



Committee and Date

Performance Management
Scrutiny Committee
11th January 2023

Item

Public

Alternative Budget Proposals 2023/24

**Responsible
Officer**

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1. Synopsis

A revised approach to alternative budgets was agreed in September by Full Council. This report sets out the alternative budget proposals of the opposition groups on the council further to their manifesto and policy priorities and in line with that previous report.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. Attached to this report are 3 appendices, setting out alternative budget proposals prepared by three opposition groups within the Council. These proposals are to be considered for possible inclusion within the Cabinet's budget proposals to be set out at its meeting of 15 February.
- 2.2. Alternative budget proposals have been reviewed by finance officers and relevant officers from service departments who have advised on the likely impact and feasibility of the proposals brought forward (in the same way as they would advise Portfolio Holders on their budget proposals to be discussed by Cabinet).
- 2.3. Should any of the attached proposals, wholly or partially, become part of the Cabinet's budget proposals recommended to Council, they will effectively become part of the Cabinet's own budget proposals and will then be considered and adopted, or not, alongside the other proposals brought to Council, including the council tax proposals. (They will not be considered as separate elements of the Cabinet's budget).

3. Recommendations

That Performance Management and Scrutiny Committee

- 3.1. Invites Opposition Group Leaders to present their alternative budget proposals to the committee.
- 3.2. Invites the committee to discuss the proposals presented.
- 3.3. Reports the overall discussion and the proposals presented to Cabinet to be considered for possible inclusion in the budget to be presented by the Leader to Council in March.

REPORT

4. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 4.1. This will be prepared for separate proposals should they be included in the budget proposals taken forward.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1. The subject of the report

6. Climate Change Appraisal

- 6.1. No direct impact arising from the report. Decisions with potential budgetary impact will require more detailed review as part of separate decisions, either within the Cabinet's Budget Report or as part of separate policy decisions.

7. Background

- 7.1. At its meeting of 22 September, Council agreed to a revised approach to alternative budgets. These proposals were agreed further to discussion at 4 May Performance Management and Scrutiny Committee and 7 September Cabinet meetings.
- 7.2. The revised process for the alternative budget proposals has been followed as set out in that report:
 - 31 October – Template sent out to Opposition Group Leaders
 - 25 November – Templates received back, and proposals reviewed by officers in relevant service areas

- 16 December – Templates confirmed further to officer review and returned to Opposition Group Leaders (21 December)
 - 3-4 January – final review and clearance of papers prior to publication
- 7.3. The next steps will be for these proposals to be reviewed by PMSC as part of this meeting, and then received by Cabinet 18 January. Cabinet will bring forward its proposals for the 2023/24 budget on 15 February, with recommendations for its approval presented to Full Council on 2 March.
- 7.4. The proposals of Leader and the Portfolio Holder for Resources, working with the cabinet, were published in outline as part of the December update to the Medium Term Financial Strategy, received by Cabinet on 14 December. These form the basis of the public consultation now available on the Council website.
- 7.5. Alternative budget proposals were prepared in isolation from each other and from the preparation of the Cabinet’s budget proposals. Proposals have followed the format common in other councils, by which budget options which support the policy objectives of the opposition groups are put forward. These then have cost or savings estimates attached to them along with feasibility appraisals. This is the same process as is adopted for the Cabinet’s budget proposals.
- 7.6. The three attachments to this report set out proposals received from the Opposition Group Leaders. Where possible, estimated costs and benefits have been identified by officers in the same way that costs and benefits are identified for all budget proposals. Overall proposals are summarised in the table below.

Political Group	Estimated revenue costs / (benefits) in 2023/24	Estimated capital costs / (benefits) in 2023/24
Liberal Democrat Party (Appendix 2)	£20.85m	£60.2m
Labour Party (appendix 3)	£20.19m	£2.0m
Green Party (Appendix 4)	£19.2m	£5.0m

- 7.7. This report presents 4 attachments, including the Administration’s own proposals (also published as the December MTFs update), also one for each of the Liberal Democrat, Labour, and Green political groups of the Council. These attachments set out the alternative budget proposals of each group, for the Cabinet to consider for inclusion within their own budget. The Labour group proposals were withdrawn.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

Alternative Budget proposals:

[Agenda for Performance Management Scrutiny Committee on Wednesday, 4th May, 2022, 2.00 pm – Shropshire Council](#)

[Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday, 7th September, 2022, 10.30 am – Shropshire Council](#)

[Agenda for Council on Thursday, 22nd September, 2022, 10.00 am – Shropshire Council](#)

December 2022 MTFS update and budget savings proposals:

[Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday, 14th December, 2022, 10.30 am – Shropshire Council](#)

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)

Local Member

Appendices

Appendix 1 – December MTFS update report presented to Cabinet (effectively the draft budget proposals of the Administration)

Appendix 2 – Liberal Democrat group alternative budget proposals

Appendix 3 – Green Party group alternative budget proposals

Appendix 4 – Labour group alternative budget proposals