

Cabinet

15th December 2020

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources – Councillor R Brown

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Director of Finance

Ward(s) affected:

All

Title:

Pre-Budget Report 2021/22

Is this a key decision?

Yes - Cabinet is being recommended to approve, as a basis for consultation, the spending and savings and Council Tax proposals for 2021/22 and future financial years as adjustments to the Council's Budget.

Executive Summary:

This report outlines as a basis for consultation a set of new revenue budget proposals for 2021/22 to 2023/24 which represent changes to the Council's existing Budget. Consultation views are also sought on the potential level of Council Tax and Adult Social Care Precept increases for 2021/22 and on the Council's COVID-19 Equality Impact Assessment. The final Budget proposals and the Council Tax and Adult Social Care increases will be subject to Council approval in February.

The Council's overall future strategy is set out in the "One Coventry Council Plan" which describes the Council's key priorities including: improving the quality of life for Coventry people, especially the most vulnerable; promoting the growth of a sustainable Coventry economy and ensuring that residents share in the benefits; and making the most of our assets and working closer with partners and residents to enable people to do more for themselves. Implicit within the plan is the Council's commitment to delivering a range of core services to everyone in the city.

2020 was expected to be a crucial year for local government in England incorporating several areas of developments in relation to its financial planning environment. However, the emergence of COVID-19 has meant that such developments have been delayed for at least one year. The Chancellor of the Exchequer's Spending Review 2020 announcement (SR2020) on 25th November was overwhelmingly focussed on a one-year perspective. Although SR 2020 included some further support for local government, at the time of writing the Council is still awaiting the 2021/22 Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement which will include details on several key funding announcements which will dictate the funding envelope within which the Council will need to operate next year. As a result, the financial Pre-Budget position set out in this report is

assumption sensitive and is likely to be subject to significant changes in a small number of key areas prior to the setting of the final Budget in February.

The delay of key expected reforms for local government funding which have now been put back until 2022/23 at the earliest leaves local government facing enormous uncertainty for the period after 2021/22. As a result, this report and the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (a draft of which was been considered by the Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board on 14th December) have a greater focus on the immediate term than usual, dictated in large part by the need to manage the current and pressing challenges facing the Council and the city.

The financial proposals in this report do not include any new service cuts. The Council's view is that this is not the appropriate time to reduce vital services and the approach taken thus far is to try and manage the Budget position through a range of technical measures, including using one-off resources to meet one-off financial pressures. That being said, this report does not include sufficient measures to present a balanced budget in 2021/22, with a financial gap of £6m still remaining at this stage. The report includes a range of approaches in section 5 which are intended to balance this position.

The pre-existing Medium Term Financial Strategy included an approach incorporating a number of transformation themes such as commercialisation and digitalisation. This work has been somewhat delayed through 2020 as the Council has shifted its focus by necessity to meeting the challenge of Covid. However, these themes are still intended to become an increasing focus of the Council's financial strategy beyond 2021/22 both to deliver financial savings but also to improve the way that the Council is able to deliver services to its citizens.

The proposals in this report are made as a basis for public consultation and the results of the consultation will be reflected in the final Budget Report in February and considered as part of the final decisions recommended in that report. Further work will be undertaken to confirm all the financial assumptions between now and the final Budget Report in February.

An outline of the resources and the spending and savings proposals are provided in Section 2 and on a line by line basis in Appendix 1. The Council's Council Tax assumptions and the basis on which it is consulting is set out in section 2. The Covid Equality Impact Assessment is included at Appendix 2 and explained in section 6.4.

Indicative details are included within this report for the Council's prospective Capital Programme for 2021/22 based on current knowledge. This will be updated in the February Budget Report, reflecting the most up to programme information available. The draft Programme is based overwhelmingly on pre-existing decisions and patterns of expenditure.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 1) Approve as a basis of consultation: the revenue spending and savings options in Section 2 and Appendix 1 of the report; the broad Capital Programme proposals in sections 2.6 to 2.8 of the report; the approach in relation to Council Tax and the Adult Social Care Precept in Section 1.10 of the report including a Council Tax rise of just under 2% and an Adult Social Care Precept of 3%; the draft COVID-19 Equality Impact Assessment at section 6.4 and Appendix 2 of the report.

