

---

# Revenue Budget 2017-18 – Supporting Information

---

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to consider and recommend to Council the 2017-18 Revenue Budget, which proposes a Council Tax requirement of £88.4m requiring a Council Tax increase of 1.99% in 2017-18 with a 3% precept ring-fenced for adult social care. The Council Tax increase will raise £4.2m, of which £2.5m will be ring-fenced for adult social care.
- 1.2 In order to arrive at a balanced budget for 2017-18, £4.7m of savings and income proposals have been recommended, including reductions in highways and drainage maintenance and road safety, restructure of youth support, family resource, help for families and young carers service, increasing highways fees and charges including parking and many others. A public consultation exercise was undertaken on each of the public facing proposals and detail on the responses is included in Appendix N . The proposed savings will have significant implications for staff which are detailed in a separate report. In 2017-18, West Berkshire Council will receive transitional grant funding of £1.37m and after considering the responses to the consultation on savings it is proposed that the Executive recommend to Council to allocate the funding as follows:
- (a) £140k to Short Breaks
  - (b) £30k to Citizens Advice Bureau
  - (c) £200k to Libraries
  - (d) £1m to be put into a Transformation Fund, to assist West Berkshire Council to transform and improve the way it delivers its services.
- 1.3 During 2016-17, usable reserves are expected to reduce by £2.75m to fund the forecast revenue over spend, fund exit costs arising from savings plans and to facilitate the transfer of John O’Gaunt School to an Academy. The Council has made provision in the 2017-18 budget to put £1.98m back into reserves. £0.98m will be put into the Adult Social Care Risk Fund to mitigate against risks in this area and if the Executive are minded to approve the use of Transition Grant after considering the consultation responses, then £1m will be allocated to a Transformation Fund, in order to ensure that the Council has the resources to pursue transformation plans outlined in the MTFS and to invest in strategies that will bring future benefits to the organisation.
- 1.4 This report also proposes the Fees and Charges for 2017-18 as set out in Appendix H and the Special Expenses as set out in Appendix I and recommends the level of General Reserves as set out in Appendix F and Appendix G.

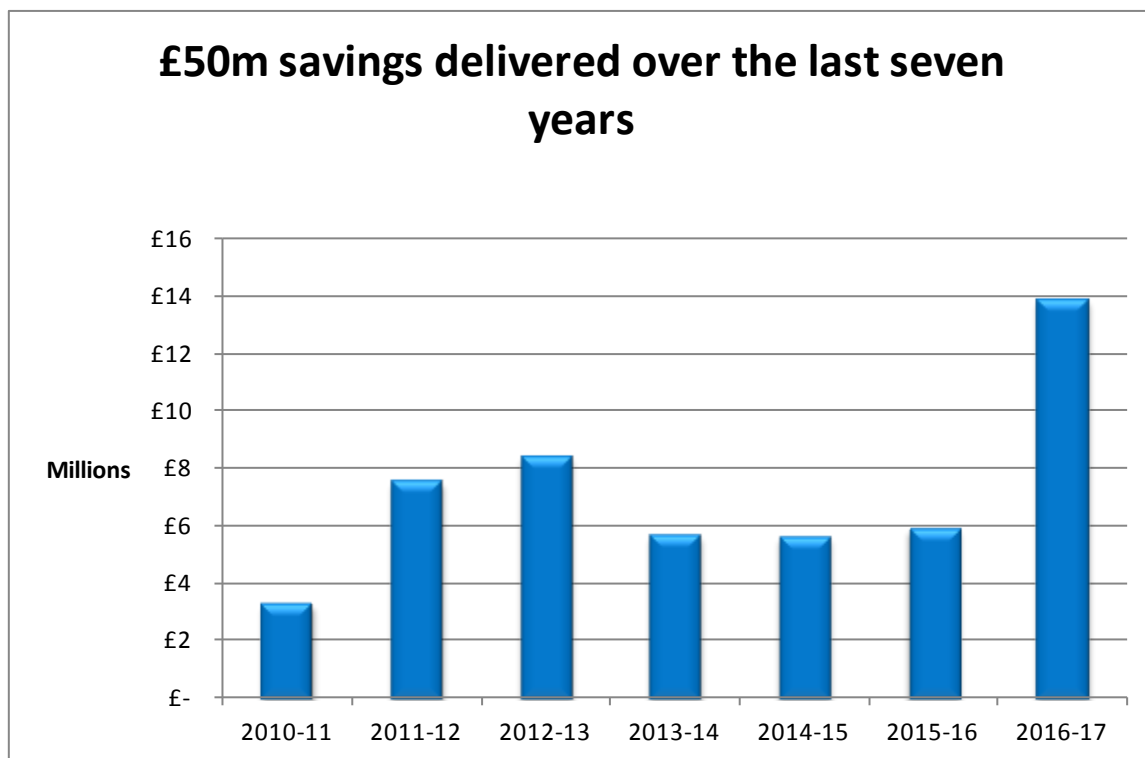
## 2. Background

- 2.1 Over the previous seven years, West Berkshire Council has had to find over £50m of revenue savings, which has been achieved through finding efficiencies, staff

reductions and transforming services. This level of savings was required as a result of a number of factors:

