

To:

Members of Scrutiny Committee (Councillors P H Murphy (Chairman), N Thwaites (Vice Chairman), I Aldridge, R Clifford, G S Dowding, B Maitland-Walker, J Parbrook, P Pilkington and R Woods)

Members of Cabinet (Councillor A Trollope-Bellew (Leader), M Chilcott (Deputy Leader), M Dewdney, A Hadley, C Morgan, S J Pugsley, K H Turner, D J Westcott)

Our Ref SC/DS

Contact Marcus Prouse mprouse@westsomerset.gov.uk

Date 6 February 2018

# THE PRESS AND PUBLIC ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND THE MEETING THIS DOCUMENT CAN BE MADE AVAILABLE IN LARGE PRINT, BRAILLE, TAPE FORMAT OR IN OTHER LANGUAGES ON REQUEST

Dear Councillor

I hereby give you notice to attend the following meeting:

#### **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Date: Thursday 15 February 2018

Time: 3.30 pm

Venue: Council Chamber, Council Offices, Williton

Please note that this meeting may be recorded. At the start of the meeting the Chairman will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being recorded.

You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act. Data collected during the recording will be retained in accordance with the Council's policy.

Therefore unless you advise otherwise, by entering the Council Chamber and speaking during Public Participation you are consenting to being recorded and to the possible use of the sound recording for access via the website or for training purposes. If you have any queries regarding this please contact Committee Services on 01643 703704.

Yours sincerely

**BRUCE LANG**Proper Officer

#### **RISK SCORING MATRIX**

Report writers score risks in reports uses the scoring matrix below

#### **Risk Scoring Matrix**

	5	Almost Certain	Low (5)	Medium (10)	High (15)	Very High (20)	Very High (25)
p	4	Likely	Low (4)	Medium (8)	Medium (12)	High (16)	Very High (20)
Likelihood	3	Possible	Low (3)	Low (6)	Medium (9)	Medium (12)	High (15)
5	2	Unlikely	Low (2)	Low (4)	Low (6)	Medium (8)	Medium (10)
	1	Rare	Low (1)	Low (2)	Low (3)	Low (4)	Low (5)
			1	2	3	4	5
		Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic	
					Impact	:	

Likelihood of risk occurring	Indicator	Description (chance of occurrence)
1. Very Unlikely	May occur in exceptional circumstances	< 10%
2. Slight	Is unlikely to, but could occur at some time	10 – 25%
3. Feasible	Fairly likely to occur at same time	25 – 50%
4. Likely	Likely to occur within the next 1-2 years, or occurs occasionally	50 – 75%
5. Very Likely	Regular occurrence (daily / weekly /	> 75%
J. Very Likely	monthly)	× 1370

- Mitigating actions for high ('High' or above) scoring risks are to be reflected in Service Plans, managed by the Group Manager and implemented by Service Lead Officers;
- Lower scoring risks will either be accepted with no mitigating actions or included in work plans with appropriate mitigating actions that are managed by Service Lead Officers.

#### SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

#### Meeting to be held on Thursday 15 February 2018 at 3.30 pm

#### Council Chamber, Williton

#### **AGENDA**

#### 1. Apologies for Absence

#### 2. Minutes

Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 18 January 2018, to be approved and signed as a correct record – **SEE ATTACHED**.

#### 3. Declarations of Interest

To receive and record any declarations of interest in respect of any matters included on the Agenda for consideration at this Meeting.

#### 4. Public Participation

The Chairman to advise the Committee of any items on which members of the public have requested to speak and advise those members of the public present of the details of the Council's public participation scheme.

For those members of the public wishing to speak at this meeting there are a few points you might like to note.

A three-minute time limit applies to each speaker and you will be asked to speak before Councillors debate the issue. There will be no further opportunity for comment at a later stage. Your comments should be addressed to the Chairman and any ruling made by the Chair is not open to discussion. If a response is needed it will be given either orally at the meeting or a written reply made within five working days of the meeting.

#### 5. Notes of Key Cabinet Decisions/Action Points

To review the Key Cabinet Decisions/Action Points from the Cabinet Meeting held on 7 February 2018 – **TO FOLLOW.** 

#### 6. Cabinet Forward Plan

To review the latest Cabinet Forward Plan for the months of March onwards, published on 26 January 2018 – **SEE ATTACHED**.

#### 7. Chairman's Announcements

An opportunity to update the Committee on any matters of interest or matters arising.

#### 8. Financial Monitoring 2017-2018

To consider Report No. WSC 10/18 to be presented by Councillor Chilcott – SEE ATTACHED.

The purpose of the report is to provide an update on the projected "outturn" – end of year – financial position of the Council for the financial year 2017-2018 (as at 31 December 2017).

#### 9. Scrutiny Committee Work Plan

To receive items and review the Scrutiny Committee Work plan for 2018. - SEE ATTACHED.

#### **COUNCILLORS ARE REMINDED TO CHECK THEIR POST TRAYS**

#### The Council's Vision:

To enable people to live, work and prosper in West Somerset

#### The Council's Corporate Priorities:

#### • Local Democracy:

Securing local democracy and accountability in West Somerset, based in West Somerset, elected by the people of West Somerset and responsible to the people of West Somerset.

#### New Nuclear Development at Hinkley Point

Maximising opportunities for West Somerset communities and businesses to benefit from the development whilst protecting local communities and the environment.

#### **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

#### Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 January 2018 at 3.30 pm

#### Present:

Councillor G S Dowding
Councillor B Maitland-Walker
Councillor J Parbrook

Councillor P Pilkington Councillor R Woods

#### **Members in Attendance:**

Councillor M Chilcott Councillor B Heywood Councillor A Trollope-Bellew

#### Officers in Attendance:

Assistant Director – Resources and Support (P Carter) Finance Services Manger (J Nacey) Democratic Services Officer (A Randell) Democratic Services Officer (C Rendell)

#### SC 59 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors I Aldridge and R Clifford.

#### SC 60 Minutes

(Minutes of the Meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 7 December 2017 – circulated with the Agenda.)

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 7 December 2017 be confirmed as a correct record.

