

Public Document Pack



EXECUTIVE

20 JANUARY 2021

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA 1

PART I

10. DRAFT GENERAL FUND AND COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2021/22

To consider the Draft General Fund Budget and Council Tax Setting for 2020/21.

Pages 3 - 170

Supplementary Agenda Published 14 January 2021

This page is intentionally left blank

Meeting EXECUTIVE
Portfolio Area Resources
Date 20 JANUARY 2021



DRAFT GENERAL FUND AND COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2021/22

KEY DECISION

Authors Clare Fletcher | 2933
Lead Officers Clare Fletcher | 2933
Contact Officer Clare Fletcher | 2933

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To consider the Council's draft 2021/22 General Fund Budget, Council Tax Support Scheme and draft proposals for the 2021/22 Council Tax.
- 1.2 To consider the projected 2020/21 General Fund Budget

REASON FOR URGENCY:

The General Fund Draft budget forms part of the budget and Policy framework and cannot wait until the next meeting of the Executive in February 2021.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the 2020/21 revised net expenditure on the General Fund of £11,189,490 be approved.
- 2.2 That a draft General Fund Budget for 2021/22 of £728,360 (as adjusted for the transfer from reserves of £8,000,000 to allow for the repayment to the Collection Fund of that amount) be proposed for consultation purposes, with a contribution from balances of £380,590 and a Band D Council Tax of £220.57 (assuming a 2.32% increase).
- 2.3 That the updated position on the General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), summarised in section 4.12 be noted.
- 2.4 That a minimum level of General Fund reserves of £3,650,000 in line with the 2021/22 risk assessment of balances, as shown at Appendix A to this report, be approved.

- 2.5 That the contingency sum of £400,000 within which the Executive can approve supplementary estimates, be approved for 2021/22, (reflecting the level of balances available above the minimum amount).
- 2.6 That the 2021/22 proposed Fees and Charges increase of £131,700 be approved and (Appendix C to this report) included in the draft budget.
- 2.7 That the 2021/22 proposed Financial Security Options (General Fund share) of £1,462,182 (Appendix B to this report) be included in the draft budget for consideration by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
- 2.8 That the Growth bids (General Fund share) of £166,966 (Appendix D to this report) are approved in principle as set out in the report and the priority order of implementation is approved as set out in paragraph 4.3.2.
- 2.9 That the pressures of £656,540 are noted, (Appendix D to this report).
- 2.10 That the 2021/22 Council Tax Support scheme is approved as set out in section 4.8 to this report.
- 2.11 That use of New Homes Bonus be noted paragraph 4.4.4 refers.
- 2.12 That the Executive approve the revised Financial Security targets for the General Fund as set out in paragraphs 4.11.1- 4.11.2
- 2.13 That the Executive delegate the sign off of further COVID business grant schemes to the Strategic Director (CF) after consultation with the Resources Portfolio holder, paragraph 4.5.14 refers.
- 2.14 That the Executive approves the use of the additional COVID grants as set out in paragraph 4.5.9-4.5.10.
- 2.15 That the Executive request the Senior Leadership Team to identify further options totalling £500K which could be implemented if the impact of COVID and other recessionary pressures are worse than projected (paragraph 4.1.3 refers).
- 2.16 That the Executive request the Senior Leadership Team to bring forward a Productivity Focused Transformation Programme by June 2021 to set out the plan for future savings (paragraph 3.11 refers).
- 2.17 That in accordance with the Council's Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, the Council be recommended to continue with the current Co-operative Corporate Plan, subject to further review in Autumn 2022, (paragraph 4.16.8-4.16.9 refers).
- 2.18 That the decisions taken on recommendations 2.2 – 2.12 above be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework rules in the Council's Constitution.
- 2.19 That Members note the Equalities Impact Assessments appended to this report in Appendices E and F.

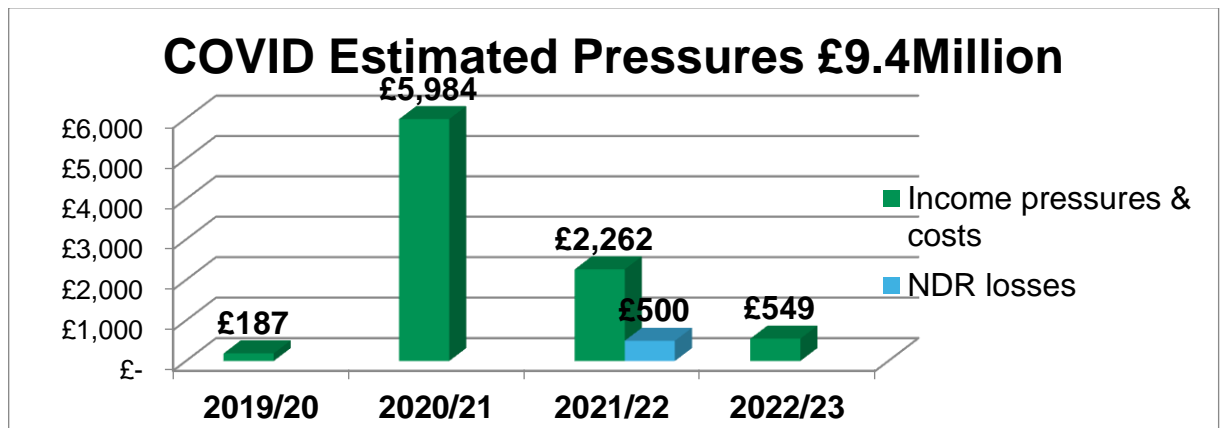
3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 This report presents the Council's draft General Fund net expenditure for 2021/22 including Financial Security options, growth bids and pressures. The General Fund Budget forms part of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework. Under Article 4 of the Constitution, the Budget includes: the allocation of financial resources to different services and projects; proposed contingency funds; setting the council tax; the council tax support scheme;

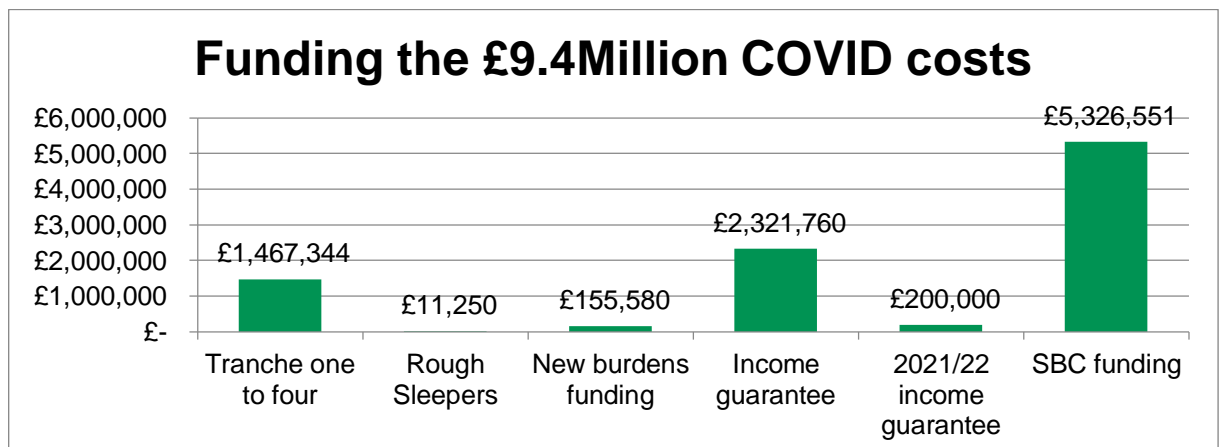
decisions relating to the control of the Council’s borrowing requirement; the control of its capital expenditure; and the setting of virement limits.