- (1) Since 2010, Council funding from Central Government has significantly reduced as part of the deficit reduction programme.
- (2) Since 2013-14, the Council has been exposed to the volatility of our local business rate generation. This represents both an opportunity to benefit from growth, but also a risk. Since the introduction of local business rate retention, growth has stagnated and a number of large appeals from business to the Valuation Office have reduced the Council’s income. We have faced the following losses as a result:
  - (a) nearly £3m from backdated appeals
  - (b) an ongoing loss of circa £850k per year.
- (3) The Care Act 2014 came into force in April 2015, introducing the most significant changes to social care legislation for 60 years. Despite the Government stating they would meet the costs of the Care Act in full, the Council has been left to cover an annual funding gap of £3m.
- (4) The Council’s costs rise by about 2% each year to perform exactly the same functions with no new demands. There have also been new cost pressures such as increased demands on children’s placements, social worker recruitment, demand for social care and demand for services such as waste management.

2.2 During this period, we have put in place a programme to remain within our budget which has delivered savings of over £50m as shown in the following chart:

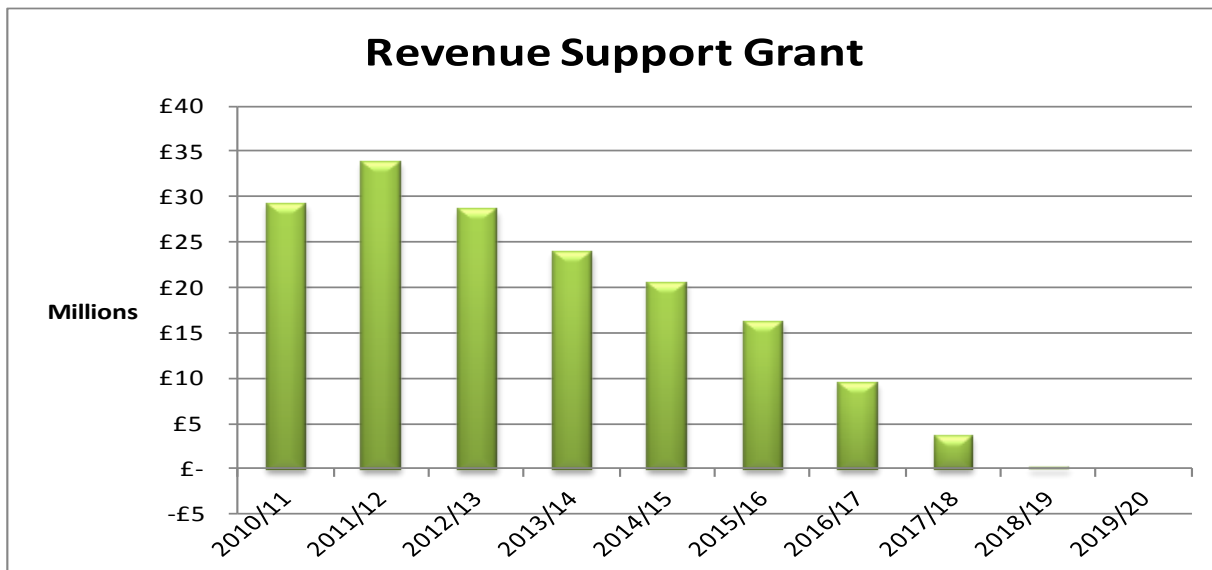


- 2.3 The 2016-17 budget was built with the largest savings programme we have ever faced. Additional savings were required as a result of the December 2015 financial settlement and had to be identified and put in place by March 2016. As a result, achieving the savings programme of £13.9m has been challenging. Transitional grant funding has been used to help services transition to a new model of operation, but despite this, at Quarter Three of 2016-17, we are forecasting an over spend of £765k. The over spend has arisen in part due to savings programmes taking longer than anticipated to realise the savings, and whilst plans are expected to achieve the full savings in 2017-18, there is pressure on the 2016-17 budget. Other factors affecting the over spend are largely in the Communities Directorate, where the forecast over spend is £1m. Adult Social Care is seeing increased complexity of client needs and upward cost pressures in commissioning services for nursing and residential care. Overall client numbers have not increased significantly which is in part attributable to the success of our preventative and demand management strategies. However, this is not enough to offset the complexity and cost pressures and the delayed realisation of savings plans. The Education Service is forecasting a £234k over spend, generated from pressure on Home to School Transport budgets and the Disabled Children’s placement budget and the service has been unable to realise the full extent of the 2016-17 savings in year. Other services across the Council have been able to generate under spends in order to bring down the overall level of over spend.
