

Subject:	Budget Update & Directorate Budget Strategies for 2010/11		
Date of Meeting:	Cabinet 9 December 2009 ECSOSC 18 December 2009		
Report of:	Director of Finance & Resources		
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Key Decision:	Yes	Forward Plan No: CAB 13209	
Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 In July 2009 Cabinet considered and agreed the budget setting process for 2010/11 in the context of having reasonable certainty over government funding allocations for next year. This report sets out latest budget information including the budget strategies for each service. The budget strategies cover financial and service pressures and savings proposals and have been developed within the indicative cash limits agreed by Cabinet in July.
- 1.2 The report follows the agreed timetable which allows Scrutiny approximately 6 weeks to review and report on these proposals before Cabinet considers the overall budget package in greater detail in February. Given the length of time between publication of this report and the final decisions by Council there will inevitably be some changes in income and expenditure projections that come to light requiring amendments to the proposals. However this report is based on the best available information at this time.
- 1.3 The resource projections continue to be based on an indicative council tax increase for 2010/11 of 2.5%. Given the financial uncertainties created by the recession and government resource allocations beyond 2010/11 the medium term financial strategy agreed at Budget Council provided for some flexibilities within the budget by creating risk provisions and a reserves strategy. This report asks Cabinet to consider the allocation of the risk provisions and reserves potentially available for use in 2010/11 in the light of the latest information on the budget, the budget strategies and the service priorities of the Cabinet.
- 1.4 Cabinet are reminded that all decisions about the 2010/11 budget should be taken in the light of a high level of uncertainty regarding resource levels for future years. Over 60% of the council's gross expenditure is funded by government grants which will not be determined for 2011/12 until after the general election.

The position on the national finances will be updated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the pre-budget report due to be announced on 9 December 2009, but a significant squeeze on public spending is inevitable to help address the growing levels of government debt.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Cabinet notes the latest budget projections and the key budget issues for future years.
- 2.2 That Cabinet considers and agrees the reserves allocations set out in paragraphs 3.4 and 3.5.
- 2.3 That Cabinet notes and agrees the risk provisions set out in table 4.
- 2.4 That Cabinet considers and agrees the budget strategies for each service as set out in appendix 1.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS

Latest Position 2009/10

- 3.1 The Targeted Budget Management month 6 report presented to Cabinet on 12 November 2009 showed a projected overspend for the general fund of £0.617m including NHS Trust managed section 75 services. Recovery actions are being undertaken and significant progress is being made to ensure that spending overall remains within budget. However, any projected overspend that remains at the time of setting the 2010/11 budget will need to be incorporated within the budget estimates.

Reserves position

- 3.2 The working balance is currently £9m and is planned to remain at this level over the next 3 years. The following table shows the projected usable reserves position over and above the working balance assuming spending is in line with current projections. The table particularly reflects the improved council tax collection fund performance in 2008/09 and 2009/10.

Table 1 – Usable Reserves	£m
Reserves Balance at 1 April 2009	2.3
Planned transfers agreed at Budget Council 26 Feb 2009	-1.9
Improvements in council tax collection fund and taxbase in 2008/09 actual, 2009/10 and 2010/11 projections	3.5
Resources generated in 2010/11 by lower than anticipated pay award in 2009/10	1.3
Provisional funding for 2009/10 overspend based on month 6 projection	-0.6
Allocations approved by Cabinet during 2009/10 including the Marina planning appeal, swine-flu preparations and Building Schools for the Future	-1.0
Recommended transfers for 2009/10 as detailed in paragraph 3.4	-1.6
Balance estimated as at 1 April 2010	2.0
Provisional allocations recommended for 2010/11 budget as	-1.5

detailed in paragraph 3.5	
Balance required for one-off risks as detailed in paragraph 3.6	0.5