#### SC 61 <u>Declarations of Interest</u>

Members present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Member of a County, Parish or Town Council:-

Name	Minute No.	Description of Interest	Personal or Prejudicial or Disclosable Pecuniary	Action Taken
Cllr B Maitland-Walker	All items	Carhampton	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr P Murphy	All items	Watchet	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr J Parbrook	All items	Minehead	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr P Pilkington	All items	Timberscombe	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr N Thwaites	All items	Dulverton	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr A Trollope-Bellew	All items	Crowcombe	Personal	Spoke
Cllr M Chilcott	All items	SCC	Personal	Spoke

#### SC 62 Public Participation

No members of public spoke at the meeting on any items on the agenda.

#### SC 63 Cabinet Forward Plan

(Copy of the Cabinet Forward Plan published 2 January 2018, circulated at the meeting).

Members highlighted that the Finance Services Manager's name needed to be altered on the Forward Plan.

**RESOLVED** that the Cabinet Forward Plan published on 2 January 2018, with amendments, be noted.

#### SC 64 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman raised two items. These were:-

- Members were encouraged to bring their own cup to use instead of the disposable plastic cups. This was to support the plight raised by the television programme Blue Planet, which was to minimise the use of plastic.
- The Chairman highlighted to Members that Ministers had written to Local Councils and urged them to take up funding to install electric car charging points within their Districts. Members were advised that this item was on the agenda for the Corporate Policy Advisory Group to be held on 24 January 2018.

#### SC 65 Financial Standing and Medium Term Financial Plan 2018-2019

The report WSC 2/18 was presented by Councillor M Chilcott.

The purpose of the report was to provide Scrutiny Committee with an update on budget estimates for 2018-2019 and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) forecasts, and to consult with Members on the proposed means of closing the residual Budget Gap for 2018-2019.

The provisional funding settlement was issued by Government late in December 2017 and included details with regards to the General Revenue Grant Funding, New Homes Bonus and Business Rates Retention Baseline and Tariff. Overall the general grant funding available to deliver services had again reduced significantly in 2018-2019:-

- a) General Funding, Revenue Support Grant had been reduced by £146,692 (46%) whilst the Rural Services Delivery Grant was kept at the same level of £171,530.
- b) New Homes Bonus funding had been reduced by £148,994 (27%).

The Business Rates position was skewed by the 2017 Revaluation of rateable values (RV) and adjustments to the Tariff payment the Council was required to make as a result. The Council had approved a revised budget and MTFP estimates in August 2017. This reflected an expected increase in the retained Business Rates in 2018-2019, which was mainly due to the uplift in the RV for Hinkley Point B power station. The increase was already reflected in the financial forecasts. Consequently, the net 2018-2019 Business Rates income forecast was revised to £2,647,765. This was an increase of £1,502,650 compared to the previous year and included a retrospective one-off credit adjustment of an estimated £1,466,010 to the Tariff.

Due to the timing differences in the adjustment to the Tariff for the 2017 Revaluation, the net Business Rates income retained for 2019-2020 would level out in broad terms, to an estimated £1,800,000, which was approximately £670,000 higher than the 2017-2018 funding level.

Cabinet was minded to recommend to Full Council a Council Tax increase of 3.32% (£5 on a Band D) which would provide an additional £70,440 income. Together with the higher Tax Base, the total Council Tax funding would increase by £104,694 in 2018-2019.

The 2018-2019 draft budget also included a prior year net Collection Fund surplus of £518,700.

Cabinet was minded to transfer £63,784 to the Business Rates Smoothing Reserve to help mitigate the risks to the level of Business Rates Retention which was outlined in the MTFP Strategy and £160,000 to the Sustainability Reserve to provide further invest to save funds.

The updated MTFP indicated that despite a balanced budget being forecast for 2018-2019, the ongoing Budget Gap remained a challenge when the savings already assumed within the MTFP were considered and the limited number of areas available to find further savings.

It was also important to emphasise that there remained significant uncertainty in the financial forecasts beyond 2019-2020. The factors were as follows:-

- The current four year settlement set proposed Government Grant Funding up to 2019-2020.
- The outcome of the Fair Funding Review was expected to be implemented in April 2020.

• Business Rates Baseline and Tariff were due to be reset in 2020 and the proposed move to 100% retention continued to be developed.

Along with the factors listed, which would influence future funding, a major proportion of the retained Business Rates relied on Hinkley Point. There was a significant risk of funding reduction if Hinkley Point B was decommissioned earlier than forecast or had any unplanned outages. There was a high probability that there would be several years between Hinkley Point B being decommissioned and Hinkley Point C generating power, which would lead to a significant 'trough' in the Business Rates income. Members were strongly advised to plan prudently for the long term risk when budget plans were considered.

During discussion, the following points were raised:-

- Concern was raised that the Government spent a majority of its time involved in Brexit negotiations, which meant it could not focus on 'business as usual'.
- Concern was raised that the Somerset Rivers Authority was still not a precepting body.
- Members queried whether there were any 'invest to save' schemes available for the Sustainability Reserve.
   There were schemes available and both Members and Officers were keen to undertake the work, however, capacity to undertake such work would need to be checked.
- Members suggested that the Business Rates Smoothing Reserve should be kept at a minimal level of £1,500,000.
- The Chairman highlighted that the figure for the 2017-2018 Projected Outturn Variance in the General Reserves Balance, as of 31 March 2018, would be reported to the Scrutiny Committee in February and was predicted to be an underspend.
- Members queried why there was still a potential delay in the Transformation Project. The delay had caused a strain of £136,000 on the budget. Concern was raised on the delay in the production of the staff structure.
  - When the figures were given, Officers had expected a 'minded to' decision in June 2017 and it had not been received until December 2017. Until the decision to form a New Council was given, the formation of a staff structure would be delayed. There was a requirement to ensure that the staff structure had been properly consulted on and the documents had not been released to staff yet, which meant that staff still had to go through the recruitment process.
- Members queried if the decision was received in February 2018 or later, would the Boundary Commission have enough time to carry out the necessary work prior to the 2019 election.
   Yes. The Local Boundary Commission and the Department for
  - Yes. The Local Boundary Commission and the Department for Communities and Local Government comments stated that everything was in place to achieve the deadlines for the 2019 election.
- Members were confused because we currently operated with 'One Team', so this meant we only had 'One Team' to transform. Members requested clarification on why Transformation could not have started before the decision was received.