- 2.4 Any 2016-17 over spend will have a negative impact on our reserves. We have made budget provision for the ongoing pressures that have arisen during 2016-17 and will continue to grow. Pressures continue in the area of learning disability where new clients require support and when children move to adult support packages, with these increases amounting to an extra £1.4m budget requirement in 2017-18. There are a further £1m of pressures in adult social care due to rising demand, price increases, additional staffing requirements and new responsibilities such as the National Living Wage and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguarding.

### 3. Local Government Settlement

- 3.1 In December 2015, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Greg Clark MP, announced that he would be giving councils the opportunity to achieve greater certainty and confidence from a four year financial settlement. In March 2016, the Government made a clear commitment to provide minimum allocations for each year of the Spending Review period, and that should councils choose to accept the offer they must have published an efficiency plan on the Council’s website by 14 October 2016.
- 3.2 In October 2016, West Berkshire Council accepted the Government’s offer of a four year funding settlement from 2016-17 to 2019-20. Whilst this settlement commits the Council to a continued reduction in the Revenue Support Grant (RSG), it provides financial stability on which the Council can plan ahead and build other sources of income. This Efficiency Plan is published on our website and summarises previously published elements of the Council Strategy, Medium Term Financial Strategy and Efficiency Strategy for the use of Capital Receipts.
- 3.3 The provisional settlement was issued in December 2016, but the final settlement has yet to be announced.

3.4 The scale of RSG cuts are shown in the following graph. In 2017-18 we will receive 61% less in Revenue Support Grant (RSG) than in 2016-17, equating to a loss of £5.8m.



Note: RSG commenced in 2013/14, prior to this it was Formula Grant.

3.5 A transitional grant has been made available to be paid in each of the first two years of the settlement. West Berkshire received transitional grant funding from central government of £1.39m in 2016-17 and will receive a further £1.37m in 2017-18.

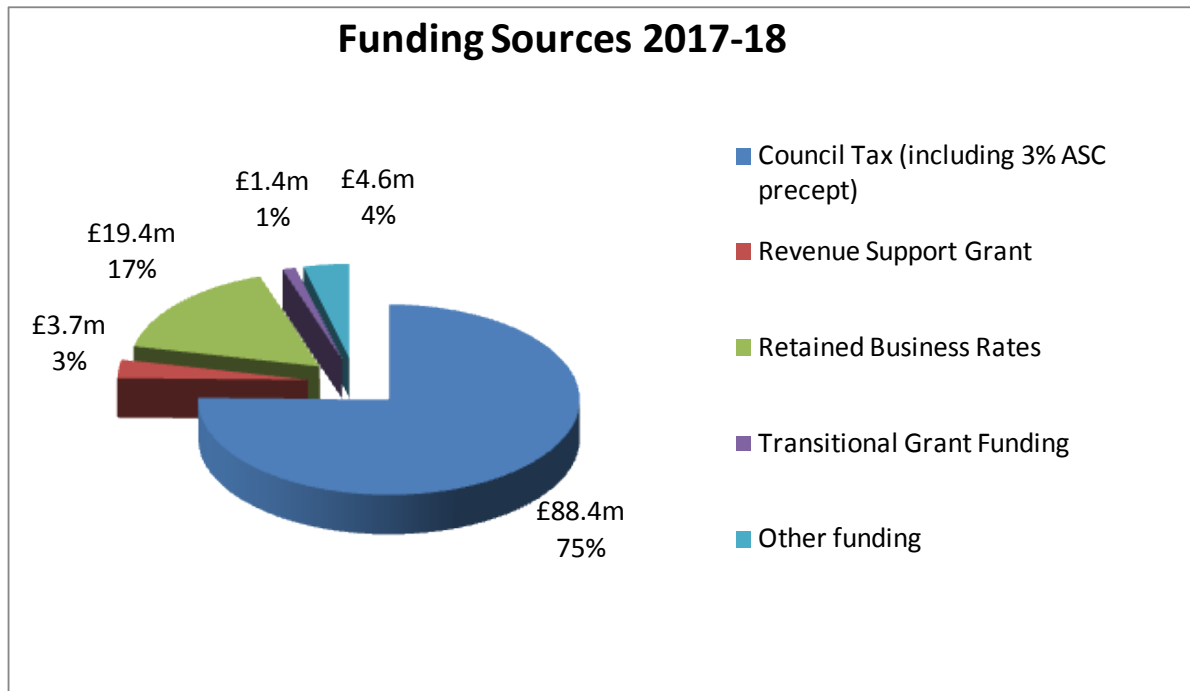
3.6 The Spending Review included proposals for further major transformation of local government funding, confirming that the Government will move to local authority retention of 100% of business rates by 2020, but it is not yet clear how this will benefit local authorities.