- 3.3 The £0.7m contribution in 2009/10 included within the month 6 projection and a further £0.55m allocation in 2010/11 to Building Schools for the Future programme will bring the total projected support for the project to its target level of £5m over 5 years.
- 3.4 The table includes recommended transfers in 2009/10 for the following:
- £0.070m for preparations for the introduction of Carbon Trading in 2011/12 including establishing the council's carbon footprint.
 - Transfer of £1.0m to the restructure/redundancy reserve to help spread the costs of reducing staff numbers within the service budget strategies.
 - The upfront costs of £0.5m required to support the development of the LDV previously funded from the receipts from the sale of council houses that have not materialised. This represents temporary funding until the LDV is operational and these costs are repaid. It is possible that up to a further £0.2m may be required to see this project through to financial close and if this arose, it would need to be funded from the balance for one off risks.
- 3.5 It is proposed to provisionally allocate £1.5m general reserves to support the following Cabinet priorities:
- £0.5m investment in the Seafront for the painting of railings and improvements to shelters as well as work at Hove Lagoon;
 - £0.5m to provide a new Transport Model for the City which will be valid for 5 years and will be a platform for planning a range of potential improvements to the city's transport infrastructure for example the development of new park and ride facilities;
 - £0.180m to ensure that Castleham Industries can be kept open in 2010/11 to allow time for careful consideration of the future options for the staff delivering this service in the light of substantial cuts in central government funding;
 - £0.100m for additional internal programme and project management capacity to ensure the delivery of the savings proposals for 2010-11;
 - £0.070m to support the delivery of the council's 10:10 commitment; and
 - £0.150m start up loan funding for a new model of delivery of youth services linked to the Falmer Academy.
- 3.6 Income and expenditure budgets will remain under pressure during the period of recovery from recession next year. The budget therefore needs to make provision for possible one off risks of temporary additional costs or reductions in income as a result of the prevailing economic conditions. A risk provision of £0.5m has been set aside for this purpose from usable reserves.

Resource Projections

Local Government Finance Settlement 2010/11

- 3.7 The provisional settlement for 2010/11 was announced on 26 November 2009. It showed that the council will continue to receive the minimum floor increase in formula grant of 1.5% or £1.6m for 2010/11 compared to a national average increase of 2.6%.

Dedicated Schools Grant

- 3.8 Schools funding in the form of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) will increase by £6.9m in 2010/11 based on the indicative allocations announced on 27 October 2009. This sum is based on estimated pupil numbers so may change when the results of the January 2010 pupil count are known. The increased amount per pupil of 4.1% in 2010/11 is however fixed.

Year	Dedicated Schools Grant £m	Cash increase	Per pupil increase	National Per pupil increase
2009/10	127.734			
2010/11	134.682	+5.4%	+4.1%	+4.3%

- 3.9 Not every school within Brighton & Hove will receive an increase in their budget of 4.1% per pupil as each local authority has a local funding formula, which distributes the total funding between each school. The formula does provide for a minimum funding guarantee of 2.1% per pupil. This local formula is agreed by the Schools Forum which is made up of representatives from local schools.

Council Tax

- 3.10 The resource estimates in this report reflect the council tax strategy agreed at Cabinet in July 2009. The planned increase is 2.5% for 2010/11.

Fees & Charges

- 3.11 Fees and charges are assumed to increase by the standard inflation assumption of 2% each year. Details of fees and charges for 2010/11 will be presented to the relevant Cabinet Member Meetings (CMM) and onto Council where appropriate prior to Budget Council. Culture and Enterprise fees and charges were presented to Culture, Recreation and Tourism CMM on 15th September 2009.

Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LABGI)

- 3.12 The LABGI grant is now allocated on the basis of sub-regions and the council forms part of the East Sussex sub-region. The provisional grant payable in 2010/11 may be announced in time for the February budget meeting. The national allocation for 2010/11 was previously confirmed at £50m and based on the council's share of this years allocation the council could receive about £0.2m. However any recommendations on the use of LABGI funds cannot be agreed until the grant is formally confirmed and assuming confirmation before the end of January will be incorporated into the Cabinet budget at the February meeting.

Concessionary Fares Funding

- 3.13 The Department for Transport have issued a consultation paper on the possible redistribution of special grant funding in 2010/11 for the national bus concession which has a closing date of 30 December. Under the proposed revised distribution there is no change to the council's special grant allocation for

2010/11 and therefore the budgeted concessionary bus fares special grant remains at £1.8m out of the total costs to the council of £9.3m. The final allocations are due to be included in the Government's response to the consultation in January 2010.

Expenditure Projections

Budget Estimates Table

- 3.14 The table below shows the latest budget estimates for 2010/11 and the following sections set out more information on each heading.

Table 3. Budget Estimates (including corporate budgets)	2010/11
	£m
2009/10 Budget b/fwd	219.0
Inflation	2.9
Risk Provision	1.8
Commitments	1.1
Service pressures and reinvestment	12.3
Efficiency Savings	-7.9
Other savings	-3.8
Further CYPT savings to be identified	-1.9
Total	223.5
Change in contribution to / from reserves	3.6
Budget Requirement	227.1
Funding Projections:	
Formula Grant	109.2
Council Tax	117.9
Total	227.1

Function & Funding Changes

- 3.15 The indicative finance settlement for 2010/11 did not include any significant function and funding changes.

