council tax and £3.454m adult social care precept; a total of £5.745m. The Government have assumed we will maximise this when referencing Council's Core Spending Power.

Business Rates

- 3.4 The impact of COVID-19 has had a significant impact upon the business rates income that Plymouth will receive. This is a national picture and reflects the impact across the retail and hospitality sector due to COVID-19. Business Rates income is forecast to fall by £2.3m in 2021/22 from the current £65.403m to a revised £63.095m. This is due to a reduction in the number of properties eligible for paying Business Rates, particularly in retail and commerce.

Revenue Support Grant (RSG)

- 3.5 As part of the Spending Review, it was confirmed that there would only be a one year funding Settlement and the Fair Funding review and move to 75% Business Rates Retention will not take place in time for the 2021/22 budget. This reflects past and ongoing uncertainty as to when these initiatives will be taken forward by Government. Therefore the 2020/21 RSG settlement has been rolled forward and uplifted for inflation. This was confirmed in the provisional settlement. The amount of RSG for Plymouth will be £9.742m in 2021/22, a £0.054m increase on 2020/21.

New Homes Bonus

- 3.6 The allocation for new homes bonus payment in 2021/22 is £1.621m. This is £1.802m less than the grant paid in 2020/21 and is due to a lower numbers of new homes and a removal of the prior years' payment.

Public Health Grant

- 3.7 The Public Health grant is another key source of income and is used to improve the health of the population, and in particular to tackle large differences in health outcomes that we see between local areas. At the time of writing this report the 2021/22 grant has yet to be advised. However, this has no impact on the bottom line as the expenditure matches the funding available.

4. Resources Summary

- 4.1 In addition to the resources referred to above the council receives a range of other "one off" specific grants. These include Better Care Fund grant and social care grant, and others which from part of the local government finance settlement announcement.

- 4.2 The maximum amount of key resources that could be available to the council are summarised below. The council tax income reflects the possible maximum 1.99% increase in council tax and 3% increase in the Adult Social Care precept. However, at this stage it should be noted that no increase in council tax has been assumed. The total Unringfenced resources available with and without the increases are set out below with a comparison to the current year.

Unringfenced Resources	2020/21	Without increases	With increases
	£m	2021/22 £m	2021/22 £m
Council Tax	118.586	115.704	121.449
Business Rates	65.403	63.010	63.010
RSG	9.688	9.742	9.742
Total	193.677	188.456	194.201

5 Spending Assumptions

- 5.1 Spending departments will absorb all increased costs arising from inflation.
- 5.2 The additional costs within the budget plans for 2021/22 are detailed in Appendix 1. These include significant cost and volume increases for Adults' and Children's services. The impact of COVID-19 related costs has been separately identified in Appendix 2.
- 5.3 The Council is committed to the National Living Wage and ensuring our care providers receive the necessary funding. This, together with additional demand and complexity within our adult social care services see a year- on year increase in the cost of providing care for the most vulnerable. Meeting the costs of care requires ongoing and increasing investment.
- 5.4 The City has an ambitious capital investment programme which supports the local economy and the revenue implications of this investment are included within the budget plans, with an additional £1.485m added in 2021/22.
- 5.5 The Government has announced a pay freeze for public sector workers outside of the NHS. There is separate negotiating machinery for local government workers nationally and it is presently assumed that the usual negotiations on pay will continue through these channels in respect of 2021.
- 5.6 A significant proportion of our revenue budget (over 70%) is spent on two main areas; adult social care services and children's social care provision. Nationally and locally the costs of providing health and wellbeing services are rising as demand and complexity increases. We have an ageing population and higher levels of young children requiring our services.
- 5.7 Following the Spending Review, we have been able to adjust our adult social care cost forecast by £2.0m against the original estimates.

- 5.8 Nationally there has been significant pressures within Children's Services. A combination of increased numbers and increasingly complex cases has meant costs have been rising beyond the existing budget provision.
- 5.9 A summary of the net additional cost pressures identified totalling £10.313m is shown in Appendix I.

6. COVID

- 6.1 Cost pressures arising from the COVID-19 pandemic of £9.604m have been included in this budget. These have been funded from a mixture of Government grants and management actions. These are made up of those that have been confirmed as part of the settlement announcement and those that are estimates. The details are included in appendix 2.

7. Settlement impact and Savings Plans

- 7.1 Prior to receipt of the provisional settlement and spending review announcement our modelling had shown a budget gap of £14.063m. The table below shows the movements which are shown in detail throughout the report to the current gap of £7.112m. This includes reversing the working assumption on council tax and precept in order to present the true funding gap.