There was 'One Team' which served both Councils. The Transformation Team had been able to work on the staff structure for the New Council whilst they waited for the decision from Government, but could not make any major changes to staffing until they knew if one new Council would be created or remain as two Councils.

- Members were pleased that the predicted deficit for next year had not occurred. However, concern was raised on what would have happened if it had and would the Transformation Project been able to carry on. Due to the hypothetical nature of the query, Members and Officers could not give a definitive answer. Both services and jobs would have been impacted and officers would have done their best to set a budget and close the accounts.
- Members queried whether the Council had to set a balanced budget or could a negative one be set.
   No. Councils had to set a balanced budget, they were not allowed to set a negative one. Another Council had tried to submit a negative budget which caused the Government to intervene.

**RESOLVED** that the Scrutiny Committee noted the latest budget estimates and referred any comments to Cabinet on the proposed means of closing the Budget Gap for 2018-2019.

#### SC 66 Capital Programme Budget Estimates 2018-2019

The report WSC 3/18 was presented by Councillor M Chilcott.

The purpose of the report was to provide Members with the detail of the Capital Bids for the 2018-2019 Capital Programme and the proposed source of funding.

The Draft Capital Programme only included essential investment in core IT systems of £26,000 and £350,000 for Disabled Facilities Grants, which were funded via contributions from the Better Care Fund.

The total Draft 2018-2019 Capital Programme was £376,000.

During discussion, the following points were raised:-

- Members requested clarification on the server situation. Concern was raised that there was £20,000 that would be used to purchase a new server when there was spare capacity on the existing server that could be used or a cheaper alternative could be found.
- The Members questions had been passed onto the IT Manager, who understood their concern and if she could find an alternative, she would do so. However, because the funds had already been granted by the Revenue Contributions to Capital Outlay, the money had been secured for the server work. The IT Manager would send a response to the questions posed by Members.
- Members queried whether there was any old IT stock that could be refurbished to last until the new systems had been procured, which should be once Transformation had been achieved. They also

requested confirmation on when the server support was due to end, the report stated either 2018 or 2019.

The IT Manager would send a response to the questions posed by Members.

- Members requested clarification on the ICT Infrastructure Project and Annual Hardware Replacement items on the list.

  Items that had been approved in the Capital Programme had to be listed, whether they were ongoing or had not yet started.
- Members requested an update on the Clanville Grange Housing Project.
   Officers did not have information on the project but would send a response to Members after the meeting.
- Members requested an update on the CASA Project.
   There had been a change to the fundamental requirements by the Police. Officers were not able to update Members on the project.
- Members thanked the Finance Services Manager for all her hard work and wished her well in her new job.

**RESOLVED** that the Scrutiny Committee noted the Draft 2018-2019 Capital Programme that totaled £376,000 and the current unallocated capital resource position.

#### SC 67 Scrutiny Committee Work Plan

The following items were highlighted from the Forward Plan:-

- The Health and Wellbeing Task and Finish Group Report had been delayed and was on the Work Plan for April.
- Members were reminded that a Task and Finish Group was due to be set up for work on the Car Park Strategy.
- Members were asked to note that the Quarter 3 Budget Monitoring Report was scheduled for the February meeting.

Members were reminded that if they had an item they wanted to add to the agenda, that they should send their requests to the Scrutiny Officer.

**RESOLVED** that the content of the Work Plan be noted.

The meeting closed at 4.31pm.

### Weekly version of Cabinet Forward Plan published on 26 January 2018

Forward Plan Ref / Date proposed decision published in Forward Plan	Date when decision due to be taken and by whom	Details of the proposed decision	Does the decision contain any exempt information requiring a resolution for it to be considered in private and what are the reasons for this?	Contact Officer for any representations to be made ahead of the proposed decision
FP/18/3/01 19/04/2017	7 March 2018  By Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: Allocation of Section 106 funds held  Purpose: to make proposals for the allocation of monies secured through planning obligations to individual schemes, and to update members with the current funding position	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Tim Burton, Assistant Director Planning and Environment 01823 358403
FP/18/3/02 19/04/2017	7 March 2018  By Lead Member for Energy Infrastructure	Title: Hinkley Point  Purpose: to consider any key issues that arise relating to Hinkley Point	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Andrew Goodchild, Assistant Director Energy Infrastructure 01984 635245
FP/18/3/03 19/04/2017	7 March 2018  By Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: Allocation of Hinkley Point C Community Impact Mitigation Funding  Purpose: to present the recommendations of the HPC Planning Obligations Board for the allocation of monies from the CIM Fund	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Lisa Redston, CIM Fund Manager 01984 635218
FP/18/3/04 08/12/2017	7 March 2018  By Lead Member Community and Customer	Title: Discretionary Housing Payment Policy  Purpose: to present the Discretionary Housing Payment Policy for recommendation to Council	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Heather Tiso, Head of Revenues and Benefits 01823 356541
FP/18/3/05 19/01/2017	7 March 2018  By Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: Budget Monitoring Report Quarter 3  Purpose: to provide Members with details of the Council's expected financial outturn position in 2017/18 for both revenue and capital budgets, together with information relating to predicted end of year reserve balances	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Jo Nacey, Financial Services Manager / Deputy S151 01823 356537