Pay award and Inflation assumptions

- 3.16 The revised pay award assumption built into the budget for the 2010/11 estimates is 1%. This assumption has been revised since the July following the lower settlement of the 2009/10 pay award. The cash limits have been adjusted to reflect this change and the ongoing resources released from this change have been earmarked for potential additional employer pension costs in future years. If the pay award is lower than 1% then the balance will be retained as a further contingency against single status future pay costs.
- 3.17 The provision for general inflation on both expenditure and income is 2% per annum. Compared to current levels of inflation in the economy this is high but inflation is expected to increase considerably during 2010/11.

Pension fund triennial review

- 3.18 The pension fund contributions of every local authority are reviewed by independent actuaries every 3 years by law. The next review will be carried out next year and revised contribution rates will be established for implementation in 2011/12. The contribution rates depend on a wide range of factors but the main ones relate to the investment performance of the fund, the levels of pay and pensions and the projected longevity of current and future pensioners.
- 3.19 The council is one of 60 employers within the East Sussex Pension Fund managed by East Sussex County Council (ESCC). Although the Pension Fund has performed consistently above the average for local authority pension funds it has not been immune to the impact of adverse changes in the financial and property markets. However, following an average increase of more than 50% in stock markets across the globe since April 2009 the overall value of the Fund in mid-November was £1.7 billion, about the same level as at the last triennial valuation.
- 3.20 At the annual pension fund forum held by ESCC on 19 November the actuary indicated that the combination of improved investment performance and a smoothing factor within the calculation of future contribution rates, would mean that the latest estimate of the increase in 2011/12 for employers contribution rates is on average 1% which can be phased in over 3 years. The impact of future pay may mean that the increase for the council is slightly higher so 1.5% will be allowed in the budget projections i.e. 0.5% increase or about £0.65m per annum from 2011/12.

Equal Pay Future Pay

- 3.21 Recurrent resources of £1.63m are included in the contingency to meet the ongoing costs of future pay. This provision was based on the estimated impact of job evaluation at the time of setting the budget. No further resources are planned for future years.

Cash Limits (% change in budgets)

- 3.22 Cash limits are generated from percentage changes in the 2009/10 adjusted budget based on both the projected demographic changes in services and the Cabinet priorities for services. These percentage changes are net of savings, service pressures and reinvestment and are designed to provide allocations that services are expected to manage within to deliver a balanced budget. The cash limits agreed by Cabinet in July have been adjusted to reflect the lower pay award assumption so that no service is better or worse off. The budget strategies included in appendix 1 set out proposals for each service managing within these cash limits.

Commitments

- 3.23 A number of commitments have been included to cover the planned changes in budgets from previous decisions. In 2010/11 these include £0.25m replacement funding for grants that have come to an end, additional financing costs of funding

the capital programme and part of the financing costs to provide a £5m contribution towards a new Historic Records Centre known as The Keep.

Risk Provision

3.24 The resources available to cover risks in the 2010/11 budget are £1.95m. The financial risks in CYPT in relation to the council’s responsibilities for safeguarding young people are significant. It is therefore proposed to provisionally earmark £1m from this provision to cover the currently anticipated costs of Looked After Children. Work on the CYPT budget strategy will continue to consider whether any reduction in this assumption can safely be made. A minimum ongoing risk provision of £0.75m is needed to cover uncertainties within 2010/11 and as a reflection of the scale of the savings package that is proposed and the risks associated with delivery. £0.2m from the total resources will be allocated for investment in youth outreach work, particularly targeted at early intervention to prevent social exclusion.

Table 4 – Risk Provisions	£m
Unallocated 2009/10 risk provision carried forward to 2010/11	0.75
Concessionary Fares Budget agreed transfer to risk provision	0.70
Planned 2010/11 Risk Provision	0.50
Total Cabinet approved provisions	1.95
Earmarked for Looked After Children	-1.00
Investment in youth outreach work	-0.20
General Risk Provision	0.75

Corporate Budgets

Financing Costs

3.25 In the budget reserves of £2.9m were earmarked for 2009 - 2012 to fund reductions in investment interest income until interest rates were projected to return to average levels of about 5%. It is now anticipated that interest rates will remain at lower levels for longer than originally anticipated, however, the debt repayment policy of using invested reserves to repay long term debt should ensure that the original level of earmarked reserves are sufficient for the next 3 years. The financing costs 2010/11 budget and the projections for future years are being prepared and will form part of the budget report to Cabinet in February.