	2021/22 £m
	FORECAST
Estimated gap before Provisional Settlement	14.063
Council Tax assumed at 1.99% & 2.00%	4.594
RSG Settlement	0.032
Business Rates Top Up adjustment	0.298
Provision for pay award moved to set-aside provision	(1.230)
New Homes Bonus reduction	0.721
Lower Tier Grant	(0.398)
Social Care Grant	(2.076)
Spending Review impact on Adult Social Care forecast	(2.000)
New Savings Plans	(6.792)
Fees and Charges	(0.100)
Current Reported Gap	7.112

- 7.2 As in previous years, the additional resources available to fund the budget for 2021/22 are insufficient to cover the base budget plus the additional costs. Therefore a range of savings is required. An analysis of savings plans by directorate and individual plans and income plans are set out below. Individual savings templates are being developed as supporting information for each saving and will be available as part of the Scrutiny meetings later this month.
- 7.3 Cabinet Members and Officers have worked to identify these savings proposals to offset these increased budget pressures which are an inevitable consequence of the ongoing reduction to funding and increased costs for Plymouth.

Savings, Income Generation and Grant Income

- 7.4 We have identified savings, income generation and grants of £1.630m which includes savings previously identified plus the impact of the Provisional Settlement.

Net Savings, Income Generation, Grant Income	2021/22 £m
Previously Identified – PFI adjustment	(0.750)
Asset Investment Fund	(0.100)
Fees and Charges	(0.108)
New Homes Bonus (drop in income)	1.802
Additional Social Care Grant 2021/22	(2.076)
New Lower Tier Grant 2021/22	(0.398)
Total Net Savings, Income Generation, Grant Income	(1.630)

- 7.5 In addition, we have identified a further £6.792m of proposed savings, which require approval by Cabinet Full details of these new savings are shown in Appendix 3.

Proposed Savings	2021/22 £m
Adults	(1.675)
Children	(1.540)
Corporate (including Finance and Chief Executive Office)	(2.422)
Place	(0.890)
Corporate items	(0.265)
Total Proposed Savings for Cabinet approval	(6.792)

8. Summary Budget Position

- 8.1 A summary of the overall budget position before any Council Tax increase is made is shown below taking into account the estimated resources available to the council, increased costs pressures and identified savings to address the funding gap.

	Draft Budget 2021/22 £m
REVENUE RESOURCES AVAILABLE	188.456
Baseline spend requirement (2020/21 net budget)	193.677
Plus identified additional costs	10.313
Overall spend requirement	203.990
Less: Net Savings, Income Generation, Grant Income	(1.630)
Less: New proposed savings for Cabinet approval	(6.792)
REVISED SPENDING FOR YEAR	195.568
Budget Gap	7.112

9. Conclusion

- 9.1 Due largely to the late distribution of the local government finance settlement the work to finalise the budget for 2021/22 is ongoing. Officers are continuing to work on the outcome of the Provisional Settlement. A full report including final options to balance the budget will be considered by Cabinet on 9 February 2021.
- 9.2 This report sets out a budget gap of £7.112m. However, this is after a number of assumptions and recommendations which need to be considered by Cabinet.
- 9.4 To get to the current position, officers have:
- Incorporated the impact of the Provisional Settlement where known;
 - Reflected the impact of the Spending Review announcements for 2021/22 costs;
 - Acknowledged the Government's commitment to a pay freeze for public sector employees. Any increase approved by the Local Government Association will be funded from a set-aside reserve;
 - Included a mix of departmental savings and income increases together with grant maximisation schemes of £1.630m.
 - Proposed additional savings requiring Cabinet approval £6.792m.
- 9.5 Officers have not made an assumption for the level of council tax increase or adult social care precept for 2021/22. This is a member decision and subject to Cabinet recommendation to Full Council.

10. Recommendations

Cabinet are asked to:

1. Note this report is based on the Provisional Settlement and subject to change in line with any Final Settlement adjustments
2. Recommend the savings options as set out in Appendix 3 to Budget Scrutiny for review;
3. Recommend the use of limited local resources including a limited use of reserves;
4. Consider the level of council tax and adult social care precept to be applied for 2021/22.

If these recommendations are adopted the draft budget can be balanced pending arrival of the final settlement in late January when the budget proposals can be finalised and submitted to Cabinet on the 9th February 2021.