3.7 The New Homes Bonus (NHB) funding for 2017-18 is £330k below previous expectations as a result of Government reforms. The number of years for which payments are made has been reduced from six years to five years in 2017-18, and then to four years from 2018-19. The reform has also introduced a baseline for housing growth set at an initial level of 0.4% of the council tax base for 2017-18. Housing growth below this level will not receive a New Homes Bonus allocation. This NHB reset will deliver £240m nationally to redirect into a one-off Adult Social Care Support Grant giving each authority a share proportional to the Adult Social Care Relative Needs Formula. West Berkshire will receive £503k one off funding from this grant which will help offset the pressures we are facing in this service.

3.8 Our Education Services Grant (ESG) is being withdrawn as a result of Government reforms. The grant consisted of two elements: general funding (2016-17: £1,472k) and retained duties (2016-17: £382k). From 2017-18, local authorities will no longer receive the general funding rate grant (but will receive transitional protection to the end of August 2017). It is estimated that this will have a negative impact on our revenue budget in 2017-18 in the region of £373k. Schools can choose to buy back the services that were previously funded from this grant from the local authority or to buy from private providers, but they will not receive additional funding to do so. The retained duties element will be added to the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). The transfer of Education Support Grant functions to schools and to the DSG was agreed at the Schools Forum meeting of 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2017.

## 4. Sources of Funding

4.1 The main sources of funding for the revenue budget for West Berkshire Council in 2017-18 are shown in the following chart. This does not include other ring-fenced grants which are used to fund specific areas.



4.2 **Council Tax.** West Berkshire Council’s main source of funding is from Council Tax, which is collected from local residents based on the value of the property in which they live. The recommendation included within this report is a Council Tax increase of 1.99% for 2017-18 with a 3% precept ring-fenced for adult social care. Income from Council Tax is expected to increase as a result of growth in the tax base and changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme. This increase is forecast to be 2.33% in 2017-18. This is based on a collection rate of 99.4%. Council Tax is our largest source of funding at 75% amounting to £88.4m in 2017-18.

4.3 **Revenue Support Grant (RSG).** Councils receive a general grant from Government to support the services provided. There are no restrictions on how this is used, within a council’s legal powers. West Berkshire Council will receive Revenue Support Grant of £3.7m in 2017-18. This represents a reduction in this funding of 61%, or a £5.8m reduction from 2016-17.

4.4 **Transitional Grant Funding.** This was announced on 8 February 2016 as a response to the consultation on the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement. West Berkshire will receive £1.37m in 2017-18.

4.5 **Retained Business Rates.** From 2013-14, councils keep a proportion of the income they receive from business rates raised in their area. Of the £85m collected locally the vast majority is paid over to central government leaving the Council with £19.4m. Currently councils have limited ability to counteract risk in relation to appeals and avoidance, and this is especially the case for councils dependent on a small number of large businesses. Whilst councils did not previously bear any risk from successful appeals, they are now liable for half of the cost, including any

backdating liability, which in some cases may go back to 2005 or earlier. Appeals have had a significant impact on West Berkshire which has resulted in a loss of nearly £3m from back dated appeals and an ongoing loss of circa £850k per year.

4.6 **Other Funding.** West Berkshire Council receives a number of specific grants to support its priorities:

- (1) **Education Services Grant.** This is being removed as a result of Government reforms and we will receive a transition grant in 2017-18.
- (2) **New Homes Bonus.** This is paid to councils to encourage them to build new homes and gives councils a grant equivalent to their increase in Council Tax income for a period of six years for each new home. There is additional money if any of these new homes are affordable housing. West Berkshire Council will receive £3.63m from this grant in 2017-18, which is £330k below our expectations. The number of years for which payments are made has been reduced from six years to five years in 2017-18, and then to four years from 2018-19. The reform has also introduced a baseline for housing growth set at an initial level of 0.4% of the council tax base for 2017-18. Housing growth below this level will not receive a New Homes Bonus allocation.
- (3) **Collection Fund Deficit.** A collection fund deficit of £108k has arisen because council tax debits raised have not matched expectations when the taxbase was set in December of the previous year. The taxbase reflects the actual number of properties liable to council tax adjusted for any relevant discounts and exemptions and with a further adjustment for the effect of new build property. In 2016-17 the physical number of new builds has met expectations but the rate of build has been slower, resulting in a lower value of debit.