Forward Plan Ref / Date proposed decision published in Forward Plan	Date when decision due to be taken and by whom	Details of the proposed decision	Does the decision contain any exempt information requiring a resolution for it to be considered in private and what are the reasons for this?	Contact Officer for any representations to be made ahead of the proposed decision
FP/18/5/01 19/10/2017	23 May 2018	Title: Cabinet Appointments on Outside Bodies  Decision: to appoint representatives to serve on outside bodies for the period to the Annual Meeting in 2018 (except where specific periods are stated)	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Bruce Lang, Assistant Chief Executive 01984 635200
FP/18/5/02 19/10/2017	23 May 2018  By Lead Member for Energy Infrastructure	Title: Hinkley Point  Decision: to consider key issues relating to Hinkley Point	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Andrew Goodchild, Assistant Director Energy Infrastructure 01984 635245
FP/18/7/01 19/10/2017	11 July 2018  By Leader of Council	Title: Corporate Performance Report Quarters 3 and 4  Decision: to provide Members with an update on progress in delivering corporate priorities and performance of council services	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Richard Doyle, Corporate Strategy and Performance Officer 01823 356309
FP/18/7/02 19/10/2017	11 July 2018  By Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: Financial Monitoring Report Quarters 3 and 4  Decision: to provide Members with details of the Council's financial outturn position in 2017/18 for both revenue and capital budgets, together with information relating to end of year reserve balances	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Jo Nacey, Financial Services Manager / Deputy S151 01823 356537
FP/18/7/03 19/10/2017	11 July 2018  By Lead Member for Energy Infrastructure	Title: Hinkley Point  Decision: to consider key issues relating to Hinkley Point	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Andrew Goodchild, Assistant Director Energy Infrastructure 01984 635245
FP/18/7/04 19/10/2017	11 July 2018  By Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: Allocation of Hinkley Point C Community Impact Mitigation Funding  Decision: to present the recommendations of the HPC Planning Obligations Board for the allocation of monies from the CIM Fund	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Lisa Redston, CIM Fund Manager 01984 635218

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FP/18/7/05 19/10/2017	11 July 2018  By Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: Allocation of Section 106 funds held  Decision: to make proposals for the allocation of monies secured through planning obligations to individual schemes, and to update members with the current funding position	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Tim Burton, Assistant Director Planning and Environment 01823 358403
FP/18/9/01 19/10/2017	5 September 2018  By Lead Member for Energy Infrastructure	Title: Hinkley Point  Decision: to consider key issues relating to Hinkley Point	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Andrew Goodchild, Assistant Director Energy Infrastructure 01984 635245

Note (1) – Items in bold type are regular cyclical items.

Note (2) – All Consultation Implications are referred to in individual reports.

The Cabinet comprises the following: Councillors A H Trollope-Bellew, M Chilcott, M Dewdney, A Hadley, C Morgan S J Pugsley, K H Turner and D J Westcott.

The Scrutiny Committee comprises: Councillors P H Murphy, N Thwaites, R Clifford, G S Dowding, B Maitland-Walker, J Parbrook, R Woods, I Aldridge and P Pilkington.

Report Number: WSC 10/18

#### **West Somerset Council**

### **Scrutiny Committee – 15 February 2018**

Financial Monitoring – 2017/18 as at 31 December 2017

This matter is the responsibility of Councillor Mandy Chilcott, Lead Member for Resources and Central Support

Report Author: Andrew Stark, Interim Finance Manager

#### 1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the projected "outturn" end of year financial position of the Council for the financial year 2017/18 (as at 31 December 2017).
- 1.2 The current forecast outturn for the Revenue Budget for 2017/18 is a net underspend of £49K. The gross underspend is £179,874
- 1.3 The current General Reserves balance is £858,776 which is above the recommended minimum. If the forecast for 31 December 2017 proves to be accurate the projected balance at the end of the year is £1,017,562 which would be £317,562 above the recommended minimum. In view of the Council's financial position, increasing the reserves balance is strongly advised therefore the forecast underspend is welcome from a financial resilience perspective.
- 1.4 The Earmarked Reserves projected balance is £3,227,213 after the proposed recommended transfers to earmarked reserves. The majority of these reserves are allocated to business rates funding volatility (£905,144), Strategic Housing Market Area Assessment (575,760), Planning Policy (£195,207), Asset Maintenance and Compliance (£183,516) and Creating a New Council/Transformation (£866,453).
- 1.5 The current forecast position for the General Fund Capital Programme in 2017/18 is a net underspend of £52,400 against a total approved budget of £11,217,020., Forecast spend during the year is £900,582 with £10,264,038 projected to be spent in the following year. Spend to date is only £585,277 therefore a proportion of the costs are projected to be incurred in the last quarter of the year.

#### 2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Scrutiny notes the Council's forecast financial performance as at 31 December 2017 with the estimated position at the end of the financial year.
- 2.2 Scrutiny support the recommendation to Cabinet and Full Council to transfer:
  - a) £600,000 to the Business Rates Smoothing reserve
  - b) £70,000 to the Transformation reserve
  - c) £30,000 to the Asset Management and Compliance reserve.

#### 3 Risk Assessment (if appropriate)

#### **Risk Matrix**

Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall
That the Authority overspends against the approved budget	3	4	12
Mitigated by regular budget monitoring reports are produced and managers actively manage the budgets under their responsibility	1	4	4

**Risk Scoring Matrix** 

	Nisk ocolling matrix						
þ	5	Almost Certain	Low (5)	Medium (10)	High (15)	Very High (20)	Very High (25)
	4	Likely	Low (4)	Medium (8)	Medium (12)	High (16)	Very High (20)
Likelihood	3	Possible	Low (3)	Low (6)	Medium (9)	Medium (12)	High (15)
	2	Unlikely	Low (2)	Low (4)	Low (6)	Medium (8)	Medium (10)
	1	Rare	Low (1)	Low (2)	Low (3)	Low (4)	Low (5)
		1	2	3	4	5	
		Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic	
Impact							

Likelihood of		Description (chance
risk occurring	Indicator	of occurrence)
<ol> <li>Very Unlikely</li> </ol>	May occur in exceptional circumstances	< 10%
2. Slight	Is unlikely to, but could occur at some time	10 – 25%
3. Feasible	Fairly likely to occur at same time	25 – 50%
4. Likely	Likely to occur within the next 1-2 years, or	50 – 75%
	occurs occasionally	
5. Very Likely	Regular occurrence (daily / weekly /	> 75%
	monthly)	