3.2 The Council’s Financial Strategy (MTFS) was reported on three occasions this year. To the Executive in June, September 2020 and updated in the December 2020 Executive Financial Security report. The increased frequency of reporting has been due to the significant projected impact of COVID on the Council’s finances and the need to take action in year, (as set out in the June MTFS update and as set out further in the September and December updates).

3.3 The projected financial impact of COVID on the Council’s finances was summarised in the December 2020 Financial Security report and is set out below. At that time the projection was £9.4Million (now estimated to be £9.7Million).

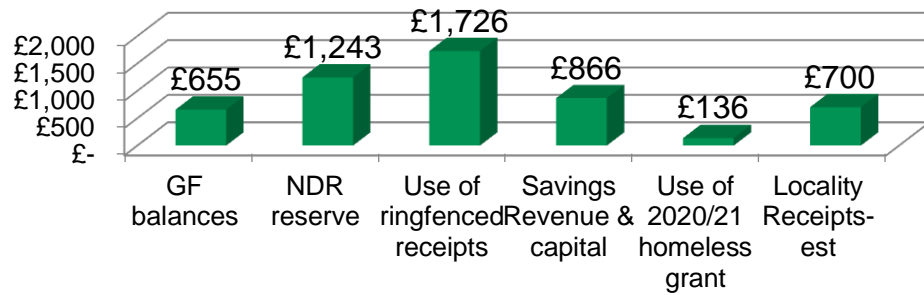


3.4 The COVID funding assumptions included in the report (summarised below), did not include some of the announcements from the 2020 Spending Review, as the allocations were not known at the time of writing the report, (see paragraph 3.7 below). The total COVID cost unfunded and therefore impacting on the General Fund was estimated to be a **£5.3Million or 56% of total losses**. The assumptions for 2021/22 (£2.2Million) and 2022/23 (£549K) will be dependent on how COVID impacts long term on services such as parking, commercial rents, fees and charges and homelessness.



3.5 Due to the projected COVID funding shortfall outlined above, a number of financial resilience measures were taken early in the financial year and included in the June Executive COVID recovery report. The table below summarises that the measures taken meant only a £655K use of General Fund balances.

SBC Covid Resources £5.3Million (£'000)



3.6 Most of the measures taken above are one off in nature (i.e. NDR reserve, use of ring-fenced receipts) and if losses are higher than estimated then new measures will need to be taken. Risk mitigation measure currently approved as part of the Financial Security Report to the December Executive were:

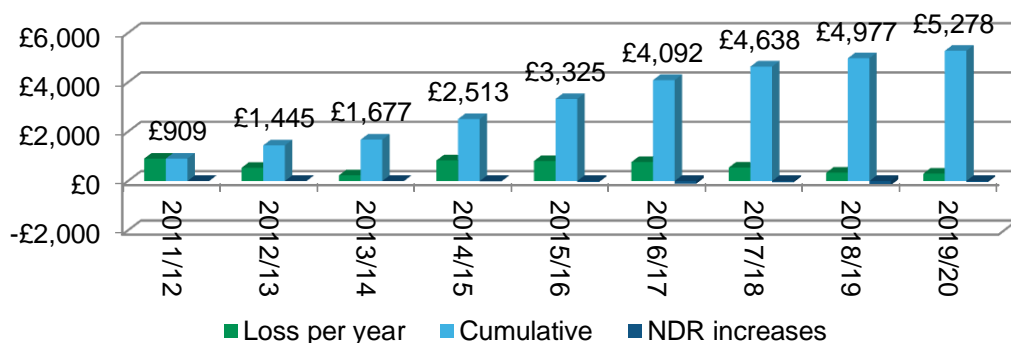
- Increase risk assessment of balances for further COVID losses £1.2Million
- Income equalisation reserve of £250K to absorb in year income losses if lower than budgeted, including fee increases for 2021/22

3.7 At the time of writing the December Financial Security report the COVID funding measures announced as part of the finance settlement but the amount for SBC not known or thought to be insignificant are listed below and an update is included in this report.

- Further COVID funding (£1.55Billion nationally)
- The council tax and business rates tax income guarantee scheme for 'irrecoverable' losses
- Funding for the increase in potential Council Tax Support Costs (£670Million nationally) to Councils

3.8 The ability to deal with the COVID 2020/21 funding gap and any potential COVID 'long tail' impacts in future years must be considered in the context of a decade of government funding cuts, which has meant most Councils including SBC have needed to have on-going Financial Security savings target to fund inflationary and service pressures along with the absorption of central government grant losses which were £5.3Million by 2019/20.

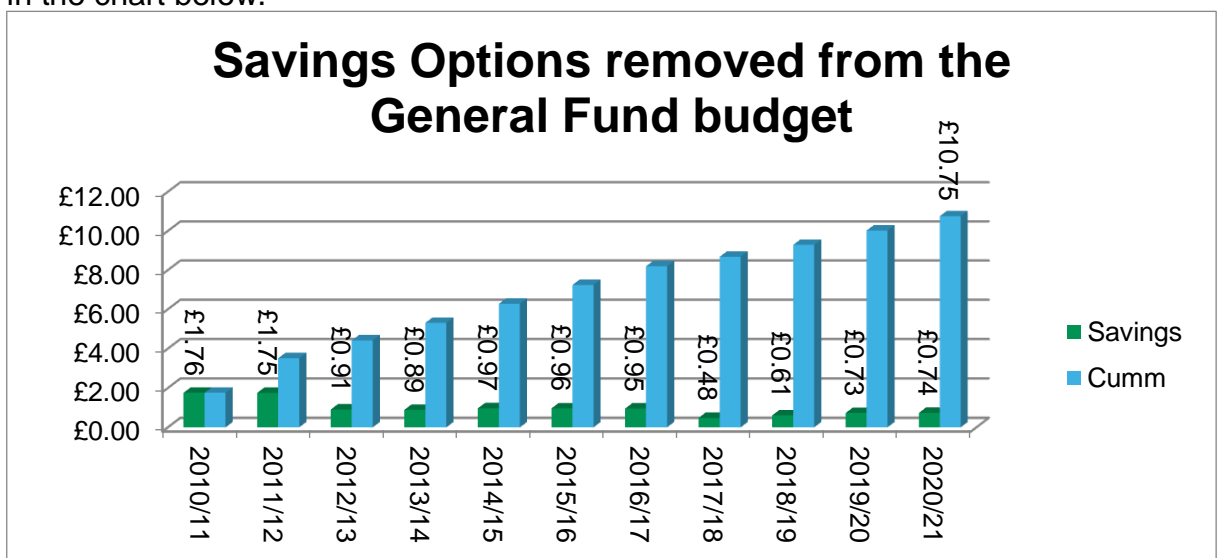
Annual Government Grant Loss



3.9 Alongside government funding reductions, the government has taken measures to curtail Councils borrowing to buy investment properties to