Appendix I**Additional Expenditure**

Net Additional Costs	2021/22 £m
Adult Social Care – Additional Costs	3.037
Children, Young Persons and Families (CYP&F) – Additional costs	2.101
Oceansgate & Mayflower projects – reversal of one-off for 2020/21	(0.968)
Street Services department review	0.668
City Business Park – loss of rent	0.300
Reset underlying savings targets	3.110
Transformation Resource – reduction in base budget	(0.400)
Housing Benefit	1.000
Reduction in Registration Income	0.080
Financing the Approved Capital Programme	1.485
Reserves Adjustment - reversal of one-off for 2020/21	(0.100)
Net Additional Costs Total	10.313

Appendix 2

COVID-19 COSTS

COVID	2021/22 £m
Costs	
ODPH Directorate - Test & Trace	0.250
Homelessness	0.600
CYP&F additional social workers	0.385
CYP&F Covid related	2.919
Leisure	0.750
Loss of car park income	1.500
Loss of commercial rent income	3.000
Housing Benefit	0.200
Total Costs	9.604
Grant Income	
Additional COVID Grant	(7.854)
Additional COVID Grant (to be confirmed)	(0.510)
Homelessness Grant	(0.270)
Lost Income - Income Compensation Scheme (Estimate)	(0.720)
Funded from Carry forward grant income	(0.250)
Total Grant Income	(9.604)
Net COVID Costs	0.000

Savings Proposals

New Savings	2021/22 Budget Saving
Customer & Corporate Services, Finance & Chief Executive	
Discretionary spending and management actions	(0.872)
Maximise benefits from Plymouth family of companies	(1.000)
Facilities Management Review	(0.550)
	(2.422)
People	
Care Package Reviews	(0.775)
Direct Payments Reviews	(0.250)
Increase Charging Income	(0.100)
Commissioning Contracts	(0.250)
Maximise Grant Income and Management actions	(0.300)
	(1.675)
Children	
Step Up Education Participation and Skills Redesign	(0.370)
In House Fostering	(0.670)
Step Up Adolescent Support	(0.500)
	(1.540)
Place	
Asset Investment Fund	(0.400)
Fees & charges and management actions	(0.157)
Waste & Street Services Commercialisation	(0.333)
	(0.890)
Corporate	
Schools PFI contract	(0.265)
	(0.265)
Total Savings Proposals	(6.792)

Draft 2021/22 Plymouth City Council General Fund Budget

Appendix 4

2021/22 Plymouth City Council General Fund Budget

Directorate	Department	Budget 2020/21			Budget 2021/22					
		Expenditure	Income	Net budget 2020/21	Cost Increases	Total Expenditure	Proposed Savings	Additional Income and Grants	Total Income	Net budget 2021/22
Executive Office	Chief Executives Office	1.422	(0.135)	1.287	0.000	1.422	(0.100)	0.000	(0.235)	1.187
	Business Support	0.428	(0.010)	0.419	0.000	0.428	0.000	0.000	(0.010)	0.419
	Electoral Function	0.779	(0.019)	0.759	0.000	0.779	0.000	0.000	(0.019)	0.759
	Members	1.402	0.000	1.402	0.000	1.402	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.402
	Legal	1.770	(0.326)	1.444	0.189	1.959	0.000	0.000	(0.326)	1.633
	Executive Office Total	5.801	(0.490)	5.311	0.189	5.990	(0.100)	0.000	(0.590)	5.400
People	Children,Young People,Families	47.193	(4.863)	42.329	2.801	49.994	(1.540)	0.000	(6.403)	43.590
	Jt Comm & Adult Social Care	119.104	(33.412)	85.691	3.037	122.141	(1.575)	0.000	(34.987)	87.153
	Education Participation Skills	101.073	(91.804)	9.269	0.000	101.073	0.000	0.000	(91.804)	9.269
	Community Connections	5.048	(2.298)	2.750	0.000	5.048	(0.100)	0.000	(2.398)	2.650
	Management and Support People	0.212	0.000	0.212	0.000	0.212	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.212
	People Total	272.630	(132.377)	140.252	5.838	278.468	(3.215)	0.000	(135.592)	142.875
Public Health	Public Health	15.540	(15.540)	0.000	0.000	15.540	0.000	0.000	(15.540)	0.000
	Operational and Development	0.091	(0.008)	0.083	0.000	0.091	0.000	0.000	(0.008)	0.083
	Trading Standards	0.433	(0.026)	0.407	0.000	0.433	0.000	0.000	(0.026)	0.407
	Environ Health (Food & Safety)	0.424	(0.044)	0.380	0.000	0.424	0.000	0.000	(0.044)	0.380
	Bereavement Services	1.498	(3.294)	(1.796)	0.000	1.498	0.000	0.000	(3.294)	(1.796)
	Licensing	0.323	(0.399)	(0.076)	0.000	0.323	0.000	0.000	(0.399)	(0.076)
	Environmental Protection	0.676	(0.351)	0.325	0.000	0.676	0.000	(0.008)	(0.359)	0.317
	Civil Protection Unit	0.202	(0.034)	0.168	0.000	0.202	0.000	0.000	(0.034)	0.168
	Public Health Total	19.188	(19.697)	(0.509)	0.000	19.188	0.000	(0.008)	(19.705)	(0.517)
Place	Economic Development	21.351	(21.819)	(0.468)	0.000	21.351	(0.400)	(0.100)	(22.319)	(0.968)
	Strategic Planning	15.917	(6.290)	9.627	0.026	15.943	(0.080)	0.000	(6.370)	9.573
	Street Services	45.894	(28.394)	17.501	0.788	46.682	(0.410)	0.000	(28.804)	17.879
	Management and Support	0.327	(3.498)	(3.171)	0.000	0.327	0.000	1.802	(1.696)	(1.369)
	Place Total	83.489	(60.001)	23.488	0.814	84.303	(0.890)	1.702	(59.189)	25.114
Finance	Finance	18.243	(3.132)	15.111	1.485	19.728	(0.066)	(0.750)	(3.948)	15.780
Customer and Corporate Service	Customer Services	64.351	(64.158)	0.193	1.080	65.431	(0.090)	0.000	(64.248)	1.183
	Human Resources & OD	14.835	(2.803)	12.032	0.000	14.835	(0.500)	0.000	(3.303)	11.532
	ICT	9.807	(0.392)	9.415	0.000	9.807	(0.874)	0.000	(1.266)	8.541
	Departmental Management	(0.253)	0.000	(0.253)	0.000	(0.253)	(0.792)	0.000	(0.792)	(1.045)
	Transformation	9.193	(0.078)	9.115	(0.400)	8.793	0.000	0.000	(0.078)	8.715
	Customer and Corporate Service Total	116.175	(70.563)	45.613	2.165	118.340	(2.322)	(0.750)	(73.635)	44.706
Corporate Items	Corporate Items	6.350	(26.827)	(20.477)	1.307	7.657	(0.265)	(2.574)	(29.666)	(22.009)
Grand Total		503.632	(309.955)	193.677	10.313	513.945	(6.792)			
								Total Resources Available		(188.456)
								Budget Gap		7.112

