

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 29 th January 2019
Report Subject	Council Fund Budget 2019/20 – Third and Closing Stage
Report Author	Corporate Finance Manager and Chief Executive

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Cabinet received a report on the Council Fund Budget 2019/20 – Third and Closing Stage at its meeting on 22 January. This report is attached as Appendix A.

Resolutions from Cabinet:

- (1) Cabinet note the updated budget forecast position as the basis for setting a legal and balanced budget for 2019/20;
- (2) Cabinet advise Council that in the absence of an improvement in the Local Government Settlement by Welsh Government then the Council will have to rely on a Council Tax rise in the region of 8.5% to meet its own expenditure requirements for 2019/20 (excluding the increase in the Levy of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority);
- (3) Cabinet invite Council to engage with Welsh Government – through a cross-party delegation - for an improved Local Government Settlement, in order to suppress Council Tax rises in Flintshire and across Wales, by specifically increasing recurring funding for schools and children’s services; and
- (4) Officers provide information on those non-mandatory services where Council could review its policies and funding commitments. The information to include financial values (to the Council Tax payer) and the risks associated with making any changes to current commitments.

The Council has developed the budget for 2019/20 in three stages:

- Stage 1: Corporate Finance Solutions
- Stage 2: Service Portfolio Efficiencies
- Stage 3: Final Balancing Stage

The attached report provides an update on each stage. A presentation will be made

at the Council meeting.

Stage Three: this is the closing stage and the Council will need to set a balanced budget to meet its legal duty. It is the collective responsibility of the whole Council to set the budget on the advice of Cabinet. The options remaining to achieve a legal balanced budget are set out in the Cabinet report for consideration. The scope for further service reductions for this financial year has been exhausted. The portfolio resilience statements which demonstrate the risks to service capacity and performance of any other budget reductions have been accepted by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Cabinet. The position of the specific requests made to Welsh Government for financial assistance is also set out within the report. Beyond a financial intervention by Welsh Government the only remaining options to balance the budget are Council Tax Income and Reserves and Balances. The scope for the latter is limited.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That the Council receives and considers the recommendations of Cabinet for balancing the budget for 2019/20.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	BALANCING THE BUDGET FOR 2019/20
1.01	The Council has developed the budget for 2019/20 in three stages:
1.02	Stage One: Corporate Finance Solutions were reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Committees throughout October and November and approved by Council on 20 November.
1.03	Stage Two: Service Portfolio efficiencies were considered at the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee throughout October and November and approved by Council on 20 th November.
1.04	Stage Three: this is the closing stage and the Council will need to set a balanced budget to meets its legal duty. It is the collective responsibility of the whole Council to set the budget on the advice of Cabinet. The options remaining to achieve a legal balanced budget are set out in this report for consideration. There is no scope for further reductions of scale. Beyond a financial intervention by Welsh Government the only remaining options to balance the budget are Council Tax Income and Reserves and Balances. The scope for the latter is limited.
1.05	Cabinet received a report on the 22 January 2019 (attached) which details the remaining options to balance the budget for 2019/20 to meet the Council's statutory duty. The Cabinet resolutions are set out in the Executive Summary and a presentation on the budget will also be made to Council.

	The Council has a further meeting scheduled in the Council diary for 19 February. At a further meeting on 28 February Council will formally need to set the Council Tax having received the Police and Crime Commissioner Annual precept, The Fire and Rescue Authority Annual levy, and the precepts from the 34 Town and Community Councils.
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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	As contained within the report to Cabinet of 22 January 2019 which is attached.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	As contained within the report to Cabinet of 22 January 2019 which is attached.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	As contained within the report to Cabinet of 22 January 2019 which is attached.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix A Cabinet Report 22 January 2019.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	As included in the Cabinet Report 22 January 2019 Contact Officer: Colin Everett, Chief Executive Gary Ferguson, Corporate Finance Manager Telephone: 01352 702271 E-mail: gary.ferguson@flintshire.gov.uk

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	As set out in the attached report.