provide an income for the General Fund, which had been seen by many Councils' as a way of replacing lost funding or plugging funding gaps. From 26 November 2020, new restrictions were implemented which meant Councils were precluded from access to cheap Public Works Board (PWLB) funding if Capital Strategies included the purchase of Commercial Investments whether from borrowing (not just from PWLB) or other means. The Investment Strategy Fund has been deleted from the SBC Capital Strategy to allow continued use of PWLB including £50Million Housing Revenue Account borrowing for this and next year. However, the new rules also reversed the 100bsp increase announced October 2019 which will improve the viability of business cases for regeneration and other programmes.

- 3.10 The Financial Security report to the December Executive identified that an additional £100K of savings options should be included in this report to ensure General Fund balances remain above the minimum level of £3.65Million, (see section 4.1) and that the funding gap was £2.25Million for the period 2021/22-2024/25. This has been exacerbated by COVID and budget pressures that have arisen within the three year period.
- 3.11 The drive for budget reductions has been in place for the last ten years as a result of lower government funding (see paragraph 3.2), while at the same time resourcing new priorities such as regeneration, absorbing inflationary pressures and addressing other central government policy changes e.g. apprenticeship levy, national insurance increases, reductions in housing benefit administration grant and service pressures from welfare reforms. The total quantum of identified savings implemented since 2010/11 is summarised in the chart below.



The ability to keep delivering significant levels of savings has become more difficult, with annual savings levels declining. There have been new initiatives introduced such as the Council's 'Cooperative Commercial and Insourcing Strategy'. This will contribute to future years' options but cannot be solely relied on in a period where income streams are vulnerable to recessionary impacts. Similarly there is an ongoing need to improve productivity and secure efficiencies by transforming how we work, in part also to ensure that the new Cooperative Working model is fully embedded. The alternative to using these methods is to make service reductions and due to the challenge for 2021/22 in a limited way this has been unavoidable in order to set a balanced budget.

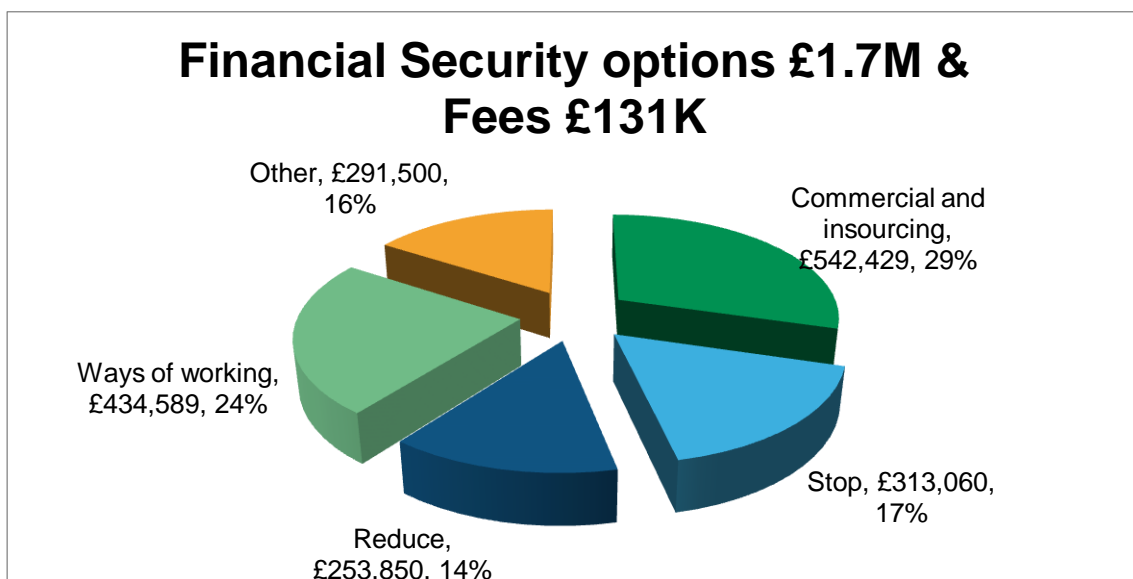
- 3.12 The impact of COVID has increased the difficulty of meeting the MTFs key principle: 'achieve an on-going balanced budget by 2022/23 by ensuring inflationary pressures are matched by increases in fees and income or reductions in expenditure'. This was updated in the September 2020 MTFs to the following year 2023/24. This is critical as the managed use of balances in the MTFs starts to converge with minimum balance levels.
- 3.13 Previous resilience measures Members have approved were included in the Draft 2020/21 General Fund budget report to only use £204K of 2020/21 £1.28Million business rate gains for funding time limited growth. This means there was not a significant reliance on all of these gains being achieved for committed spend, this means any gains achieved can be returned to the General Fund so improving resilience of General Fund balances during this and next year.
- 3.14 At the December 2020 meeting, the Executive approved a package of Financial Security budget options, growth and pressures and fee increases to be included in the 2021/22 Budget. These measures were to ensure the General Fund had sufficient levels of reserves to meet any legacy impacts on COVID for 2021/22 onwards.
- 3.15 Whilst the MTFs contains projections of future income levels and assumptions of savings required, there is difficulty in projecting financial resources beyond this year, due to:
- The impact of COVID on income and expenditure next year is difficult to predict and will depend on whether the economy can recover sufficiently.
 - BREXIT deal and any potential increase in cost of goods and contracts.
 - Increased welfare pressures as a result of higher unemployment, an increase in Council tax support numbers has been built into the council tax base.
 - The government's further one year funding settlement, (rather than a multi-year settlement). The proposals for the Fair Funding review and any reset of business rates, now deferred to 2022/23 means considerable uncertainty about future funding. Councils like Stevenage have benefited from business rate gains in the last few years to fund regeneration aims and support General Fund balances, a full reset would see those gains disappear through an adjustment to the tariff payable to the government
 - Government measures beyond 2021/22 to reduce public spending.
- 3.16 The November MTFs report modelled a 2.32% increase in Council tax (or £5 on a Band D) as included in the provisional finance settlement. However due to the increase in discounts the tax base is projected to reduce for the first time in 10 years and the projected increase in council tax income is estimated to be only £128,559. The level of council tax increase will not be decided until the February Council meeting.
- 3.17 The Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules in the Constitution, prescribe the Budget setting process, which includes a consultation period. The timescale required to implement this process is outlined below:

Date	Meeting	Report
Dec-20	Executive	Financial Security Report with 2021/22 savings proposals for the General Fund and HRA
	Overview and Scrutiny	Financial Security Report with the three year savings proposals for the General Fund and HRA
Jan-21		Draft 2021/22 General Fund budget, Council Tax and Council Tax Support
	Overview and Scrutiny	Draft 2021/22 General Fund budget, Council Tax and Council Tax Support
Feb-21	Executive	Final 2021/22 General Fund budget, Council Tax and Council Tax Support
	Overview and Scrutiny	Final 2021/22 General Fund budget, Council Tax and Council Tax Support
	Council	Final 2021/22 General Fund budget, Council Tax and Council Tax Support

4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS

4.1 Financial Security Options

4.1.1 At the December 2020 Executive, Members approved General Fund Options of £1.386Million and HRA options of £225K totalling £1.611Million. The total projected savings options are now **£1.704Million of which £1.462Million relates to the General Fund, an increase of £78K**, (slightly lower than the £100K required). The increase largely relates to the new option to cease the Graduate programme when the current two graduate's term finished. A summary of the proposed options is shown below and the options are detailed in Appendix B & C.



4.1.2 Officers together with the Leaders Financial Security Group (LFSG) will continue to work towards identifying options to contribute to the Financial Security target. The Executive also recommended that LFSG also review the savings options prior to their inclusion in the February 2021 final budget report, this is currently being arranged.

4.1.3 In addition to the options recommended above the December Financial Security report identified that a further £500K of options should be identified and considered by the Executive if the financial position worsened. The CFO deems this necessary in light of the on-going COVID impact on the Councils finances. The Senior Leadership Team is recommended to identify further options by March 2021. This means further action can be taken quickly if required to ensure the resilience of General Fund balances.

4.1.4 The Financial Security options include a number of service reductions and this has been inevitable based on the target of savings required, EQIA's have been completed for these options and are included in Appendix E and F to this report.

4.2 Fees and Charges

4.2.1 2021/22 fees and charges have been scrutinised by LFSG and recommendations made for approval and included in the chart in paragraph 4.1 above and totalled £133,700.

4.2.2 The majority of fee increases agreed at the December Executive were recommended to be implemented in February 2021, with the exception of garage rent increases which are implemented in April 2021. However due to the continuing restrictions for the retail sector, it is proposed to defer implementation of the market fees and charges until 1 July 2021. This reduces the fee increases projections by £2,000 to £131,700 for 2021/22, as detailed in Appendix C.

4.3 Growth and Service Pressures

4.3.1 The growth allowance in the MTFs for 2021/22 was a nominal £75K, however the December Financial Security report identified some unavoidable growth and service pressures as summarised below and detailed in Appendix D.

	2021/22
Growth	£166,966
Pressures	£656,540
Total	£823,506

4.3.2 The growth options recommended relate to Council priorities and an on-going cost to the General Fund. Due to the current financial position (as a result of COVID), the CFO recommends the growth is not implemented until such time income budgets in particular are in line with the assumptions in the 2021/22 budget. Review points are suggested every quarter a part of the quarterly monitoring process. In order to add additional costs into the General Fund growth may need to be prioritised on an affordability basis. The prioritisation recommended is as follows:

Priority	Growth	General Fund	HRA	Total
1	Mainstream No More -Core	£37,500	£12,500	£50,000

Priority	Growth	General Fund	HRA	Total
2	New Commercial Officer post	£33,000	£22,000	£55,000
3	Seed money for CNM	£18,000	£0	£18,000
4	Mainstream culture post	£50,000	£0	£50,000
5	Enhanced Information Governance Service.	£28,466	£12,200	£40,666
	Total	£166,966	£46,700	£213,666

4.3.3 The pressures totalling £656,540 are deemed unavoidable and therefore no prioritisation has been given.

4.4 New Homes Bonus (NHB)

4.4.1 The December 2020 Financial Security Report advised Members that the threshold for new properties in the tax base had not been reached in order to receive a further payment in 2021/22 , (a one off payment). However there was an increase in the number of affordable properties in Stevenage and an additional £67,480 of NHB was received for 2021/22, this also is a one off payment.

4.4.2 The remaining NHB payment consisting of prior year legacy payments and including the £67,480, total £365,478 for 2021/22 and this has been allocated in line with the 2020/21 General Fund Budget report need and is shown below.

New Homes Bonus £'000			
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Play & Bins (Capital)CNM	£342	£284	£220
Contribution to Capital Reserve	£250	£250	£250
General Fund	£0	£0	£0
Total Expenditure	£592	£534	£470
Balance in NHB reserve	(£ 461)	(£ 234)	£0
In year Funding	(£ 365)	(£ 8)	£0
Expenditure in year	£592	£534	£0
Balance remaining in NHB reserve	(£ 234)	£0	£0
Alternative Funding required	£0	£291	£470

4.4.3 The Locality Reviews disposal sites approved by Members at the September 2020 Executive together with a further report to the January 2021 Executive, provide funding for loss of NHB and crucially removes revenue contributions to capital (RCCO) from the General Fund, increasing General Fund balances over the medium term by £474K per year. This is summarised in the table below and shows this measure can remain in force until 31 March 2027. This would leave £104K of receipts and the end of that period but would be insufficient to avoid RCCO beyond 2027/28 so additional sites will be required for disposal or future capital spend reduced from then onwards.

Spend Requirements :	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	Total
	£'000						
Contribution to Capital Reserve	£0	£7	£250	£250	£250	£250	£1,007
Play & Bins (Capital)CNM	£0	£284	£220	£0	£0	£0	£504
Contribution to RCCO GF	£474	£474	£474	£474	£474	£474	£2,844
Total	£474	£765	£944	£724	£724	£724	£4,355
Receipts required each year	(£474)	(£765)	(£944)	(£724)	(£724)	(£724)	(£4,355)
Estimated receipts remaining							(£104)

4.4.4 The Provisional Financial Settlement did trail changes to the NHB scheme with the government writing,
 “We will soon be inviting views on how we can reform the scheme from 2022-23 to ensure it is focused where homes are needed most “.
 At the time of writing the report no further details have been published.

4.5 Finance Settlement

4.5.1 The finance settlement, (published on the 17 December 2020) included additional COVID funding allocations. A summary of the non-COVID funding versus the assumptions in the December 2020 report are shown below.

Original Finance Settlement (2021/22)			
	2021/22	December MTFS	Variance (= less)
Revenue Support Grant	£0	£0	£0
Business Rates:			£0
Business Rates	£2,585,301	£2,572,439	(£12,862)
Under indexing	£129,104	£134,035	£4,931
Other adjustments	£0		£0
Total Business Rates	£2,714,405	£2,706,474	(£7,931)
NHB (legacy payments)	£365,478	£297,998	£67,480
Lower Tier services grant*	£140,043	£0	£140,043
Total	£3,219,926	£3,004,472	£199,592

4.5.2 The financial settlement is £199,592 more than projected in the December 2020 MTFS, however members should note that the increased funding is **one off** in nature and is not a substitute for on-going financial savings. The level of lower tier grant* was based on 2013/14 Settlement Funding Assessment levels (£86Million nationwide) and used to fund a ‘floor’, to ensure that no authority has a total ‘Core Spending Power’ less than in 2020/21 (£25Million). The Lower tier service grant increased the SBC’s core spending power (government calculation) up to 2020/21 levels as is demonstrated below.