4.7 **Ring-fenced Funding.** The Council receives ring-fenced funding which must be spent on these specific areas. The largest of these are detailed below:

- (1) **Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).** The DSG does not form part of the revenue budget as it is a ring-fenced grant which can only be spent on school/pupil activity as set out in 'The School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations'. The funding received is split into three blocks – Schools, Early Years and High Needs. The DSG settlement for each block for 2017-18 was announced on 20 December 2016 and is set out in the table below (the early years block is provisional).

| 2017/18 Estimate  | DSG Funding<br>£m | Expenditure Budget<br>£m | Difference<br>£m |
|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| Schools Block     | 97.0              | 97.0                     | 0                |
| Early Years Block | 8.9               | 8.9                      | 0                |
| High Needs Block  | 19.6              | 20.2                     | -0.6             |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>125.5</b>      | <b>126.1</b>             | <b>-0.6</b>      |



There was a small surplus of £0.2m in the schools block, and the Schools' Forum agreed to allocate this out to schools, bringing this block into balance. Although schools will receive a small increase to their per pupil funding, it falls short of the additional costs they will incur in 2017-18, making it harder for them to balance their own individual budgets.

The method for allocating early years block funding is currently out to consultation with all providers of early education, and the intention is to set a balanced budget for this block by setting funding rates within what is affordable.

There is a shortfall of £0.6m in the high needs block, and at the meeting of the Schools' Forum on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2017 a strategy for balancing this block over two years was agreed subject to the final forecast position.

The final decisions on the early years and high needs blocks will be made by the Schools' Forum on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2017.

- (2) **Public Health Grant.** West Berkshire Council receives a ring-fenced grant to fund public health functions. The Government has announced savings in public health spending of which West Berkshire's share is £152k for 2017-18. The grant is to remain ring-fenced in 2017-18 and we will receive £6.007m (2016-17: £6.159m).

## 5. Revenue Expenditure

- 5.1 **Base Budget Growth:** This is the budget increase required for the Council to perform exactly the same functions year on year. As part of the budget setting process, the Council provides for general inflationary pressures such as salary increases (1% assumption) based on the established number of posts, together with salary increments and increases to National Insurance and pension contributions.
- 5.2 **Contract Inflation:** Budgets are inflated where a contract is in place and is subject to annual inflationary increases. This amounts to £610k in 2017-18. The main amount of contract inflation the Council faces is from the waste PFI contract. This contract increase is based on the RPIx measure in January of each year. Full details are given in Appendix C.
- 5.3 **Service Pressures:** Each year new unavoidable service pressures arise and need to be built into the revenue budget. The service pressures for 2017-18 amount to £3.7m and include £1.4m for the transition of learning disability clients from children to adult placements and £1m in adult social care relating to demand, complexity of need and prices. The introduction of an Apprentice Levy has created a new pressure on both the Council and individual schools' budgets, and no additional funding has been made available for this. Full details of the Council pressures are given in Appendix D.
- 5.4 **Provision for Other Risks:** The Council is facing a number of risk items that will arise in 2017-18 but cannot yet be quantified. These include increase in demand for services over and above budget assumptions, inflation and income from business rates and any changes as a result of the final settlement. There is a risk to delivering some savings plans in full, and this risk increases in line with the size of

the savings programme. We have allocated some funding in the revenue budget to help fund these items.

## 6. Council Tax

- 6.1 The Council is proposing a Council Tax increase of 1.99% with a 3% precept ring-fenced for adult social care. This will raise a total of £4.2m, of which £2.5m will be ring-fenced for adult social care.
- 6.2 Adult social care makes up over a third of the Council's net revenue budget. Whilst efficiencies are being made in the way the Council operates this Service, the precept will go towards funding the mounting pressures faced in the areas of learning disability, demographic increases, increased costs, additional staffing requirements.