List of Appendices included:

Appendix 1 – Pre-Budget Financial Position
Appendix 2 – COVID-19 Equality Impact Assessment

Other useful background papers:

None

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No - The final budget proposals will be considered by Council following the consultation period.

Pre-Budget Report 2021/22

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 Proposals for the Council's 2021/22 Budget are set out in this report within the context of two fundamental factors. Firstly, the period of austerity from 2010 means that Council has had to become accustomed to operating within a very significantly tighter financial envelope than it did previously. Secondly, the Covid pandemic has had the most dramatic impact on local government finances since the Second World War.
- 1.2 The Spending Review announcement on 25th November indicated that local government will see broadly the same level of core funding in 2021/22 compared with 2020/21 although the Review does not detail individual authority settlements. The assumptions in this report are that the Council too will see its individual funding allocation and the majority of its other key financial inputs for next year maintained at broadly the same level as this year.
- 1.3 Confirmation of the Government's proposed settlement for the Council will be contained within the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement in mid-December followed by a final settlement announcement a few weeks into 2021. The Council's existing participation in the West Midlands 100% Business Rates Retention Pilot is anticipated will continue into 2020/21 which means that the Council will once again be subject to a tariff, assumed at level of c£20m at this stage. This is required to be paid over to Government as part of the overall local government funding model.
- 1.4 When the 2020/21 Budget was set, the following year (2021/22) financial gap stood at £19m, rising to £38m by 2023/24. These figures were based on broad assumptions about the Council's financial position, including the impact of the wider local government finance system. They form the starting point of the 2021/22 Budget process.
- 1.5 In the period since February, work has been undertaken to update the assumptions that underpin this position with the underlying objective of meeting the immediate budget gap and to address the medium term financial position. This exercise has been made more challenging than usual due to the impact of COVID-19. At the time of writing, the 2020/21 financial year is anticipated will see expenditure and income pressures and new emergency expenditure programmes incurred in excess of £50m, broadly matched by an equivalent amount of government funding. In addition, grants to businesses and individuals affected by Covid and new Covid related Business Rates Reliefs and Council Tax discounts amounting to more than £110m are in the process of being paid by the Council. This level of previously unbudgeted financial activity is unprecedented and makes the question of what the financial fall-out will be for next financial year extremely difficult to predict.
- 1.6 The City Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) has been considered in draft by the Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board (14th December). The Strategy has a greater focus on the immediate term than usual, dictated in large part by the need to manage the current and pressing challenges facing the Council and the city. Given the significant uncertainty still being experienced it is planned to include the final MTFS as an appendix to the Budget Report in February to maximise the degree of alignment between them.
- 1.7 The MTFS sets out further the national and local context in which the Council is operating and the financial assumptions within this Pre-Budget Report are aligned to the draft MTFS. Prior to setting the final Budget in February, the Council will be required by law to establish the Council Tax and Business Rates tax-bases for 2021/22 and declare any projected deficits or surpluses from previous years. The best estimates of these tax-bases have been included in the financial projections within this report. These reflect the single biggest

impact of Covid. The assumed reduced level of Council Tax and Business Rates collection rates and projected increase in the level of Council Tax Support claimants, largely as a result of Covid, are forecast to have resulted in a financial pressure of c£16m which needs to be managed within the 2021/22 Budget position. SR2020 has indicated that some of this pressure will be alleviated by funding for 75% of the impact on Council Tax and Business Rates that has occurred within 2020/21 which total £4m. Due to wide differences in the way that this policy might be interpreted, no forecast has been included at this stage within the overall financial position.