Insurance Premia

3.26 The council achieved substantial savings when it tendered the bulk of its insurance cover in 2008. Although the agreements are for 3 years the insurance companies re-quote at the end of each financial year for the coming year. The insurance market remains relatively soft and it is not expected that there will be any significant cost increases for next year although the outcome will not be known until March 2010. However, Officers will take the opportunity to ask for a range of quotes with different levels of cover in order to establish the optimal balance between the level of the premia and the level of cover. Preliminary work undertaken on the insurance of the vehicle fleet has identified an opportunity to deliver savings on this element of the portfolio.

Concessionary Bus Fares

- 3.27 The budget projections for 2010/11 allowed for an increase of 5% in the budget for concessionary fares net of government grant. The payments to the bus operators largely depend upon the number of journeys undertaken by concessionaires and the level of bus fares. The number of journeys has increased by approximately 7% so far this year and it is anticipated that further significant increases will occur next year. Recent discussions with local operators suggest that they currently do not have plans to increase fares next year but this position could change depending on their ability to control costs and maintain commercial revenue during the economic downturn. Based on the most recent information the budget increase allowed for in the original projections for 2010/11 is therefore considered reasonable.

Service Pressures

- 3.28 Directorate Budget Strategies incorporate service pressures of £11.7m above inflation that are being managed within the cash limit. The most significant pressures are included in the following table -

Table 5 – Main Service Pressures	£'m
Increased Independent Foster Agency and in-house foster placements. The increased costs reflect the significant increase in placement numbers during 2009/10 and a continuing rising trend.	2.5
Demographic growth in Adult Social Care clients (Physical disabilities, vulnerable older people, mental health and learning disabilities).	1.6
Reduction of income due to the recession (Royal Pavilion, development control, Land Charges & commercial property portfolio)	1.3
Reduction in Area Based Grants for preserved rights, supporting people and the removal of the transitional funding for Stronger Safer Communities grant and Neighbourhood Renewal Fund grant.	1.2
Adult social care learning disability transitions from CYPT	0.9
Changes in housing benefit regulations	0.5

Savings

- 3.29 A total savings package of £11.7m has been identified within the Directorate Budget Strategies, £7.9m through efficiencies, £1.3m through additional income and £2.5m through service changes. Details of the savings proposals are shown in appendix 1.
- 3.30 Work in CYPT is still ongoing to identify the scale of potential savings in their corporate critical budgets and other savings opportunities in order to balance to their cash limit.

- 3.31 Culture & Enterprise, Environment and Finance & Resources have identified savings for reinvestment in addition to those required to meet their respective cash limits. Details of the reinvestment proposals are contained within their budget strategies.

Staffing Implications

- 3.32 The council is committed to working positively with staff and unions to avoid compulsory redundancies wherever possible through redeployment. To minimise the impact on staff Human Resources will continue to co-ordinate redeployment through the following measures:
- The examination of every post will be advertised as a possible redeployment for staff at risk before other applications are considered.
 - Searches for alternative employment options across the council in partnership with the Trade Unions. As with the previous 2 years regular meetings with the Trade Unions will be scheduled.
 - Supported trial periods and identification of training needs.
- 3.33 The Directorate Budget Strategies include the deletion of an estimated 101.7 full time equivalent (FTE) posts and at the time of writing this report there are approximately 53.4 FTE redundancies which are likely to reduce significantly as the measures listed above are implemented.

Budget Projections and Issues for Future Years

- 3.34 A medium term financial strategy covering the years 2010/11 to 2012/13 will be prepared as part of the budget report to Cabinet in February. Part of the report will be an analysis of the key budget risks facing the council. The 2 areas of the budget at greatest risk and uncertainty in the medium term are government grants and pay related budgets.
- 3.35 In 2009/10 the council is likely to receive about £450m in government revenue grants representing approximately 61% of gross expenditure on all services. The level of government funding beyond 2010/11 is unknown and will not be determined until after the next general election when the local government finance settlement is announced in November / December 2010.
- 3.36 Approximately 40% of gross expenditure or £300m is spent on pay and pay related items. Assumptions therefore about the level of future pay awards, pension contributions and single status future pay and allowances have a major impact upon the overall budget.