#### 4 Background and Full details of the Report

- 4.1 This report provides the Council's forecast end of year financial position for 2017/18 revenue and capital budgets, based on forecasts as at 31 December 2017.
- 4.2 The regular monitoring of financial information is a key element in the Council's Performance Management Framework. Crucially it enables remedial action to be taken in response to significant budget variances, some of which may be unavoidable. It also provides the opportunity to assess any consequent impact on reserves and the Council's the Medium Term Financial Plan.
- 4.3 Members will be aware from previous experience that the position can change between 'in-year' projections and the final outturn position, mainly due to demand-led services. The budget monitoring process involves a detailed review of all budgets. However it should be noted that the frequency of formal reporting has reduced from this year as business processes are streamlined to reflect reductions in the overall capacity within the Council.
- 4.4 Budget Holders, with support and advice from their accountants, regularly review the position and update their forecasts based on currently available information and knowledge of service requirements for the remainder of the year. As with any forecast there is always a risk that some unforeseen changes could influence the position at the year end, and a number of risks and uncertainties are highlighted within this report. However, the following forecast is considered to be reasonable based on current information.

#### **General Fund Revenue Account – 2017/18 Forecast Outturn**

- 4.5 This report provides an indication of the forecast outturn (end of year position) for the year and any significant anticipated variances to budget. There are risks and uncertainties within the forecast, and Officers will continue to monitor the position through the remainder of the year and will provide updates as appropriate.
- 4.6 The current forecast outturn for the 2017/18 Revenue Budget shows a projected underspend of £49k. This represents 1.01% of the Net Costs. Table 1 below provides a summary revenue budget and outturn for the year.

Table 1 – Summary Predicted Revenue Outturn 2017/18

NET UNDER(-)/OVERSPEND FOR THE YEAR	0	-49,000	-49,000
TOTAL FUNDING	-4,834,593	-5,386,007	-551,414
Collection Fund Surplus - Council Tax	-63,800	-63,800	0
Collection Fund Deficit - Business Rates	-480,635	-480,635	0
Council Tax	-2,111,217	-2,111,217	0
Rural Services Delivery Grant	-171,530	-171,530	0
New Homes Bonus	-545,411	-545,411	0
Revenue Support Grant	-316,885	-316,885	0
Business Rates Funding	-1,145,115	-1,696,529	-551,414
NET BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE	4,834,593	5,337,007	502,414
Transfers to/from General Reserves	-109,786	-109,786	0
Transfers to Earmarked Reserves	-45,776	655,202	700,978
Subtotal - Net Costs	4,990,155	4,791,591	-198,564
Interest costs and income	-26,875	-45,565	-18,690
Subtotal - Net Service Costs	5,017,030	4,837,156	-179,874
Somerset Rivers Authority	24,394	24,394	0
Growth and Development	443,970	443,970	0
Housing and Communities	998,090	964,796	-33,294
Operations	3,024,266	2,891,456	-132,810
Corporate	526,310	512,540	-13,770
	£	£	£
	Budget	Outturn	
,	Original	Predicted	Variance

4.7 Only significant variations to budget are included in this report, with the following overspends and underspends highlighted for this review.

#### **Overspends**

- a) Land Charges: The reduction in Land Charges income of £13,084 and relates to the reduction in fees in 2016. The reduction was to compensate for lower payments to Building Control and SCC.
- b) Housing Bed and Breakfast: The forecast overspend in Bed and Breakfast of £27,603 is due to increased demand.

#### **Underspends**

- c) Human Resources: There is a forecast underspend in expenditure of £10,481.
- d) Elections: Forecast underspend of £13,770 is as a result of reimbursement from the PCC election.
- e) Building Control: Building Control partnership have forecast a saving of £22,650 on the contract.

- f) Waste: Somerset Waste Partnership have forecast an in year saving on Waste contract of £17,632.
- g) Roughmoor Depot and Enterprise Centre: forecast additional income of £10,912 lead to overall underspend.
- h) Visitor Centre: Additional rental income and savings in NNDR lead to overall underspend of £10,912.
- i) Environmental Health: Vacancies have seen a reduction of staffing costs of £23,077.
- j) Community Development: There is forecast underspend on professional fees and subscriptions of £18,119.
- k) Private Sector Renewal: There is saving on the HIA, Sedgemoor contracts of £32,066.
- I) Car Parks: There is a predicted excess of income over budget of £85,824 in car park pay and display income, another demand led service. This is susceptible to change therefore forecasts will be reviewed and updated throughout the year
- m) Interest Costs and Income: There is an underspend of £5,000 on interest payable as current cash flow forecasts indicated there will be no need to take on external loan borrowing during 2017/18, plus £13,690 additional investment interest income due to improved returns compared to budget assumptions.
- n) It is proposed to recommend: £30,000 of the underspend to the Asset Management and Compliance Reserve, £70,000 of the underspend to Transformation reserve and to top up the transfer to the Business Rates Smoothing Reserve to £600,000.

#### **Business Rates**

4.8 A summary of the new Retained Funding figure is shown in the table below:

Table 2 – Business Rates Retention Estimates

	2017/18	2017/18	2017/18
Business Rates Retention Funding	Budget	Actual	Difference
Estimates	£	£	£
40% Standard Share of Business Rates	6,620,078	6,620,078	0
Yield			
Rates yield from renewable energy	50,000	29,490	20,510
schemes			
Tariff to Government	-6,058,369	-4,770,161	-1,288,208
Levy Payment	0	-651,583	651,583
Safety Net Income	98,095	0	98,095
S31 Grant	414,729	448,123	-33,394
Net Retained Business Rates Funding	1,124,533	1,696,529	-551,414

- 4.9 As the table shows, although our projected 40% share of business rates income remains the same, our Tariff has decreased by approximately £1.3m but there is a levy to pay of £652k. Other adjustments give a surplus on Business Rates of £551k.
- 4.10 There has been a one-off adjustment to the 2017/18 Tariff. We have received clarification over the accounting treatment of this adjustment and understand that it will have a favourable effect on the 2017/18 outturn position. This forecast surplus is proposed to be transferred to the Smoothing Reserve.