Core Spending Power Calculation			
	2020/21	2021/22	Variance
Assumed Council Tax	£5,988,685	£6,236,612	£247,926
Business Rates:			£0
Business Rates	£2,572,439	£2,572,439	£0
Under indexing	£103,104	£134,035	£30,931
Total Business Rates	£2,675,543	£2,706,474	£30,931
NHB (legacy payments)	£784,378	£365,478	(£418,901)
Lower Tier services grant	£0	£140,043	£140,043
Total Core Spending Power	£9,448,606	£9,448,606	£0

4.5.3 The Government remains committed to reforming local government finance and this will include the fair funding review and reset of business rates. However the statement on the review was,

“There may be an opportunity to do so next year and my department will work with the Treasury to review that” and when further pressed, the Secretary of State was “**not able to confirm when we will bring that forward**”. No further detail had been published at the time of writing this report.

4.5.4 The Council has historically benefited from business rate gains, however the closure of some high profile retailers means any gains would be challenging to realise in 2021/22 and consequently no business rate gains have been included in the draft 2021/22 General Fund budget. The 2021/22 estimated position for Business Rate gains, will not be known until the NNDR 1 form is completed, which has to be approved by 31 January 2021 (by law).

4.5.5 The government also published a response to Sir Tony Redmond’s Independent review into the oversight of local audit and the transparency of local authority financial reporting. A full response will be made by the government in spring 2021. The majority of the recommendations have been agreed, or partly agreed. This includes :

- Introduction of a new standardised statement of service information and costs which will need to be presented alongside the accounts.
- The recommendation to re-extend the deadline for audited financial statements to 30 September
- The proposed creation of an Office of Local Audit and Regulation. The government will make.

4.5.6 Funding of £15Million was announced to support authorities with the anticipated rise in audit fees for 2021/22, with funding to be allocations to be confirmed in the new year. No further details had been published at the time of writing this report.

4.5.7 The government has also announced **£1.55 billion COVID-19 Expenditure Pressures Grant – Allocations**. This funding is un-ring -fenced and payable in April 2021 and is to fund:

- Adult social care, children’s services, public health services,
- household waste services,
- **Shielding the clinically extremely vulnerable, homelessness and rough sleeping, domestic abuse**

- Managing excess deaths,
- Support for re-opening the country
- **The additional costs associated with the local elections in May 2021.**

4.5.8 This funding should be used in planning to cover any COVID-related costs for the priority pressures above and any further COVID-19 costs in 2021/22. **Councils have been advised that they should plan on the basis of not receiving any additional funding for the above pressures.** The CFO recommends that this money is ring fenced for the purposes identified above on the basis that no further funding will be made available.

4.5.9 The government also announced a **Local Council Tax Support grant** on which they are seeking views as part of the settlement. This is for £670 million of new, un-ringfenced funding that will be provided to authorities in recognition of the increased costs of providing local council tax support following the pandemic. The funding has been allocated, (subject to consultation) on the basis of each billing authority's share of the England level working-age local council tax support caseload, adjusted to reflect the average bill per dwelling in the area. **The indicative funding allocations published for Stevenage is £118,850. The funding will be un-ringfenced.** The draft budget assumes that this support General Fund balances.

4.5.10 The government has published the Local tax income guarantee for 2020/21, this will compensate local authorities for 75% of irrecoverable losses in council tax and business rates income in respect of 2020-21. This will be based on:

- For council tax, a comparison of each authority's council tax requirement and an adjusted Net Collectable Debit.
- For business rates, this is broadly a comparison of income as calculated in the National Non-Domestic Rates ('NDR') statistical collection forms 1 and 3.

4.5.11 At the time of writing the draft budget report an assessment had not been made of any potential income as a result of the scheme as the guidance will need to be reviewed and assessed.

4.5.12 There is also an extension of the Sales Fees and Charges scheme based on the 2020/21 fee budgets. The draft December MTFs assumed £200K of income guarantee scheme and which is now estimated at £255K and will run for the first three months of 2021/22.

4.5.13 A summary of all the announcements is shown below:

Provisional Finance Settlement	
	2021/22
Non COVID related funding:	
Business Rates	£2,585,301
Under indexing	£134,035
Total Business Rates	£2,719,336
NHB (legacy payments)	£365,478
Lower Tier services grant	£140,043
Redmond Review (higher audit fees)	TBC
Government Support non COVID	£3,224,857
COVID related costs:	

Provisional Finance Settlement	
	2021/22
Share of £1.55Billion	£500,208
Local Government Support grant (£670M) (indicative)	£118,859
Income Guarantee Scheme (estimated)	£255,000
Local tax income guarantee for council tax and NNDR	TBC
Government Support COVID	£874,067
Total	£4,098,924

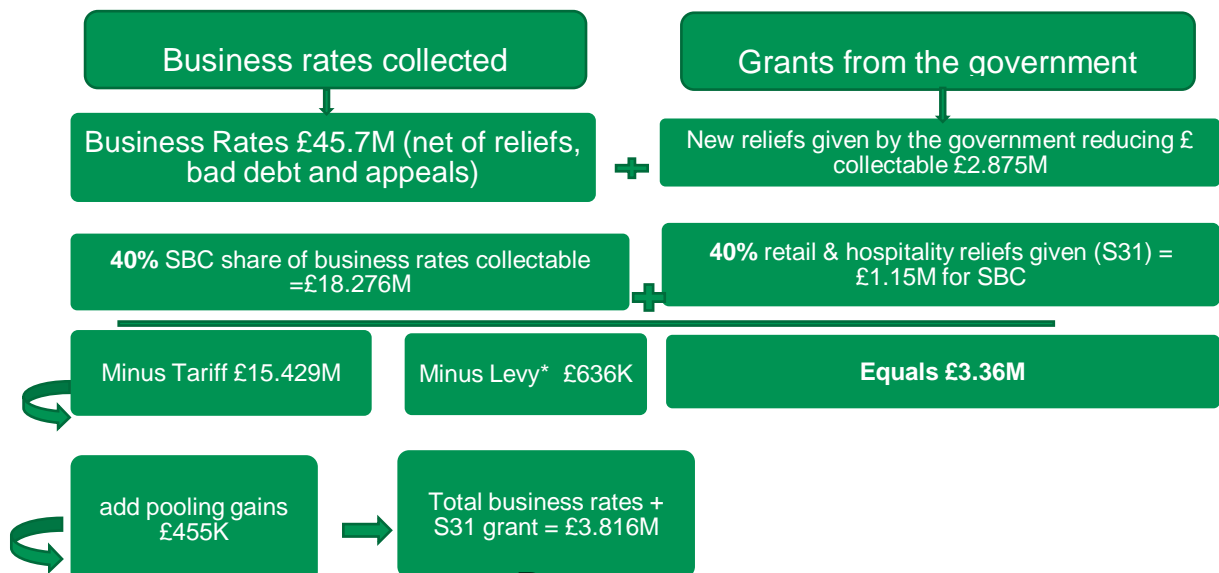
4.5.14 The government has announced a raft of support for businesses which the Council must approve a scheme and then administer. In order that the monies can be distributed quickly to those businesses in need, the CFO recommends that the approval of any future schemes and discretions are delegated to her following consultation with the Resources portfolio holder.

