Cabinet - 12 February 2025

Supplementary Report - Corporate Budget Plan 2025/26 to 2028/29, incorporating the Capital Strategy; and the Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2025/26

Revenue

Since the dispatch of the budget plan to Cabinet on 03 February 2025 the final Local Government Settlement was published on 05 February 2025.

The final settlement included the following amendments:

- Increase in National Insurance Contributions funding £785,445 taking the total funding to £2,435,445 (estimated direct cost to the council is £3.3m, government funding only covers c74% despite the increase);
- Increase in Children's Social Care Prevention Grant £203,519 taking the total funding to £3,088,074. The grant is ringfenced and investment has been increased to match the increased grant income;
- Reduction in Top Up Grant £211,022 taking total funding to £22,561,963;

There have also been other changes outside of the settlement as follows:

- Reduction in West Midlands Combined Authority Transport Levy investment of £231,038 taking the revised charge to £11,907,647;
- Increase in Environment Agency Levy of £2,087 taking the revised charge to £89,530;
- Increase in Public Health Grant £1,047,591 taking the total funding to £21,016,408. The grant is ringfenced and investment has been increased to match the increased grant income;
- Additional investment into corporate pay and pension allocation £618,156;
- Re-phasing of saving P5 Relocation of the Leather Museum saving £190,000 from 2025/26 to 2026/27;
- Re-phasing of saving OP33 Leisure review and health initiatives £165,000 from 2025/26 to 2026/27;

Annex 4 of this report has been updated to reflect the above changes and attached.

All of the above have an impact on the General Fund and have impacted on the statutory determinations (councils' gross income and expenditure). The Statutory determinations have been amended to reflect all of the above amendments since the despatch of the budget report to Cabinet on 12 February 2025. There are also still a number of final grant allocations to be received at this time, and officers will ensure that spend is adjusted to reflect final grant allocations, as appropriate.

The final levies and Police and Fire Precepts have not yet been received. Any changes to those following receipt of final figures will be reported to Council on 26 February 2025.

In respect of the Chief Finance Officer (S151 Officer) Section 25 Report, Annex 11 the impact of the final settlement does not change the Chief Finance Officer's recommendations in respect of the level or adequacy of reserves.

Capital

Since the dispatch of the budget plan to Cabinet on 12 February 2025 Walsall Council has been awarded a £20m capital grant from MHCLG for the Community Regeneration Programme. The Community Regeneration Programme for Walsall will bring together public and private sector partners along with the council to devise a programme of activity that will create opportunities for Walsall people and tackle health and inequality problems. The grant will be awarded in two payments with £10m received in 2024/25 and £10m in 2025/26.

The grant will increase the externally funded element of the capital programme for 2025/26 by £10m to £53.96m as detailed in **Annex 9**. This will have no impact on the revenue budget, or the council's borrowing already included in the report.

Annex 5 of this report has been updated to reflect the above changes and attached.

The attached is the revised recommendation that incorporates the above changes. Due to timing of the announcement the updated report and Section B 'Corporate Budget Plan' have not been reproduced for this meeting.

Ross Hutchinson, **☎** 01922 658411, ⊠ Ross.Hutchinson@walsall.gov.uk

Corporate Budget Plan 2025/26 to 2028/29, incorporating the Capital Strategy; and the Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2025/26

Recommendation

3.3 That Cabinet approve and recommend to Council, the following:

3.3.1 Revenue

- a) The financial envelope of resources for 2025/26 as set out in **Section B Part 1** "The Revenue Corporate Budget Plan and Capital Programme".
- b) A Walsall Council net council tax requirement for 2025/26 of £162.78m and a 2.99% increase in council tax, plus a further 2% increase for Adult Social Care precept (total council tax increase of 4.99%).
- c) That the recommendations of the S151 Officer in respect of the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the budget calculations and the adequacy of reserves **be approved**, including the levels of central contingency and reserves and an opening general reserve of not less than £24.12m, as set out in the S151 Officer Section 25 statement in **Annex 12** of the Budget Plan.
- d) The (estimated) levies below for outside bodies and Cabinet **approve** that the final figures **be substituted** for these provisional ones once they are available at the Council meeting on 26 February 2025. (An estimate has been used within this report based on informal notification from the authorities).

LEVY	AMOUNT (£)
West Midlands Combined Authority Transport Levy	11,907,647
Environment Agency	89,530

- e) The following statutory determinations (references are to the Local Government Finance Act, 1992 as amended), and subject to any final changes arising from receipt of final precepts and levies, receipt of final grant allocations, technical/legislative guidance and final specific grant allocations, and Cabinet approve that these will be substituted at the Council meeting on 26 February 2025 for the final figures once received:
 - I. £849,006,475 being the aggregate gross expenditure, which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) (a) to (f) of the Act.
 - II. £686,230,084 being the aggregate income which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) (a) to (d) of the Act.
 - III. £162,776,391 being the amount, by which the aggregate at (e) (I) above exceeds the aggregate at (e) (II), calculated by the council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its council tax requirement for the year.