## 7. Savings and Budget Consultation 2017-18

- 7.1 In order to arrive at a balanced budget, £4.7m of savings and income proposals have been recommended including reductions in highways and drainage maintenance and road safety, restructure of youth support, family resource, help for families and young carers service, increasing highways fees and charges including parking and many others as detailed in Appendix E. As a result of these savings plans, a number of employees are at risk of redundancy and the associated exit costs will impact on our level of reserves.
- 7.2 Given the scale of the savings requirement for 2017-18, some tough decisions have had to be made. We recognised that a number of the proposals being put forward within the revenue budget would be considered 'front line' services that people use and will miss. The Council launched its public consultation on its 2017-18 Revenue Budget on 31 October 2016. The consultation ran for six weeks and concluded on 11 December 2016. A total of 302 responses were received to the seven individual public facing proposals.
- 7.3 Since the consultation closed, Members and officers have read and assessed in depth all of the comments that have been received. The Revenue Budget papers have included, as Appendix N, the summary of officer conclusions and recommendations together with consultation summary reports, overview of responses and recommendations and Equality Impact Assessment Stage 2 for each of the savings that were consulted on. The verbatim comments are available on our website at [www.westberks.gov.uk/budgetproposals](http://www.westberks.gov.uk/budgetproposals).
- 7.4 The Public Sector Equality Duty (149 (1)) requires a Local Authority in exercise of its functions to have due regard to the need to:
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.
  - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
  - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.



- 7.5 The Public Sector Equality Duty requires “decision makers” to keep the welfare of service users and their families at the forefront of their mind particularly those that are most disadvantaged. This is an important consideration when setting the 2017-18 budget.
- 7.6 The Executive has considered the consultation responses and recommend to Council that the £1.37m Transitional Grant funding is allocated in the following way:
- (a) £140k Short Breaks
  - (b) £30k CAB
  - (c) £200k Libraries
  - (d) £1m Transformation Fund which will continue to assist West Berkshire Council to transform and improve the way it delivers its services.

## **8. Levies and Capital Financing Costs**

- 8.1 This budget includes approximately £10.2 million for principal and interest payments on the long term loans which the Council has taken out to fund its capital programme. This cost is offset by interest earned on the Council’s investments estimated at about £0.4 million. The remaining budget also includes levies set by the Environment Agency and the Thames Valley Magistrates Courts Service.

## **9. Fees and Charges**

- 9.1 There are generally two types of charges; statutory and discretionary and the rationale behind the proposed increases to each Directorates fees and charges are included in detail in Appendices H (1) to H (4).

## **10. Funding Statement**

- 10.1 The Funding Statement for 2017-18 shows all non-ringfenced funding available to the Council which can be used to fund the budget requirement.

| 2017-18 Funding Statement                               |        |               |
|---|--------|---------------|
|   | £m     | £m            |
| <b>Income</b>   |        |               |
| Council Tax income                                      |        | 88.40         |
| Revenue Support Grant                                   |        | 3.70          |
| Transitional Grant Funding                              |        | 1.37          |
| Adult Social Care Support Grant                         |        | 0.50          |
| Other Non-Ringfenced Grants                             |        | 0.06          |
| Retained Business Rates                                 |        | 19.38         |
| Education Services Grant (ESG) Transitional Funding     |        | 0.51          |
| New Homes Bonus   |        | 3.63          |
| Council Tax Collection Fund deficit                     |        | -0.11         |
| <b>Funds available</b>                                  |        | <b>117.44</b> |
| <b>Expenditure</b>                                      |        |               |
| Opening Directorate Budget                              | 103.68 |               |
| Base budget growth                                      | 1.67   |               |
| Contract inflation                                      | 0.61   |               |
| Service pressures                                       | 3.70   |               |
| Provision for Other Risks                               | 0.28   |               |
| Requirement for savings or other income                 | -4.71  |               |
| <b>Directorate Budget Requirement</b>                   |        | <b>105.23</b> |
| Capital Financing                                       |        | 9.86          |
| Transitional funding                                    |        | 1.37          |
| <b>Net Budget Requirement for Management Accounting</b> |        | <b>116.46</b> |
|   |        |               |
| Increase in Service Specific Reserves                   |        | 0.98          |
| <b>Budget requirement</b>                               |        | <b>117.44</b> |

## 11. Reserves

- 11.1 As part of the financial planning process, the Council considers the establishment and maintenance of reserves. Reserves are categorised into usable and unusable reserves. Usable Reserves consist of the General Reserve and Earmarked Reserves. The General Reserve exists to cover a number of non-specific items and risks. The Council's s151 officer (Head of Finance) recommends that the General Reserve is a minimum of 5% of the Council's net revenue budget, which for 2017-18 would be £5.8m. Earmarked Reserves are held for specific future projects or service risks.
- 11.2 During 2016-17, usable reserves are expected to reduce by £2.75m to fund the forecast revenue over spend, fund exit costs arising from savings plans and to facilitate the transfer of John O'Gaunt School to an Academy. The Council has made provision in the 2017-18 budget to put £1.98m back into reserves; £0.98m into the Adult Social Care Risk Fund to mitigate against risks in this area and if the Executive are minded to approve the use of Transition Grant after considering the consultation responses, £1m will be put into a Transformation Fund, in order to ensure that the Council has the resources to pursue transformation plans outlined in the MTFs and to invest in strategies that will bring future benefits to the organisation. Usable reserves will therefore reduce by £770k overall.