4.6 Business Rates 2020/21

4.6.1 The government calculates the amount of business rates that should be retained by Stevenage and this is called the baseline need. The base line need for 2020/21 was £2.572Million plus a further £103K payable in Section 31 grants to compensate Councils for changes to increases in business rates the government had made in previous years, (including moving from RPI to CPI for the annual increase, which is a lower inflation index).

4.6.2 The £2.572Million is much lower than a 40% share of the total Stevenage business rate yield after any reliefs of £18.3Million (100% circa £45M), this is because the government applies a 'tariff' which reduces that 40% share down to the 'base line need' (before any growth), giving a tariff in 2020/21 payable to the government of £15.43Million. Then a 'levy' is applied to any gains above that baseline need at rate of 50%.

4.6.3 The original budget for 2020/21 was £3.861Million which includes Hertfordshire pooling gains of £455K. This means Stevenage had £1.28Million of business rates above the baseline assessment that could be retained by SBC.



**not all gains above the baseline of £2.57Million are subject to the levy of 50%*

- 4.6.4 The Hertfordshire pool which included Stevenage, (the first time since 2015/16) increased 2020/21 business rate gains by £455K. The Pool governance states that any safety net payments to be a first call on the pool (where pool members fall below their base assessment), with the balance of benefits then shared 70% Districts, 15% County Council and 15% growth fund plus any gains that would have been paid if the pool didn't exist. In the event of an overall loss, i.e. safety net payments exceed levy retained, this would similarly be split.
- 4.6.5 In summary the 2020/21 General Fund budget included :
- S31 grants of £1.15Million shown in net General Fund expenditure
 - Business rates of £2.67Million shown in core resources (from the Collection Fund)
- 4.6.6 However, the level of S31 grants can be different from the original budget, as they are based on a payment from the government which **relates to the year they are raised**, while assumed business rates from the Collection Fund are **fixed** for the year, regardless of what happens, (the £2.67Million). It can take up to two years for the impact of changes between original budget to outturn for that year.
- 4.6.7 The impact described in para. 4.6.6 can cause some distortions to the General Fund and there is a huge distortion in 2020/21 because the **government increased the level of additional retail and hospitality reliefs from £925K to £21Million**, as the government extended retail and hospitality reliefs to the whole sector in March 2020. This means SBC's share of S31 grants has **increased to £9.15Million** to be paid in year while still taking the budgeted £2.67Million from the Collection Fund, a total of £11.82Million for 2020/21, or £8Million too much. This measure was taken as the tariff of £15.4Million was still payable to the government from the General Fund and the S31 grants offset the cashflow impact.
- 4.6.8 The NDR position is summarised below and shows that the increase in S31 grants gives the General Fund £8Million more in business rates income than it should have but this has to be repaid in 2021/22 to the Collection Fund. The extra S31 grants **reduce net expenditure in 2020/21 by £8Million as S31 grants are included in General net expenditure. The CFO recommended transferring this amount into a S31 ring fenced reserve in 2020/21 and reversing the entry in 2021/22 to match the repayment to the Collection Fund in 2021/22**, (December Financial Security report). This is to avoid the misconception that the General Fund has a high level of reserves at 3 March 2021, (distorted by the £8Million 'over payment of business rates'). **However the impact in 2021/22 is to reduce the General Fund net budget by £8Million, as the monies are transferred back from the reserve to the General Fund, matching the overpayment back to the Collection Fund in the same year.**

Business rates 2020/21				
	2020/21 Original £'000	2020/21 Year end £'000	2020/21 should have been	Variance repaid in 2021/22 to Collection Fund
General Fund Net Expenditure:				
S31 income	(£1,150)	(£9,150)	(£9,150)	£0
Total General Fund	(£1,150)	(£9,150)	(£9,150)	£0
Core Resources:				
Business Rates(from)/to Collection Fund	(£2,210)	(£2,210)	£5,790	£8,000
Pooling gains	(£455)	(£455)	(£455)	£0
Less COVID related losses			£500	£500
Total business rates	(£2,665)	(£2,665)	£5,835	£8,500
Total Business rates & S31 grant	(£3,816)	(£11,816)	(£3,316)	£8,500

4.6.9 The 2020/21 projection will be reviewed as part of the completion of the NDR1 form by the 31 January 2021, which is delegated to the CFO to approve.

Business Rates 2021/22

4.6.10 The December 2020 Financial Security Report identified that the NDR baseline funding, would increase by September 2020 CPI of 0.5%. Any gains above the baseline assessment can be retained by the Council after the levy of 50% is applied. The 2020 Finance Settlement announced no increase in NDR for businesses next year and this means the Council will receive Section 31 grant to compensate for the uplift loss on business rates collectable.

4.6.11 Projecting Business Rates for 2021/22 gains is difficult with business failures announced to date, these will impact on the level of collectable business rates for 2021/22, together with any future failures, if retail and hospitality sector is impacted further by COVID. Therefore at the current time no NDR gains are being projected. If gains are realised then this will be built into future MTFS projections.

4.6.12 The Council (via the Executive) must approve the level of estimated 2021/22 business rates it will receive by 31 January each year. However due to the provisional settlement being received in December, this was delegated to the CFO following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources in the December Financial Security report. Any revisions to the 2020/21 projections and estimates for 2021/22 will be updated as part of the final General Fund report.