- 1.8 Sitting behind the overall financial approach is the Council's commitment to protect its most vulnerable citizens and to deliver a range of core services to everyone in the city in line with the One Coventry Council Plan. However, the Council continues to face a difficult task to achieve this at the same time as dealing with a period of austerity that has been paused but not necessarily ended. Therefore, in addition to the specific proposals within this report, the Council is exploring a number of other approaches in order to address future budget gaps. The pre-existing Medium Term Financial Strategy included incorporated a number of transformation themes. These themes have been refined to reflect the Council's approach to commercial opportunities, its digital offer, how it delivers services across its operational property and assets, its organisational design and culture and how it works with its partners and communities. This work has been somewhat delayed through 2020 as the Council has shifted its focus by necessity to meeting the challenge of Covid but continues to form part of its medium term approach.
- 1.9 Ahead of these programmes delivering alternatives options for future service delivery, the Council has clarified or forecast a range of technical assumptions including information from SR2020 and identified a range of largely technical savings and reserve contributions compliant with its existing MTFS. The proposals avoid any significant detrimental impacts on services to the people of Coventry. The descriptions set out in Appendix 1 give an indication of the implications of each proposal.
- 1.10 This report proposes that the budget consultation is carried out on the basis that the Council will increase Council Tax levels by just under 2%, the maximum amount allowable by Government without triggering a referendum. In addition, it is also proposed as a basis for consultation to apply the full flexibility to raise a 3% Adult Social Care Precept in line with Government guidelines. As a result, if these changes are approved within the final proposals in February, Council Tax bills would increase by just under 5%.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1 The remainder of the report details the financial position facing the Council and the specific proposals put forward for consultation. These proposals are detailed within Appendix 1.

Revenue

- 2.2 Following the 2020/21 Budget Report the Council faced a budget shortfall of £19m for 2020/21 with significant budget gaps after this. A number of budget pressures and shortfalls in the achievement of savings plans have then created a revised budget gap over this period the most significant of which are outlined below:
 - Children's Services are forecasting costs of £4m relating to the number of Looked After Children (LAC), the unit costs of placements and the number and cost of officers required to manage current workload pressures. These costs reduce in subsequent years based on an assumption that LAC numbers return to a lower level. Further costs may be experienced in 2021/22 depending on the depth and longevity of Covid impacts. These have not been included within the

financial position on the basis that if they emerge, they will be matched against the Covid funding for local government identified within SR2020.

- It is anticipated that not all of the companies in which the Council has a financial interest will be able to match the overall level of dividends built into the Council's plans, mostly as a result of the Covid pandemic. This shortfall (£2.4m in 2021/22) is expected could persist at a similar level in 2022/23 and could then begin to recover in 2023/24.
- Income budgets for car parking and bus lane enforcement are forecast to suffer a shortfall of £1.7m as a result of what are to expected to be long-term trends in usage and offending patterns respectively. Although Covid has been an exacerbating factor in this, the shortfall is expected to be a persistent long-term impact. Further shortfalls may be experienced in 2021/22 depending on the depth and longevity of Covid impacts. These have not been included within the financial position on the basis that if they emerge, they will be matched against the Covid funding for local government identified within SR2020.
- Adult Social Care (ASC) costs of £1.6m reflect the latest forecasts of changes in the market, local demography and inflationary pressures. It is possible that the ASC Precept and additional social care funding identified in SR2020 will be accompanied by upward pressure in the market although neither the pressure nor the likely grant funding has been incorporated at this stage.
- SR2020 introduced new restrictions on councils being able to access borrowing from the Public Works Loans Board (in effect, the Government) if they acquire assets for commercial gain over the next three years. As a result, the Council will not be able to meet the remaining unmet balance of previously set income targets for commercial property rents that were predicated on the purchase of such assets. These targets (£1.5m rising to £2m) have been removed at this stage pending a review of the Council's approach in this area.

2.3 Overall resources include the Government settlement, amounts in relation to Council Tax and Business Rates and several specific grants that the Government includes within its definition of Core Spending Power. Movements in this category include the following:

- The Government Spending Review indicated a local government settlement for 2021/22 that is broadly in line with that for 2020/21 (although authority specific details are yet to be announced). The Council's initial financial assumptions was for a worsened settlement and the updated position represents a estimated improvement of £9m.
- Collection rate forecasts for Council Tax and Business Rates have been lower than historical experience in 2020/21 and further impacts are expected to continue in 2021/22 as the impact Covid pandemic feeds through to what are expected to be difficult economic circumstances for businesses and individuals. The volume of Council Tax Support claimants has grown through 2020/21 and is expected to continue increasing over the coming period. Due to Collection Fund accounting arrangements any in-year surplus or deficits are carried forward to the following year. This means that for both Council Tax and Business Rates the cumulative worse than previously planned for positions of both 2020/21 and 2021/22 are reflected in this Pre-Budget position. The Government's dispensation to spread 2020/21 deficits over three years affects the Council's Business Rates position. Although the Council Tax forecast is worse than previously anticipated it does not actually result in a deficit position.