Appendix 5**Plymouth's COVID-19 recovery and renewal framework priorities**

Priority Area	Key elements
Restating the Council's vision and values	<p>Carry a special urgency given the impact of the pandemic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A City to be proud of • One of Europe's most vibrant cities where an outstanding quality of life is enjoyed by everyone • Making Plymouth a fairer city where everyone does their bit • Democratic, responsible, fair and co-operative • A growing city and a caring council • How we will deliver
Managing the Council's finances	<p>Unprecedented impacts on income, demand for services and the local and national economy – a sound financial footing is a prerequisite for delivering the rest of our programmes and messaging about making and sticking to tough decisions and existing plans, delivering efficiencies and understanding each other's challenges across directorates is important. The importance of financial management and planning need to underpin all of the priority areas</p>
Resurgam: supporting the economy	<p>How the city responds to the recession will impact us for years to come – it's important that everyone understands the importance of delivering key infrastructure and cultural projects, sector based recovery priorities, buying local and plans for jobs and homes</p>
<p>Minimising inequalities and supporting individuals and communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caring for Plymouth • Supporting children • Building community resilience 	<p>Acknowledgement of the impacts of the pandemic on existing inequalities in the city: for children, vulnerable adults, those in care homes, educational attainment, and broader health outcomes. Retaining and developing what we have learned about working with communities and the VCS, and remembering 'the wedge' – that services and support for communities spans general support and joint working with individuals, prevention and resilience all the way through to acute focussed support</p>
<p>The Way We Work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People Strategy • Business Support • Accommodation • Digital approaches to organisational and service delivery • Customer engagement 	<p>Adopted in March 2020 and focussed around attracting and keeping the right people (employer of choice), being well led, supporting inclusivity and diversity, promoting wellbeing, and aspiring to be the best</p> <p>Joining up and aligning services, sharing resources, setting consistent standards and developing skills</p> <p>Rationalising our estate and recognising changes in working practices, financial and environmental drivers for change</p> <p>Embrace and promote new digital approaches, lead by example in using new systems</p> <p>More than the digital agenda – includes getting the basics right, understanding customer needs, aligning services, rationalising 'front doors' and having a coherent and visible approach to engagement and community resilience</p>
Responding to the climate emergency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement and behaviour change • Waste minimisation and recycling • Buildings: reducing emissions • Travel and transport • Renewable energy