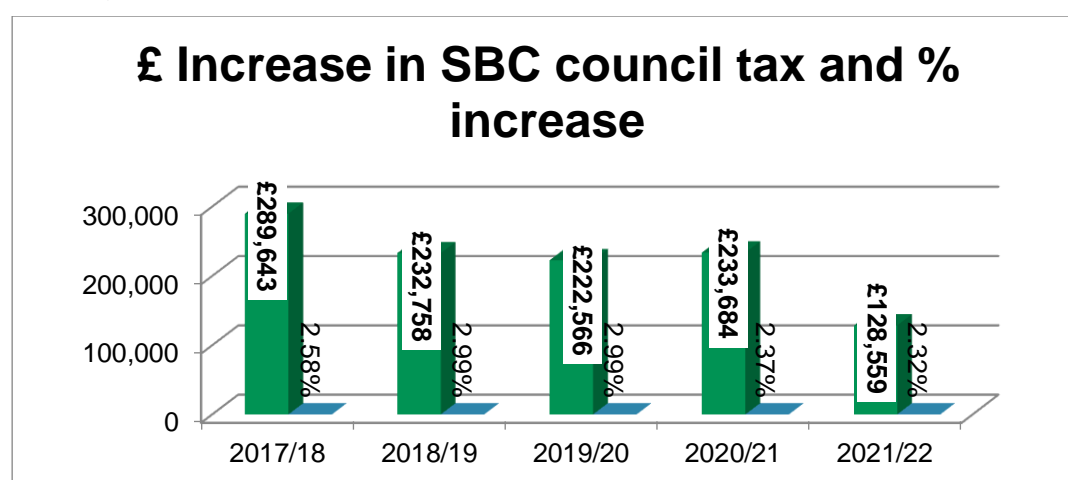
4.7 Council Tax

4.7.1 Part of the budget setting process includes consideration of council tax levels. The provisional settlement allows for a 2% or £5.00 on a Band D (2.32%), whichever is the greater, before a referendum on an amount above this is required. The provisional settlement consultation does not closed until 14 January but the Draft Budget assumes the 2.32% increase.

4.7.2 The table below shows the increase per property band based on a 2.32% increase.

Council Tax increase modelled for Stevenage Precept 2021/22				
Council Tax band	2020/21	2.32% increase	Total cost per year	Total cost per week
A	£143.71	£3.33	£147.04	£2.83
B	£167.67	£3.89	£171.56	£3.30
C	£191.62	£4.45	£196.07	£3.77
D	£215.57	£5.00	£220.57	£4.24
E	£263.47	£6.11	£269.58	£5.18
F	£311.38	£7.22	£318.60	£6.13
G	£359.28	£8.34	£367.62	£7.07
H	£431.14	£10.00	£441.14	£8.48

4.7.3 Increasing council tax by 2.32% versus 1.99% nets the Council an additional £19,697 per year. Due to the projected taxbase for 2021/22 being 0.17% lower than the 2020/21 taxbase, (due to increased reliefs and CTS projections) the increase in the council tax with a 2.32% increase is only £128,559 additional income, much lower increase for SBC than in previous years, (see para.4.5.9 re council tax support grant funding).



4.7.4 Council tax is a key funding resource and locally raised taxation has become more important to the General Fund as central funding has reduced or risk transferred to local authorities in terms of regulations and policy changes regarding business rates and new homes bonus, all be it constrained in terms of level of increase. As in previous years the council tax increase will not be agreed until the February Council meeting. Based on the increasing financial dependency the General Fund budget the CFO recommends a 2.32% increase be considered by the Executive and Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

4.8 Council Tax Support

4.8.1 A local CTS scheme cannot be revised for at least one financial year. A Billing Authority (SBC) must consider whether to revise or replace its scheme with another on an annual basis.

4.8.2 Any revision to a scheme must be made by the Council by the 11 March, immediately preceding the financial year in which it is to take effect and will require consultation with those affected. Additionally consideration should be given to providing transitional protection where the support is to be reduced or removed.

4.8.3 The Council must, in the following order, consult with major precepting authorities (i.e. Hertfordshire County Council and Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire), publish a draft scheme in such manner as it thinks fit, and consult such other persons as it considers are likely to have an interest in the operation of the scheme. The CFO wrote to both precepting authorities regarding the proposal for 2020/21 and at the date of writing the report HCC had no objections to the scheme proposed and no response had been received from the PCC.

4.8.4 The current **working age** scheme requires those all maximum benefit to pay 8.5% of their council tax bill for the year. This equated to £138.10 for a band c council home in 2020/21 (an additional 25% discount for a single person) or £2.66 per week.

4.8.5 Members approved in the October Executive Council Tax Support report to retain the existing scheme for 2021/22. **Members are recommended to agree the existing scheme uprated for benefit changes for 2021/22.**

4.9 General Fund Net Expenditure

4.9.1 The 2020/21 projected and the 2021/22 draft General Fund net expenditure is summarised below, including the changes from the December 2020 report. The 2021/22 net budget has decreased by £467,100* compared to the December's MTFs. *This does not include any recommendations included in the Wholly Owned Company – Housing Development report to this committee.

Summary of 2021/22 budget movements	On-going?	£	On-going £
2021/22 budget before return of ring-fenced S31 reserve		£9,195,460	
Reduced by S31 reserve (see para. 4.6.5)		(£8,000,000)	
Total Net budget reported December 2020		£1,195,460	
Lower costs/Increased Income:			
lower inflation than budgeted for	Y	(£43,103)	(£43,103)
Increased recharges to the HRA including digital	Y	(£163,192)	(£163,192)
increased savings 2021/22	Y	(£78,814)	(£78,814)
Increased projected income guarantee scheme	N	(£55,000)	
Increased Lower Tier Funding (Finance settlement)	N	(£140,043)	£0
Increased COVID funding for council tax support	N	(£118,860)	
Increased COVID funding for homeless elections	N	(£500,208)	
New Homeless & Rough Sleeping Fund	N	(£500,830)	
Other net reductions	Part	(£84,859)	(£35,000)
Total		(£1,684,909)	(£320,109)
Increased Costs/lower Income:			
Ringfenced grant for homeless and elections 2021	N	£500,208	
New Homeless & Rough Sleeping Fund (2 nd year)	N	£500,830	

Summary of 2021/22 budget movements	On-going?	£	On-going £
Reduction in investment income	Y	£27,670	£27,670
Reduction in 2021/22 fee increases (Markets para 4.2.3)	N	£2,000	
Increased COVID losses	N	£177,101	
Lower parks & open spaces income	Y	£10,000	£10,000
Total		£1,217,809	£37,670
Total budget movements		(£467,100)	(£282,439)
Updated General Fund 2021/22 net budget		£728,360	

4.9.4 There is an on-going positive impact on balances for future years of £282,439, however £163,192 relates to increased recharges to the HRA which may in future years swing back to the General Fund. There is still a need to find financial security saving for future years to ensure, (that in line with the MTFS) there is move from the current draw on balances per year to a contribution to balances by 2023/24, (revised from 2022/23 in the September 2020 MTFS update).