- Several income streams linked to social care were previously assumed would fall-out in 2021/22. The Spending Review has now indicated that these will continue at least for a further one year. This is now assumed will affect two adults and children's social care grants and the Independent Living Fund although information on the latter income stream was not confirmed and may be wrapped up with other social care funding announced in the Spending Review. As a result of this ambiguity, the Council's Pre-Budget position does not assume any additional social care funding at this point.
- The proposals put forward in this report assume taking the full flexibility of the 3% Adult Social Care Precept allowed for within the Spending Review as a basis for consultation. This would create additional resources of £4.3m.

2.4 There is a small number of technical savings, the most significant ones being as follows:

- Latest estimates based on the Council's superannuation position assume that savings of £2.3m rising to £5.9m can be released over the next three years. This assumes taking the full budget flexibility of current calculations which are based on cost experience gained to date through 2020/21.
- There is a reduction of £1.5m in the budgeted amounts now required for housing and homelessness as a result of less expensive and more suitable temporary accommodation made available through Council initiatives.
- It is proposed to reduce to nil (for two years) the budget for funding organisational exit costs (redundancy and pension strain) with any such costs being funded from the reserve balance established for this purpose.

2.5 The net result of these changes would still leave the Council significantly adrift of a balanced budget position. As a result and in the light of the extra-ordinary impact of COVID-19 on the Council's financial position (which should be one-off or short-term for the most part) it is proposed that the Council uses reserve balances to fund some of the short-term pressures within its financial position, specifically those relating to dividend loss and Collection Fund losses. Given the nature of the pressures, the use of reserves in this manner does not breach the Council's MTFS strategy of not using reserves to support ongoing expenditure.

Table 1: Financial Position 2021/22 to 2023/24

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	£000	£000	£000
Initial Budget Gap	19,129	30,816	37,786
Resources	(13,224)	(21,736)	(17,916)
Non-Achieved Savings	1,010	650	650
Expenditure Pressures	10,426	8,795	7,766
Income Pressures	4,505	4,796	2,610
Directorate and Technical Savings	(6,449)	(6,510)	(7,585)
Reserve Contributions	(9,194)	1,000	1,000
Budget Gap	6,202	17,811	24,311

Capital

- 2.6 The Council has an aspirational draft capital programme which totals nearly £1billion. Of this nearly c£211m is currently cash-flowed for 2021/22. It should be said at the outset that much of this Programme is reliant on receiving future approvals from the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) and the Department of Transport (DFT). In turn these approvals will rely on the WMCA being able to secure funding streams that are equal in value to the amounts identified when the initial Devo-Deal was established. The Devo Deal included £438m of WMCA funding for CCC of which c£193m does not have yet have a secure funding stream and could not progress until it does. This element is not included in Capital programme numbers within this report. Work is on-going between the WMCA and the 7 West Midlands district councils to secure this programme.
- 2.7 The main components of the Council's provisional programme are set out below with the figures quoted representing the projected sums earmarked currently for 2021/22. The five year programme and an updated cash-flow position will be included in February's final Budget Report. The Programme includes:
- A strategic transportation programme of around £141m under the banner of UK Central incorporating the Coventry South package (including A46 works, Coventry Station Masterplan and Very Light Rail).
 - Up to £54m of other economic regeneration and infrastructure works including the completion of the City of Culture works and Public Realm of the Upper Precinct, funded partially from the new grant investment from the Getting Building Fund, the continuation of Air Quality Programme and the Mixed Recycling Facility
 - City Centre Regeneration investment taking forward the city's Friargate District (building 2) and City Centre South plans.
 - Housing Infrastructure Fund works at Eastern Green totalling c£15m.
 - Continued investment in the schools capital works including provision for the expansion of secondary places under their One Strategic Plan.
- 2.8 The draft programme will be subject to change between now and February with every expectation that some of the proposed expenditure profile will be shifted to later years. It is important to be aware also that some of the schemes involve a complex mix of funding sources, multi-partner delivery arrangements and challenging planning, technical and approval cocktails that do not always lend themselves to smooth project delivery progress. In overall terms, given the large amount of externally funded and driven proposals within the Council's Capital Programme it is very likely that a fair degree of flux will continue to be experienced in its cash-flow over the next few years.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