Capital Programme

- 3.37 The projected capital programme for 2010/11 of £61.3m is shown in appendix 2. This represents a significant level of investment by the council in difficult financial times and is one of the largest capital programmes in the council's history. The council has received an indicative settlement for 2010/11 and the government resources available are reasonably certain. The proposed programme is fully funded subject to the achievement of £2.4m net capital receipts including Right to Buy sales.

- 3.38 The Corporate investment funds include £0.75m for the Strategic Investment Fund which will be allocated as part of the budget report in February; £1m for the Asset Management Fund and £0.435m for the ICT Fund which will be allocated in March/April 2010.
- 3.39 In addition to the programme set out in appendix 2 there are resources available to fully fund the construction of the new Falmer Academy, and there is a planned contribution in 2010/11 to the Brighton Centre redevelopment reserve of £0.5m.

Housing Revenue Account

- 3.40 The latest HRA Budget projections as shown in appendix 1, take into account the financial position as at TBM month 6 and the required level of reserves. In setting this budget, officers have taken into account the required level of efficiency savings but also sought to maximise the level of resources available to invest in meeting the Decent Homes Standard.
- 3.41 The budget projections are very provisional at this stage because the draft annual subsidy determination for 2010/11 has not yet been received.
- 3.42 The service has identified savings of £0.636 million, the equivalent of a 6% savings target which will be used to fund inflationary increases such as the pay award.
- 3.43 The HRA will need to fund service pressures from its revenue surpluses which are currently used to fund works in the capital programme. The HRA Budget projections assume a continuing increase in 'Negative Subsidy' resulting in the HRA paying an additional £0.769 million of rental income to the government. The service pressures also include funding to support the Housing Improvement Programme and the Turning the Tide Strategy.

2010/11 Budget Timetable

- 3.44 Timetable for the remaining budget papers.

Council Taxbase	Cabinet	14 Jan 2010
General Fund Revenue Budget and Council Tax	Cabinet	11 Feb 2010
Housing Revenue Account	HMCC	8 Feb 2010
	Cabinet	11 Feb 2010
Capital Resources and Capital Investment	Cabinet	11 Feb 2010
Budget Council		25 Feb 2010

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The budget and council tax consultation process was agreed by the cross party Budget Review Group. For 2010/11 the consultation has involved a budget questionnaire to a random sample of residents across the city. The results of this consultation are due in December 2009 and will be circulated to all Members. The council has a statutory duty to consult with business ratepayers and a meeting will be held in January/February.

- 4.2 The Budget Report to Council in February 2010 will represent a culmination of the budget process which will have included a number of consultative processes including members, trade unions and in some cases service users.

5 FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 These are contained in the main body of the report.

Finance Officer Consulted: Mark Ireland

Date: 24/11/09

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 Agreeing the budget strategies of each directorate is part of the Cabinet's function of formulating budget proposals for subsequent consideration and adoption by Full Council. Cabinet is also able to consider and agree the provisional risk provision and reserves allocations. The recommendations at paragraph 2 above are therefore proper to be considered and, if appropriate, approved by Cabinet

Lawyer Consulted:

Oliver Dixon

Date: 24/11/09

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 The budget includes provisions to meet both equal pay compensation and address inequalities in pay through the implementation of job evaluation. All budget proposals have been considered by each Directorate to determine whether they are covered by existing Equalities Impact Assessments or whether new ones are required and if so, how and when they need to be completed. Where appropriate the findings from existing Equality Impact Assessments have been considered as part of the proposal process.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 Sustainability issues will be taken into account throughout the council's budget setting process.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 The budget projections identify resources to help replace the reduction in government grants funding of certain crime and disorder initiatives.

Risk & Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 There are considerable risks to the council's short and medium term budget strategy including the impact of the recession and changes in the national economy, spending exceeding budgets, pressures on existing budgets, further reductions in grant, legislative change demands for new spend. The budget process includes the recognition of these risks in determining the 2010/11 budget and relevant risk provisions are set out in the body of the report.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

5.7 The report is relevant to the whole of the city.

6 EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S)

6.1 The budget process allows all parties to put forward viable alternative budget and council tax proposals to Budget Council on 25 February. Budget Council has the opportunity to debate both the proposals put forward by Cabinet at the same time as any viable alternative proposals.

7 REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 The council is under a statutory duty to set its council tax and budget before 11 March each year. This report sets out the latest budget assumptions, process and timetable to meet its statutory duty.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Directorate Budget Strategies and overall summary.
2. Capital Investment Programme 2010/11

Documents in Members' Rooms

None

Background Documents

1. Files held within Strategic Finance section