| Usable Reserves Summary      | Actual       | Use of       | Increase in | Estimate     |
|------------------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
|                              | 1.4.2016     | Reserves     | Reserves    | 1.4.2017     |
|                              | £m           | £m           | £m          | £m           |
| General Fund                 | 5.32         | -            | -           | 5.32         |
| Risk Fund                    | 1.03         | -            | -           | 1.03         |
| <b>Total General Reserve</b> | <b>6.35</b>  | <b>0.00</b>  | <b>0.00</b> | <b>6.35</b>  |
| Earmarked Reserves           | 12.09        | -2.75        | 1.98        | 11.32        |
| <b>Total Usable Reserves</b> | <b>18.44</b> | <b>-2.75</b> | <b>1.98</b> | <b>17.67</b> |

- 11.3 Earmarked reserves are set aside to cover specific future liabilities and risks and include schools balances, schools in financial difficulty, self insurance, waste management and service specific risk funds. The service specific risk funds were created to meet known risks within Adult Social Care, Children and Family Services and Legal Services. At Quarter Three 2016-17, there are over spends in all these areas and at year end the Executive will decide how to fund any over spend. The table below shows what impact the 2016-17 forecast over spend would have on these risk funds, if they were used. As a result of ongoing pressures identified in the service risk register, the Adult Social Care risk reserve will be increased by £980k as part of the 2017-18 budget setting.

|                                | Adult       | Children &      | Legal       |              |
|--------------------------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------|--------------|
|                                | Social Care | Family Services | Services    | Total        |
|                                | £m          | £m              | £m          | £m           |
| <b>Opening Balance</b>         | <b>1.11</b> | <b>0.50</b>     | <b>0.05</b> | <b>1.66</b>  |
| Forecast Use of Reserve        | -0.69       | -0.03           | -0.05       | <b>-0.77</b> |
| Increase in provision          | 0.98        | 0.00            | 0           | <b>0.98</b>  |
| <b>Closing Balance 31.3.17</b> | <b>1.40</b> | <b>0.47</b>     | <b>0.00</b> | <b>1.87</b>  |

- 11.4 Reserves are detailed in the s151 officer's statement in Appendix G.

## 12. Special Expenses

- 12.1 There are four Parish special expenses areas within the District and the special expenses to be levied are detailed below:

|                                 |                |
|---------------------------------|----------------|
| Hungerford Footway Lighting     | £5,600         |
| Kintbury – St Mary's Churchyard | £6,200         |
| Shaw – St Mary's Churchyard     | £3,400         |
| Theale – Holy Trinity           | £1,550         |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>£16,750</b> |

Tilehurst and North Fawley had special expenses levied on them in 2016-17 but the expenditure was subsequently not taken on by West Berkshire Council. These levies will be refunded as follows:

|                                   |         |
|-----------------------------------|---------|
| North Fawley – St Mary the Virgin | £350    |
| Tilehurst – St Michael's          | £12,500 |

12.2 The special expenses total £3,900 and are detailed in Appendices I.

### 13. Options for Consideration

13.1 The scale of the Local Government Settlement has left West Berkshire Council with limited options. We are proposing to increase Council Tax by 1.99% with a 3% precept ring-fenced for adult social care. If these options were not taken, the savings requirement would be £4.2m higher. We have considered all options available to us in order to keep the savings requirement to the level it is and included the use of transitional grant funding.

### 14. Proposals

- (1) That Council approve the 2017-18 Council Tax requirement of £88.4 million requiring a Council Tax increase of 1.99%, with a 3% precept ring-fenced for adult social care.
- (2) That the Fees and Charges be approved as set out in Appendix H and the appropriate statutory notices be placed where required.
- (3) That the Special Expenses be approved as set out in Appendix I.
- (4) That the responses received to each of the public facing savings proposals in relation the public consultation exercise undertaken on the 2017-18 budget be acknowledged and noted and that the Transition Grant of £1.37m be allocated as follows:
  - (a) £140k to Short Breaks
  - (b) £30k to Citizens Advice Bureau
  - (c) £200k to Libraries
  - (d) £1m to be put into a Transformation Fund, to assist West Berkshire Council to transform and improve the way it delivers its services.