- 3.1 The proposals in the report are subject to statutory consultation requirements. The Council will communicate the report's key messages through usual consultation channels including social and digital media.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1 This report includes a set of draft budget proposals and does not authorise spending and savings decisions. Following a public consultation period, full Council will consider the final budget proposals in February to be implemented from 1st April 2021. An indicative profile is set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

5. Comments from the Director of Finance and the Director of Law and Governance

5.1 Financial implications

This Pre-Budget report comes in the wake of an extra-ordinary set of circumstances that have had an impact at both a global and a local level. The prospect that 2021/22 will see less dramatic Covid effects does not disguise the fact that the legacy financial implications of the pandemic will be considerable, including those on local authority budgeting. In part but not exclusively as a result of Covid, a number of councils have reported financial difficulties during 2020/21 or have indicated that these will be encountered without further Government support during 2021/22. The non-Covid reasons for financial problems vary but have often incorporated one or more of the following elements: medium term planning which has been over-reliant on reserve contributions; budgeting decisions that fail to recognise and address fundamental weakness in the financial position; running down reserve balances to insufficiently low levels; a breakdown of governance structures in decision making and; financial planning approaches which place an over reliance on speculative commercial activity.

The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy which will be reported alongside the Budget Report in February will provide greater coverage of the Council's approach to financial planning addressing the issues above. There should be no mistaking the fact that these are difficult times for local authorities and for many authorities including Coventry, the path to a balanced medium term financial position is not easily identifiable at this point. Fundamental to this will be Government's clarification on a number of issues: the future fair funding formula for local government; Business Rate reform including the degree of Business Rates retention; the future of the West Midlands Combined Authority Business Rates pilot; a multi year local government settlement; future grant funding streams including the New Homes Bonus; and the future arrangements for funding adult social care. The recent Spending Review has provided some (but not complete) assurance on some key elements for 2021/22 which have helped the Council move towards a position whereby it should be able to manage its financial position next year. In terms of future years however, the Council continues to use several modestly prudent assumptions in relation to future settlements to provide some budgeting realism ahead of what could be potentially volatile outcomes. This approach will help to maintain a focus on sound budget setting decision making going forward.

The detailed proposals set out in Appendix 1 reflect a range of technical assumptions and forecasts. This includes estimated impacts from Covid that total more than £20m including those affecting Children's Services, company dividends and a combined effect on Council Tax and Business Rates of £16m. It is important to stress that the longevity and depth of pandemic effects are impossible to predict at this stage, dependent as they are on issues such as whether there are further spikes in cases, any future lockdowns and the success of future vaccination programmes. At this stage, only costs that are can be more reliably estimated have been included in the Pre-Budget position whilst others in relation to some income streams and other more assumption sensitive cost forecasts have been excluded. At the same time however, Spending Review announcements on funding for social care, Collection Fund losses, sales fees and charges losses and Covid expenditure pressures have also been omitted pending further clarity. The planning assumption is that there will be a strong degree of offset between these pressures and the associated funding within 2021/22.

The Council's approach in 2020/21 has been both to try and manage additional Covid resources on a multi-year basis (matching funding to spending profiles) and to protect other Council reserves and budget provision to enable these to be applied across financial years. This requires a balanced approach which applies resources to deliver vital services to citizens who are vulnerable and in need but not over-committing to the extent that the

Council's financial position is exposed. In this way the Council has sought to put itself in a financially stable position that will enable it to continue to provide support to local people over a medium term position and not have to cut services in an unplanned way. It is worth adding that support to businesses has generally been through prescribed and ring-fenced funding. This has been and is being administered in line with Government guidance. The Council's wider approach has been to continue to support the local economy through the regeneration elements included within its Capital Programme and ongoing services delivered to local businesses.

The resulting financial position in Appendix 1 show a financial gap of £6m rising to £24m over the next three years. With a focus at this point on 2021/22, the Council's approach between this report and the final Budget proposals will seek to bridge the £6m gap through the following mechanisms:

- Incorporating Government announcements as they emerge including through the Local Government Finance Settlement.
- Refine existing forecasts in a few key areas including pay contingency and company dividends.
- Identify cost control action in the current year to generate resources to carry-forward and look for flexibility to offset pressures with matching reserve balances.
- Manage Covid programmes on a multi-year basis where appropriate to make grant available next year.