#### **General Fund Reserves**

4.11 The following table shows that the current General Reserves balance is £858,776, and the current forecast underspend could increase this balance to £1,718,540 at the year end. .

Table 3 – General Reserves Balance 31 March 2018

	£
Balance Brought Forward 1 April 2017	858,776
2017/18 Budget transfer to General Reserve	30,700
2017/18 Budget: Transfer from Unused Earmarked Reserves	79,086
Current Budgeted Balance	968,562
2017/18 Projected Outturn Variance – Q3 Forecast	49,000
Projected Balance 31 March 2018	1,017,562
Recommended Minimum Balance	700,000
Projected Balance above recommended minimum	317,562

4.12 The current recommended minimum balance is £700,000 – the projected balance at 31 March 2018 of £1,017,562 would be £317,562 above the recommended minimum balance. In view of the Council's future financial pressures the prudent advice is to maintain reserves above the recommended minimum, to provide limited resilience for emerging costs and to provide some flexibility to support measures to address ongoing financial sustainability.

#### **Earmarked Reserves**

4.13 Earmarked Reserves are amounts that have been set aside for specific purposes from existing resources, where the expenditure is expected to be incurred in future years. The table below provides a summary of the movement in earmarked reserve balances during 2017/18 financial year to date.

Table 4 – Estimated Earmarked Reserves Balance 31 December 2017

	£
Balance Brought Forward 1 April 2017	2,635,809
Transfers From Earmarked Reserves in 2017/18	-109,086
Transfers To Earmarked Reserves in 2017/18	700,000
Current Balance	3,227,213

4.14 The table above shows that the current projected reserves balance is £3,227,213 after the proposed recommendations have been included. Full details of earmarked reserves can be found in Appendix A to this report. A significant proportion of the balance (£905,144) relates to the Business Rates Smoothing Reserve which is committed to provide a contingency for business rates funding volatility, £575,760 on funding for community land fund to support bringing forward affordable housing and £866,183 which is committed to support Transformation and Creating a New Council.

#### **Capital Budget Predicted Outturn 2017/18**

4.15 The following table summarises the position for both general schemes and Hinkley-funded schemes. Actual spend up to 31 December 2017 totals £585,277, and at this stage only a small variance against budget has been reported.

Table 5 – Summary Capital Programme Forecast as at 31 December 2017

	General	Hinkley Funded	
	Schemes	Schemes	Total
	£	£	£
Original Capital Budget 2017/18	6,858,124	426,961	7,285,085
Supplementary Budget Approvals	0	0	0
Carry Forwards from 2016/17	1,807,820	2,124,115	3,931,935
Revised Capital Budget 2017/18	8,665,944	2,551,076	11,217,020
Forecast Spend in 2017/18	803,957	96,625	900,582
Forecast Spend in Later Years	7,809,587	2,454,451	10,264.038
Total Forecast Capital Spend	8,613,544	2,551,076	11,164,620
Net Underspend (-) / Overspend	-52,400	0	-52,400

4.16 A scheme by scheme analysis of the 2017/18 Programme at 31 December 2017 is set out in Appendix B.

#### **Capital Receipts Reserve**

4.17 The overall General Fund capital funding position remains limited, and it needs to be borne in mind that the carry forward Capital Programme requires funding of £1,007,215 from the Useable Capital Receipts Reserve and the 2017/18 Capital Programme requires funding of £12,500. The Council has also previously agreed to use uncommitted capital receipts to fund capital debt repayment – in lieu of Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) for a period of three years from 2015/16 to 2017/18 (£143,100 x 3 years). Council agreed to use unallocated capital resources of £111,488 to fund Transformation Implementation.

Table 6 – Useable Capital Receipts Reserve Balance 31 March 2018

	Actual
	£
Balance Brought Forward 1 April 2017	2,219,314
Actual Capital Receipts to date	0
Current Balance of Capital Receipts Available	2,219,314
2017/18 Original Budget (Council 22 February 2017)	-12,500
2016/17 Carry Forwards (Council 2 August 2017)	-1,007,215
Flexible use of capital receipts for Transformation Implementation Cost	-111,488
Current Capital Receipts Funding Required for Approved Schemes	1,088,111
Ring-fence to fund capital debt repayment (in lieu of MRP) in 2017/18	-143,100
Uncommitted Capital Receipts Balance	945,011

- 4.18 Currently the approved Capital Programme has not required an increase in the underlying capital borrowing requirement.
- 5 Links to Corporate Aims / Priorities
- 5.1 The financial performance of the Council underpins the delivery of corporate priorities and therefore all Corporate Aims.
- 6 Finance / Resource Implications
- 6.1 Contained within the body of the report.
- 7 Legal Implications
- 7.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.
- 8 Environmental Impact Implications
- 8.1 None for the purpose of this report.

- 9 Safeguarding and/or Community Safety Implications
- 9.1 None for the purpose of this report.
- 10 Equality and Diversity Implications
- 10.1 None for the purpose of this report.
- 11 Social Value Implications
- 11.1 None for the purpose of this report.
- 12 Partnership Implications
- 12.1 None for the purpose of this report.
- 13 Health and Wellbeing Implications
- 13.1 None for the purpose of this report.
- 14 Asset Management Implications
- 14.1 None for the purpose of this report.
- 15 Consultation Implications
- 15.1 None for the purpose of this report.
- 16 Scrutiny Comments / Recommendation(s)

#### **Democratic Path:**

- Scrutiny Yes 15 February 2017
- Cabinet Yes
- Full Council -

Reporting Frequency: Twice-yearly

### **List of Appendices**

Appendix A	Summary of Proposed Earmarked Reserves
Appendix B	Capital Programme Outturn 2017/18