IV. £2,188.58 being the amount at (e) (III) above, divided by the council tax base of 74,375.36, calculated by the council in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year (average council tax at band D).

V. Valuation bands

Being amounts given by multiplying the amount at (e) (IV) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5 (1) of the Local Government Act 1992, is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the council in accordance with Section 30 and 36 of the Act as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwelling listed in different valuation bands.

Α	В	С	D
1,459.05	1,702.23	1,945.40	2,188.58
E	F	G	н
	•	•	• •

f) The draft precept from the Fire and Rescue Authority and the Police and Crime Commissioner, issued to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992, for each of the categories of dwelling shown below and Cabinet **approve** that the final figures **be substituted** once they are available at the Council meeting on 26 February 2025.

PRECEPTING AUTHORITY	VALUATION BANDS						
Police And	Α	В	С	D			
Crime Commissioner	153.00	178.50	204.00	229.50			
	E	F	G	Н			
	280.50	331.50	382.50	459.00			
Fire & Rescue	Α	В	С	D			
	53.46	62.37	71.28	80.19			
	E	F	G	Н			
	98.01	115.83	133.65	160.38			

g) That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (e) (v) and (f) above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30 (2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the amounts of council tax for 2024/25 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below and Cabinet **approve** that the final figures **be substituted** once the final precepts are available at the Council meeting on 26 February 2025.

Α	В	С	D
1,665.51	1,943.10	2,220.68	2,498.27
E	F	G	Н
3,053.44	3,608.61	4,163.78	4,996.54

- h) That notice **be given** of the council tax within twenty one days of it being set by publishing details of the same in the "Express and Star" newspaper circulating in the Authority's area.
- i) That the S151 Officer **be instructed** to take all necessary action in relation to council tax, community charge and national non-domestic rates, including, where appropriate, the signing of all documents, billing, the giving of notices and the taking of necessary steps to ensure collection thereof.
- j) That the S151 Officer be delegated authority to make transfers to and from reserves in order to ensure that reserves are maintained as necessary and in particular, adjusted when reserves are no longer required, or need to be replenished.
- k) That, pursuant to Section 52ZB and 52ZC of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the relevant basic amount of council tax for the Council is not excessive in relation to determining whether a referendum is required.

3.3.2 Capital

- a) The allocation of capital expenditure plans as set out in Part 1 "The Revenue Corporate Budget Plan and Capital Programme" and that the capital and leasing programme as set out in Annex 10 be approved bearing in mind the principle that unless affordable from within current resources, specific projects funded by borrowing will not be commenced until a payback agreement is in place. Schemes funded from grant will commence when final allocations are published.
- b) That the S151 Officer be **delegated authority** to determine how each source of finance is used to fund the overall capital programme and to alter the overall mix of financing as necessary, to maximise the flexibility of capital resources used and minimise the ongoing costs of borrowing to the council.
- c) That the S151 Officer, after consultation with the Deputy Leader of the Council (Portfolio Holder for Finance), be **delegated authority** to release capital resources held back for any contingent items that may arise (earmarked capital receipts for essential or emergency spend), and also for any match funding requirements that may be required of the council in order to secure additional external capital funding (e.g. bids for government or other funding).
- d) That the S151 Officer be **delegated authority** to determine the use of capital receipts in relation to the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts to ensure that they meet the requirements set out by the Secretary of State.
- e) The Capital and Investment Strategy set out in **Annex 7** of the Budget Plan **be** approved.
- f) The Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy set out in **Annex 11** of the Budget Plan **be approved.**

3.3.3 Treasury Management

- a) **Part 2A** The Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2025/26 onwards, including the council's borrowing requirement, borrowing limits, and the adoption of the prudential indicators, **be approved**.
- b) That decisions to effect movements between conventional borrowing and other long term liabilities, such as leases, **be delegated** to the S151 Officer.
- c) That decisions to use capital receipts or borrowing within the framework of approved prudential indicators **be delegated** to the S151 Officer.
- d) Part 2B Treasury Management Policies, be approved.