It is anticipated that each of these areas will deliver some scope to manage the remaining gap and it is the view of the Director of Finance that further action to identify new savings is not required at this stage. However, this does not mean that the Council can afford to be complacent or plan on an optimistic basis for the medium term. Any such approach would run the risk of leaving future financial gaps with insufficient time to identify ways of addressing them. Therefore, the intention is to proceed with transformation workstreams relating to commercialisation, digitalisation, its organisational design and culture, use of its operational property and how it works with its partners and communities in order to deliver most cost effective and fit for purpose services for the city. At this stage it is envisaged that collectively these workstreams will provide savings that can be profiled into budgets from financial year 2022/23.

The Council's recent revenue and capital budgets have maintained a strong focus on helping Coventry become a growing and more prosperous city both to help protect and increase key tax revenue streams and reduce the reliance of some local residents on Council services. In addition, the Council has adopted more commercial approaches to identify new and increased revenue streams. These approaches have been delayed and their effectiveness reduced through 2020/21 as a result of Covid but will continue to be important as part of a balanced strategy which plays due regard to the risks and limitations inherent within them. The reality is that the risk of not taking such approaches is greater than that of pursuing them and suffering occasional negative consequences.

One of the most surprising aspects of the current year has been the degree to which the Council has been able to continue to pursue its plans within an expansive Capital Programme despite the Covid pandemic. This remains a critical part of the medium term revenue focus referenced above and is central to the Council's plans to increase local regeneration and prosperity as the city addresses the need to recover from the pandemic and meeting the challenges of EU exit and economic recession. The need to secure the remaining funding within the WMCA Devo Deal remains a significant risk to successful delivery of part of the Programme.

5.2 Legal implications

The proposals in this report are designed to meet the Council's statutory obligations in relation to setting a balanced 2021/22 budget by mid-March 2021. This includes the duty to report to the Council on the robustness of the estimates provided and the adequacy of the financial reserves in place. Section 31A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 refer.

6. Other implications

6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's Plan?

The Council, in common with all local authorities, will continue to be faced with challenging resource constraints although the precise nature and trajectory of this are not yet clear. Individual savings and pressures set out in this report demonstrate the Council's commitment is seeking to minimise impacts on front-line services. The pre-budget position is presented within the context of the developing Medium Term Financial Strategy, which will align with the priorities set out for the City within the Council Plan. In this way pre-budget proposals are aligned to existing policy priorities.

6.2 How is risk being managed?

The inability to deliver a balanced budget is one of the Council's key corporate risks. The proposals within this report are aimed directly at trying to mitigate this risk. The new savings that will be included in the Council's bottom line budget position are unlikely to represent a significant risk of non-achievement. However, the continued large budget gaps for future years will need to be addressed as part of the next budget process through 2021.

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

None of the new proposals set in Appendix 1 are likely to result in post deletions or service reductions. Measures for managing the financial gap based on current forecasts are set out in section 5 and any new savings proposals are unlikely to be put forward except as a last resort if the local government financial settlement is much worse than currently anticipated. Revenue gaps that need to be managed in later years means that the Council will have to consider changes that might radically affect the way it works and the services it provides in the future.

6.4 Equalities / EIA

An initial assessment is that the savings contained in this year's pre-Budget report are unlikely to have any significant equality impacts. This position will be reviewed ahead of the final budget proposals being put forward in the new year, and any associated equality analysis will be carried out accordingly.

As part of its ongoing compliance with the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty, the Council is committed to understanding the differential impacts that the COVID-19 outbreak has had on the communities of Coventry. The Council has therefore produced an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) on the local impact of COVID-19 (see Appendix 2) in order to support this year's budget setting process. A series of EIAs were carried out at service level in order to identify any unintended, disproportionate impacts on people with certain protected characteristics through changes to routine service delivery that were implemented during the Council's emergency response. The results of these EIAs have been collated in order to identify the cumulative impact on protected groups – and demonstrate that people from Black, Asian and Minority ethnic groups and people with disabilities have been most disproportionately impacted. The EIA also reflects wider findings of other research showing that the pandemic has exacerbated existing health inequalities in society.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment

None

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

There are little or no direct implications for partner organisations in the proposals.

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