### 15. Conclusion

15.1 The Council is forecasting an over spend in 2016-17 which will reduce our level of reserves. The ongoing effect of these budget pressures and the impact on reserves has been factored into the 2017-18 budget, and together with the reductions in government funding, we have had to close a funding gap of £8.9m. This has been achieved by £4.7m of savings proposals and increased income and a Council Tax increase of 1.99% raising £1.7m, a 3% precept ring-fenced for adult social care raising £2.5m. The precept will help to fund the increased demand, complexity of care and cost pressures we are facing in this area.

15.2 West Berkshire Council has an excellent track record of delivering on its savings proposals and of reacting to ongoing pressures in order to minimise the budgetary impact.

**Strategic Aims and Priorities Supported:**

The proposals will help achieve the following Council Strategy aims:

- BEC – Better educated communities**
- SLE – A stronger local economy**
- P&S – Protect and support those who need it**
- HQL – Maintain a high quality of life within our communities**
- MEC – Become an even more effective Council**

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the following Council Strategy priorities:

- BEC1 – Improve educational attainment**
- BEC2 – Close the educational attainment gap**
- SLE1 – Enable the completion of more affordable housing**
- SLE2 – Deliver or enable key infrastructure improvements in relation to roads, rail, flood prevention, regeneration and the digital economy**
- P&S1 – Good at safeguarding children and vulnerable adults**
- HQL1 – Support communities to do more to help themselves**
- MEC1 – Become an even more effective Council**

**Officer details:**

Name: Andy Walker  
Job Title: Head of Finance  
Tel No: (01635) 519433  
E-mail Address: [Andy.walker@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:Andy.walker@westberks.gov.uk)

---

## Appendix B

### Equality Impact Assessment - Stage One

We need to ensure that our strategies, policies, functions and services, current and proposed have given due regard to equality and diversity.

Please complete the following questions to determine whether a Stage Two, Equality Impact Assessment is required.

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| <b>Name of policy, strategy or function:</b>             | Revenue Budget |
| <b>Version and release date of item (if applicable):</b> |                |
| <b>Owner of item being assessed:</b>                     | Andy Walker    |
| <b>Name of assessor:</b>                                 | Andy Walker    |
| <b>Date of assessment:</b>                               | 12.1.17        |

| Is this a:      |           | Is this:                                    |            |
|-----------------|-----------|---|------------|
| <b>Policy</b>   | <b>No</b> | <b>New or proposed</b>                      | <b>Yes</b> |
| <b>Strategy</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>Already exists and is being reviewed</b> | <b>No</b>  |
| <b>Function</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>Is changing</b>                          | <b>No</b>  |
| <b>Service</b>  | <b>No</b> |   |            |

|  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|
| <b>1. What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the policy, strategy function or service and who is likely to benefit from it?</b> |                                  |
| <b>Aims:</b>   | Set a revenue budget for 2017-18 |
| <b>Objectives:</b>   | A balanced budget                |
| <b>Outcomes:</b>   |                                  |
| <b>Benefits:</b>   | Statutory requirement            |

|   |                                  |                                    |
|---|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>2. Note which groups may be affected by the policy, strategy, function or service. Consider how they may be affected, whether it is positively or negatively and what sources of information have been used to determine this.</b> |                                  |                                    |
| (Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation.)                              |                                  |                                    |
| <b>Group Affected</b>   | <b>What might be the effect?</b> | <b>Information to support this</b> |
| <b>Further Comments relating to the item:</b>   |                                  |                                    |



|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

| 3. Result  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>Are there any aspects of the policy, strategy, function or service, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could contribute to inequality?</b> | <b>No</b> |
| <b>Please provide an explanation for your answer:</b><br>Any impacts have been assessed and have been publicly consulted on where necessary.               |           |
| <b>Will the policy, strategy, function or service have an adverse impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?</b>              | <b>No</b> |
| <b>Please provide an explanation for your answer:</b><br>Any impacts have been assessed and have been publicly consulted on where necessary.               |           |

**If your answers to question 2 have identified potential adverse impacts and you have answered ‘yes’ to either of the sections at question 3, or you are unsure about the impact, then you should carry out a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment.**

**If a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment is required, before proceeding you should discuss the scope of the Assessment with service managers in your area. You will also need to refer to the Equality Impact Assessment guidance and Stage Two template.**

| 4. Identify next steps as appropriate: |  |
|--|--|
| Stage Two required                     |  |
| Owner of Stage Two assessment:         |  |
| Timescale for Stage Two assessment:    |  |
| Stage Two not required:                |  |

**Name:**

**Date:**

---

**Please now forward this completed form to Rachel Craggs, the Principal Policy Officer (Equality and Diversity) for publication on the WBC website.**