Annex 4 - MTFO movements since reported to Cabinet 16 October 2025

	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m	Total £m
Gap as per report to Cabinet 16 October 2024	11.05	7.47	0.00	0.00	18.52
Changes to investments					
NEW – Energy cost	0.70	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.70
NEW - Remove third party spend saving	2.25	(0.75)	(0.75)	(0.75)	0.00
NEW - Remove TVI saving	2.70	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.70
NEW - Ongoing software costs following completion of Enabling technology capital project	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.08	0.08
NEW - Continuation of Walsall Connected initiative	0.00	0.06	0.00	0.00	0.06
NEW - Senior Partnership officer to support Walsall 2040	0.02	0.00	(0.02)	0.00	0.00
NEW – Additional HR advisory posts	0.00	0.09	0.00	0.00	0.09
NEW - Revenue implications of leasing	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.50
NEW - Waste short term contact	0.87	(0.43)	(0.44)	0.00	0.00
NEW - Middlemore Lane equipment lease	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.25
NEW - Children's Social Care Prevention Grant	3.09	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.09
NEW - Family Hubs Start for Life Programme Income	0.09	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.09
NEW - Domestic Abuse grant	0.18	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.18
NEW - Homelessness Prevention grant	0.32	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.32
NEW - Increase in national insurance contributions	3.30	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.30
NEW - Pay Award	2.14	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.14
NEW – Remove Town hall and events saving	0.04	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.04
NEW – Public Health Grant	1.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.05
No 2 Cloud/ Microsoft licences and infrastructure costs (reduce and reprofile)	(0.24)	0.20	0.00	0.00	(0.04)
No 8 Transport Levy	(0.23)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(0.23)
No 10 Carer allowances uplifts (removed)	(0.11)	(0.12)	0.00	0.00	(0.23)
No 11 & 25 External framework placement uplifts (merged and one-off increase)	0.18	(0.18)	0.00	0.00	0.00

	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m	Total £m
No 13 Children in care growth (re-	0.38	0.14	(0.34)	(0.11)	0.07
profile and increase)	0.00		(0.0.7)	(0111)	
No 14 Children placement moves (re-	(0.26)	0.09	0.09	0.10	0.02
profile and increase)	(/				
No 15 Home to school transport	0.07	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.09
(increase)					
No 32 Independent fostering agency framework retender outcome	0.10	0.06	0.07	0.05	0.28
(increase)	0.10	0.06	0.07	0.05	0.26
No 53 One-off transformation					
programme investment to support					
savings within customer experience	(0.04)	0.00	0.05	(0.01)	0.00
saving (re-profile)					
No 71 Uplift in care provider fees					
(impact of new living wage and	2.45	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.45
national insurance contributions)	2.40	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.40
No 71 Uplift in care provider fees (re-					_
profile and reduction)	(2.14)	(4.22)	(2.10)	0.81	(7.65)
No 73 Social Care increase in existing					
service user placements costs		0.40		0.44	0.4-
following strength-based reviews (re-	(0.18)	3.16	3.08	3.41	9.47
profile and increase)					
No 75 Inflationary increase for S117					
Mental Health service users care	0.01	0.01	(0.01)	(0.01)	0.00
costs (re-profile)			, ,	, ,	
No 84 Social care increase in demand	0.03	0.42	0.49	0.69	1.62
pressures (inflow/attrition)	0.03	0.42	0.49	0.09	1.63
Total changes to investments	17.02	(1.46)	0.63	4.26	20.45
Changes to savings proposals					
NEW - One-off reduction in elections	(0.22)	0.33	0.00	0.00	0.00
due to a fallow year in 25/26	(0.33)	0.33	0.00	0.00	0.00
NEW - Airport dividend – one off	0.00	(2.50)	2.50	0.00	0.00
income	0.00	(2.50)	2.50	0.00	0.00
NEW - Review of the family drugs and	0.00	(0.09)	0.00	0.00	(0.09)
alcohol model and provision.	0.00	(0.09)	0.00	0.00	(0.09)
NEW - Increased traded income with	(0.01)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(0.01)
schools	(0.01)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(0.01)
NEW - Review of statutory service	(0.04)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(0.04)
provision	(0.04)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(0.04)
NEW - Deletion of quality assurance	(0.05)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(0.05)
officer post	(0.00)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(0.00)
NEW - Integrate parenting offer within					
early help and children's social care	(0.06)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(0.06)
as part of family help					
NEW - Integrate customer facing	45				,
activity within HAF to the customer	(0.02)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(0.02)
experience centre					