#### **Contact Officers**

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23 APPENDIX A

#### SUMMARY OF PREDICTED EARMARKED RESERVES AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2017

Earmarked Reserve Account	1 April Balance £	Transfers In	Transfers Out	Transfers Between Accounts	31 March (Projected Balance) £	Comments
Community Safety	13,533				13,533	External funding specifically earmarked for community safety initiatives
Sustainability Reserve	40,700				40,700	Earmarked for initiatives that have a positive impact upon the long term sustainability of the Council, used for essential asset maintenance and health and safety works
Minehead Events	396				396	Mary Portas grant – specifically earmarked
District Election Reserve	8,550				8,550	Earmarked for costs of elections
Water Bathing Signs	1,266	490			1,756	Environmental grant specifically earmarked
Other Election Reserve	13,536				13,536	Funds to meet the additional costs of Individual Electoral Registration
Inspire	3,391				3,391	Earmarked for costs under the Inspire Directive
Cuckoo Meadow	16,820				16,820	Lottery monies earmarked to be used in future years for play equipment.
Minehead Town Centre Signage	115				115	Contribution from Minehead Chamber of Trade and Morrison s106 to fund the signs
CCTV	1,565				1,565	Underspend in 2013/14 earmarked to fund the purchase of a new CCTV camera
Homelessness Prevention	43,620				43,620	Balance of Homeless Prevention funding plus remainder of Mortgage Rescue Grant
Morrison's Footpath	6,000		-6,000		0	Earmarked to part fund the footpath upgrade
Transformation Reserve	39,470	70,000			109,470	Funding to support transformation costs
Watchet Harbour Dredging	7,000		-7,000		0	Earmarked to fund additional dredging.

Earmarked Reserve Account	1 April Balance £	Transfers In	Transfers Out	Transfers Between Accounts	31 March (Projected Balance) £	Comments
Customer Service Equipment Reserve	666		-666		0	Specialised Chair Required (Health and Safety). This was funded from other resources.
Car Parking Reserve	10,000				10,000	Monies set aside in respect of maintenance and signage.
Environmental Health Reserve	4,081				4,081	Destitute Burial Reserve
Minehead Harbour Dredging Reserve	5,500		-5,500		0	Monies set aside to fund works in future years.
Online DHP Reserve	5,375				5,375	Online Software Requirement for Revenues and Benefits
Asset Maint & Compliance	213,516	30,000	-30,000		213,516	Asset maintenance compliance works to be completed.
Strategic Housing Market Area Assessment Reserve	575,760				575,760	DCLG funding for community land fund to support bringing forward affordable housing within West Somerset. The bulk of the funds anticipated to be spent in 2017/18 and 2018/19 as projects progress.
Business Support Grant	5,677				5,677	Funding from various sources to fund initiatives to support small businesses
Planning Reserve	20,000				20,000	Monies set aside to fund specialist technical advice for major planning applications. E.g. Landscape visual impact assessments, retail studies etc.
Revenues and Benefits Reserve	72,749		-37,725		35,024	Monies set aside to provide service resilience and to fund planned software upgrade needed for CTS scheme developments.
Training Reserve	10,000				10,000	Monies set aside to meet future training needs across the organisation.

Earmarked Reserve Account	1 April Balance £	Transfers In	Transfers Out	Transfers Between Accounts	31 March (Projected Balance) £	Comments
Licensing Staff Reserve	12,791				12,791	Monies set aside to fund extra resource within West Somerset Council.
Finance Reserve	44,840				44,840	These monies fund additional staff to deal with BAU during transformation.
Community Right to Challenge	5,000		-5,000		0	Government Grant set aside to support the administration of applications under regulations.
Assets of Community Value	10,000				10,000	Government Grant set aside to support the administration of applications under regulations.
Business Rates Retention Smoothing Account	305,144	600,000			905,144	This is a volatile area and we are committed to mitigating the risk of Business Rates retention by setting aside an appropriate level of funds in this reserve
Dulverton Mill Leat	12,195		-12,195		0	
Planning Policy Reserve	195,207				195,207	Monies set aside and to be drawn down to cover additional costs arising and relating to the West Somerset Local Plan preparation through to examination and beyond to adoption.
Steam Coast Trail	31,723				31,723	WSC is working in continued partnership with Friends of the Steam Coast Trail and Sustrans. These monies will support the delivery of Phase 2 of the Steam Coast Trail - the creation of a traffic free route between Old Cleeve and Washford by the end of 2018. A key part of the Steam Coast Trail vision for safe cycling between Minehead and Williton.
Creating a New Council	756,713				756,713	Funding required primarily to implement the approved Transformation Business Case and also to create a new council replacing West Somerset and Taunton Deane councils.
SWP Vehicles	33,617				33,617	To help fund our contribution to the new operating model.
WS Employment Hub	21,293				21,293	To be transferred to Community Outreach Fund.

Earmarked Reserve Account	1 April Balance £	Transfers In	Transfers Out	Transfers Between Accounts	31 March (Projected Balance) £	Comments
Agile Working	20,000				20,000	Investment in technology to implement transformation changes and better enabling of agile working
Members Technology	20,000				20,000	Funding to invest in updating members technology that complements the implementation of transformation of ways of working
Contingency to underwrite 2017/18 Savings	48,000				48,000	Funding to underwrite the 2017/18 savings and mitigate any adverse impact on the General Reserve balance
Totals	2,635,809	700,490	-109,086	0	3,227,213	

<sup>\*</sup>Projected balances are shown after proposed recommendations.