	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m	Total £m
NEW - Removal of system support contract	(80.0)	(0.11)	0.00	0.00	(0.19)
NEW - Staffing efficiencies as part of One Source phase 2 implementation	(0.05)	(0.16)	0.00	0.00	(0.21)
P4 Introduce more rewilding	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.05
P5 Relocation of the leather museum (re-phased)	0.19	(0.19)	0.00	0.00	0.00
OP33 Leisure review and health initiatives (reduced)	0.17	(0.17)	0.00	0.00	0.00
OP35 Additional income from an increase in outdoor advertising (reduced)	0.05	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.10
OP36 Remove external One Source system support by using in-house expertise (removed)	0.20	0.20	0.00	0.00	0.40
OP56 £100k capital investment in CCTV to support revenue savings	0.00	0.00	0.05	0.00	0.05
OP61 ASC demand – decrease in existing service user placement costs (re-aligned)	0.10	(0.65)	(0.65)	(0.72)	(1.92)
OP62 ASC demand – additional service use contributions based (realigned)	(0.20)	0.14	0.18	0.19	0.31
OP63 Health contribution – Section 117/continuing health care (re- aligned)	0.26	0.06	0.05	(0.27)	0.10
Total changes to savings	0.18	(3.09)	2.13	(0.80)	(1.58)
Other service adjustments					
EEC - Extended producer responsibility	(5.88)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(5.88)
Children's - Extended rights to home to school transport (grant rolled into general funding)	0.08	0.00	.0.00	.0.00	0.08
Children's - Children's Social Care Prevention Grant (new funding)	(3.09)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(3.09)
Children's - Family Hubs Start for Life Programme Income (increase in funding)	(0.09)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(0.09)
ASC – Public Health Grant	(1.05)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(1.05)
EEC – Domestic Abuse grant (increase in funding)	(0.18)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(0.18)
R&T – Homelessness Prevention	(0.32)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(0.32)
grant (increase in funding) Total service adjustments	(10.53)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(10.53)
rotal service adjustinents	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m	Total £m

Central adjustments					
Increase in business rates income (funding)	(2.47)	2.42	0.15	1.66	1.76
Council tax surplus (funding)	(0.47)	0.47	0.00	0.00	0.00
Council taxbase changes (funding)	(0.85)	(0.10)	(0.11)	(0.11)	(1.17)
Reprofiling of central budget	3.53	0.43	(0.75)	(1.63)	1.58
New Homes Bonus increased income (funding)	(0.15)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(0.15)
Social Care grant increase income (funding)	(5.93)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(5.93)
Recovery Grant (funding)	(9.84)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(9.84)
National insurance contributions grant (funding)	(2.43)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(2.43)
Reduction in Top Up Grant	0.21	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.21
Net use of reserves	0.68	(2.50)	2.50	0.00	0.68
Total central adjustments	(17.72)	0.72	1.79	(80.0)	(15.29)
Revised savings to be identified (Current budget shortfall)	0.00	3.64	4.55	3.38	11.57

Annex 5 – Capital Programme movements since reported to Cabinet 16 October 2025

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Council Funded Schemes - Cabinet 16 October 2024	48.95	32.38	10.40	8.79	100.52
Maintaining a safe and secure environment - reduced	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	0.00	(0.15)
Telephony - removed	(0.19)	(0.19)	0.00	0.00	(0.38)
Wi-fi – reprofiled	(80.0)	0.00	0.08	0.00	0.00
Bloxwich Town Deal -reduced	(1.44)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(0.44)
Council roof repairs – reduced	(0.08)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(80.0)
Wheeled bin stock - reduced	(0.07)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(0.07)
Aids and adaptations - increased	0.83	0.83	0.83	0.83	0.32
New children's home 2025- new	0.85	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.85
Refurbishments to foster carer's homes - increased	0.10	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.55
Libraries – Community association style Hub – new	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.10
Assistive technologies - new	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.25
Promotion of community health and safety - reduced	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.06)	0.00	(0.14)
ICT Safe & Secure bring forward 2025/26 budget into 2024/25	(0.05)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(0.05)
Maintaining a Safe & Secure Environment - bring forward budget for upfront CISCO license	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.06)	0.00	(0.24)
Allotment Boundary Improvement Works	(0.02)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(0.02)
Hatherton Road car park	(0.21)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(0.21)
Play areas & outdoor gym	(0.13)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(0.13)
Revised Council Funded Schemes	48.63	32.99	11.29	9.77	102.68
External Funded Schemes - Cabinet 16 October 2024	31.19	22.27	23.08	30.10	106.64
Family Hubs 2025/26 allocation	0.09	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.09
Disable Facilities Grant additional budget	0.63	0.63	0.63	0.63	2.52
High Needs budget re-profile	1.72	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.72
Basic Needs budget re-profile	10.00	6.00	(4.35)	(11.65)	0.00
LA Housing fund 3	0.32	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.32
Community Regeneration Programme	10.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	10.00
Revised External Funded Schemes	53.95	28.90	19.36	19.08	121.29
Revised Programme	102.58	61.89	30.65	28.85	223.97