APPENDIX B

2017/18 CAPITAL PROGRAMME AS AT 31st December 2017

2017/10 CAPITAL PROGRAMME AS AT 3131 Dece	A	В	C (= A+B)	D	Е	F	G (= F+E)	H (= G-C)
	•	Transfers and	Total	Actual	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Variance
Scheme	Current	Supplementary	Current	Spend	Total	Total	Total	Against
	Budget	Estimates	Budget	to Month 9	Spend In	Spend In	Capital	Current
	2017/18	2017/18	2017/18	2017/18	2017/18	Later Years	Spend	Budget
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
General Schemes								
Wheddon Cross Public Conveniences	12,000	0	12,000	12,000	12,000	0	12,000	0
Superfast Broadband	240,000	0	240,000	0	0	240,000	240,000	0
JMASS ICT Transformation	274,580	0	274,580	0	188,580	0	188,580	-86,000
Transformation	196,000	0	196,000	0	39,000	157,000	196,000	0
Offsite Backup Facility	15,000	0	15,000	0	0	15,000	15,000	0
ICT Infrastructure Projects	30,270	0	30,270	6,950	30,270	0	30,270	0
Annual Hardware Replacement	2,857	0	2,857	0	0	2,857	2,857	0
Disabled Facilities Grants	650,470	0	650,470	181,003	181,003	469,467	650,470	0
Private Sector Housing Partnership	0	0	0	5,788	5,788	0	5,788	5,788
Decent Homes	15,910	0	15,910	0	15,910	0	15,910	0
Stair Lift Recycling	760	0	760	0	0	0	0	-760
Clanville Grange Low Cost Housing Scheme	128,000	0	128,000	124,922	124,922	0	124,922	-3,078
7 The Esplanade, Watchet	15,000	0	15,000	0	0	15,000	15,000	0
East Wharf Contingent Disposal Costs	66,611	0	66,611	0	0	66,611	66,611	0
CASA Project	83,000	0	83,000	400	400	82,600	83,000	0
Minehead Esplanade Project	0	0	0	1,581	1,581	0	1,581	1,581
Somerset Waste Partnership-Loan	3,500,000	0	3,500,000	0	0	3,500,000	3,500,000	0
Capital Sustainability Fund	64,500	0	64,500	84,893	84,893	0	84,893	20,393
Steam Cost Trail	209,277	0	209,277	39,698	39,698	169,579	209,277	0
Cuckoo Meadow	3,460	0	3,460	0	3,460	0	3,460	0
Seaward Way-Proposals for Mixed Development	2,982,000	0	2,982,000	0	0	2,982,000	2,982,000	0
Seaward Way Housing Land	13,800	0	13,800	21,227	21,227	0	21,227	7,427
Sub-total - General Schemes	8,503,495	0	8,503,495	478,462	748,732	7,700,114	8,448,846	-54,649
S106-Funded General Schemes								
Williton Pavilion	128,209	0	128,209	38,786	52,976	75,233	128,209	0
Huish Champflower Village Hall	10,000	0	10,000	0	0	10,000	10,000	0
Footpath Lighting Enhancement	12,000	0	12,000	0	0	12,000	12,000	0
Dunster Parish Council -Multi Use Games Area	12,240	0	12,240	0	0	12,240	12,240	0
Carhampton BBQ Area	0	0	0	2,249	2,249	0	2,249	2,249

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#### 2017/18 CAPITAL PROGRAMME AS AT 31st December 2017

General Fund Programme Total	8,665,944	0	8,665,944	519,497	803,957	7,809,587	8,613,544	-52,400
Sub-total - S106 Schemes	162,449	0	162,449	41,035	55,225	109,473	164,698	2,249
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
	2017/18	2017/18	2017/18	2017/18	2017/18	Later Years	Spend	Budget
	Budget	Estimates	Budget	to Month 9	Spend In	Spend In	Capital	Current
Scheme	Current	Supplementary	Current	Spend	Total	Total	Total	Against
		Transfers and	Total	Actual	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Variance
	Α	В	C (= A+B)	D	E	F	G (= F+E)	H (= G-C)

2017/18 CAPITAL PROGRAMME AS AT 31st December 2017

	Α	В	C (= A+B)	D	E	F	G (= F+E)	H (= G-C)
		Transfers and	Total	Actual	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Variance
Scheme	Current	Supplementary	Current	Spend	Total	Total	Total	Against
	Budget	Estimates	Budget	to Month 9	Spend In	Spend In	Capital	Current
	2017/18	2017/18	2017/18	2017/18	2017/18	Later Years	Spend	Budget
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Hinkley-Funded Schemes								
HPC CIM - Westfield Church	8,100	0	8,100	0	8,100	0	8,100	0
HPC CIM - S BW 7 NP Mitigation	344,850	0	344,850	0	0	344,850	344,850	0
HPC CIM BW TC Support Scheme	116,070	0	116,070	0	0	116,070	116,070	O
HPC CIM Brean Down Way Project	65,000	0	65,000	65,000	65,000	0	65,000	0
HPC CIM - Beach Hotel Kitchen	3,000	0	3,000	0	3,000	0	3,000	0
Williton Pavilion	250,000	0	250,000	0	0	250,000	250,000	0
Steam Coast Trail	216,334	0	216,334	0	0	216,334	216,334	0
HPC Housing - Empty Homes & LOTS	94,500	0	94,500	0	0	94,500	94,500	0
Doniford Road Watchet	4,391	0	5,000	0	0	5,000	5,000	0
Stogursey Victory Hall (Leisure)	1,000,000	0	1,000,000	780	780	999,220	1,000,000	0
Enterprising Minehead	303,477	0	303,477	0	0	303,477	303,477	0
HPC CIM - Salvation Army - Youth Space	19,745	0	19,745	0	19,745		19,745	0
Holford & District Village Hall	125,000	0	125,000	0	0	125,000	125,000	C
Hinkley Fund Programme Total	2,550,467	0	2,551,076	65,780	96,625	2,454,451	2,551,076	0
TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME ALL SCHEMES	11,216,411	0	11,217,020	585,277	900,582	10,264,038	11,164,620	-52,400

### Scrutiny Committee – Work Programme 2018

15 <sup>th</sup> February	12 <sup>th</sup> April	14 <sup>th</sup> June	2 <sup>nd</sup> August	18 <sup>th</sup> October	TBC
Notes of any Key Cabinet Decisions / Action Points.	Notes of any Key Cabinet Decisions / Action Points.	Notes of any Key Cabinet Decisions / Action Points.	Notes of any Key Cabinet Decisions / Action Points.	Notes of any Key Cabinet Decisions / Action Points.	
Q3 Budget Monitoring – A. Stark	WSC Corporate Plan 18/19 – R. Doyle	Q4 Performance Report – R. Doyle		Parking Task and Finish Report – M. Prouse	
	Somerset Strategic Housing Framework – M. Leeman	Financial Outturn – P. Fitzgerald			
	Health and Wellbeing in WS Task and Finish Report – M. Prouse	Broadband 'Airband' Overview – I. Timms & CDS			