4.9.5 The 2020/21 General Fund working budget has increased by £457,810, a summary is shown in the table below.

Summary of 2020/21 budget movements	£
Working Budget	£10,731,610
Lower costs/Increased Income:	
COVID funding for new burdens	(£23,030)
Total	(£23,030)
Increased Costs/lower Income:	
Reduction in AFM projection (recycling)	£112,540
Reduction in income guarantee scheme	£11,120
Lower parks and open spaces income	£10,000
Wholly Owned Company set up costs (omitted from 2020/21 budget)	£75,000
Increased COVID losses (including homeless costs, commercial rents, recycling income)	£261,610
Other minor budget changes	£10,640
Total	£480,910
Total budget movements	£457,880
Updated General Fund 2020/21 net budget	£11,189,490

4.10 Projected General Fund Balances

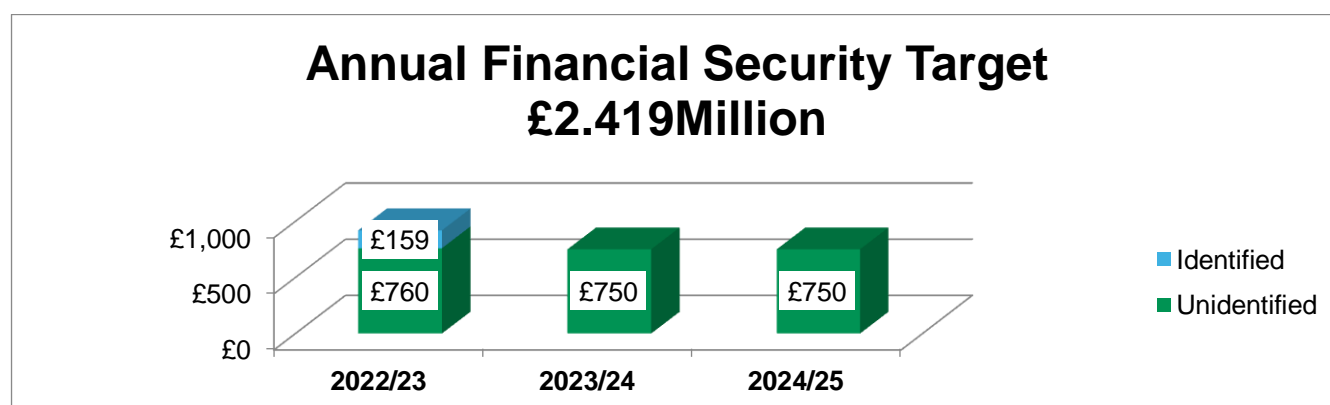
4.10.1 The projected General Fund balances and council tax requirement are shown below.

	2020/21 Estimate	2020/21 Projected	2021/22 Estimate
Net Expenditure excluding S31 grants	£10,220,060	£12,339,720	£9,578,360

	2020/21 Estimate	2020/21 Projected	2021/22 Estimate
S31 grants NNDR	(£1,150,230)	(£9,150,230)	(£850,000)
Transfer of S31 grants	£0	£8,000,000	(£8,000,000)
Total Net Expenditure*	£9,069,830	£11,189,490	£728,360
(Use of)/ Contribution to Balances	(£349,030)	(£2,468,690)	(£380,590)
Budget Requirement	£8,720,800	£8,720,800	£347,770
Business Rates	(£2,665,314)	(£2,665,314)	(£1,869,336)
Total Government Support	(£2,665,314)	(£2,665,314)	(£1,869,336)
(Return) /Contribution to Collection Fund (NDR) re 2020/21	£0	£0	£8,500,000
(Return) /Contribution to Collection Fund (NDR) pre 2020/21	£380	£380	(£821,128)
Collection Fund Surplus (ctax)	(£67,265)	(£67,265)	(£40,152)
Council Tax Requirement	£5,988,601	£5,988,601	£6,117,154
Council Tax Base	27,781	27,781	27,734
Council Tax Band D	£215.57	£215.57	£220.57
Council Tax Band C	£191.62	£191.62	£196.07

4.11 Revision of Financial Security Targets Future Years

4.11.1 The Financial Security target for 2022/23-2024/24 is now £2.419 Million, as summarised below. This will need to be reviewed at the next MTFS update to ensure firstly that there is a contribution to balances by 2023/24 and secondly to reflect any further impacts of COVID on the General Fund.



4.11.2 In addition to the Financial Security target identified above the Executive approved the need to find a further £500K of options that could be implemented if the General Fund financial resilience reduced and minimum balance levels were breached.

4.11.3 The Financial Security savings options going forward are anticipated to be driven through the Transformation and Commercial and Insourcing Strategy. If sufficient savings cannot be identified through these initiatives then the probability of further service reductions is likely as the ability to deliver efficiency savings has diminished.

4.12 General Fund Reserve Projections

4.12.1 General Fund balances are projected to be £3.9Million by 2024/25 which means a reduction of £3Million from balances held at 1 April 2020.

Balances £'000	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Revised Balances at 31 March each Year:	(£ 6,930)	(£ 4,461)	(£ 4,081)	(£ 3,662)	(£ 3,664)
use of balances	£2,469	£381	£418	(£ 2)	(£ 241)
General fund Balance 1 March	(£ 4,461)	(£ 4,081)	(£ 3,662)	(£ 3,664)	(£ 3,905)
Minimum	(£ 2,920)	(£ 3,650)	(£ 3,200)	(£ 3,000)	(£ 2,900)
Variance	(£ 1,541)	(£ 431)	(£ 462)	(£ 664)	(£ 1,005)

4.12.2 The improvement in the projected balances from the December report (and as set out section 4.9 of the report), means the projected year end balances for 2021/22 are now £431K above the risk assessed balances of £3.65Million, however this is a minimal cushion against COVID losses, which need to be reassessed as a result of the extended lockdown into 2021/22.

4.12.3 The improvement in balances combined with the package of Financial Security options recommended for approval has significantly improves the Council's financial resilience. There are still risks:

- Realising the level of business rate gains for 2020/21, however the MTFs assumes that £800K of the £1.28Million total gains will be realised. This will not be known until the NNDR3 claim in submitted post April 2021 and the pooling gains realised from the Hertfordshire Pool (£455K). In the current economic position this still remains a risk but is currently though achievable by the CFO.
- Re-evaluation of further COVID losses for 2020/21 and 2021/22
- Ability to implement the level of savings outlined in the report

4.12.4 There is also financial risk associated with more innovative Financial Security options versus stopping services and cutting spend. While these options are preferable to reducing/stopping services they may be a departure from 'normal' council operations and require careful implementation and monitoring.

4.13 Risk Assessment of General Fund balances

4.13.1 The General Fund balances have been risk assessed for 2021/22 and the minimum level of balances required is £3.65Million

4.13.2 The risk assessment of balances includes amounts for general overruns in expenditure and losses of income (1.5% of the gross value) and in addition for specific risks.

4.11.3 A new risk that has been added to the risk assessment of balances includes:

- Increased cost COVID in 2021/22 estimated to be £1.2Million in addition to that assumed within the budget.

4.14 Contingency Sums

4.14.1 The Executive will recall that a Contingency Sum needs to be determined by the Council as part of the Budget and Policy Framework in order to avoid the need for Council to consider all supplementary estimates during the course of the year. This contingency sum constitutes an upper cumulative limit during the financial year within which the Executive can approve supplementary estimates, rather than part of the Council's Budget Requirement for the year. A sum of £400,000 is proposed for

2020/21, this remains unchanged from the current year, however due regard will need to be given to breaching minimum balances.

4.15 Allocated Reserves

4.15.1 The allocated reserves as at 31 March 2022 are estimated to be £1.723Million, which is a reduction of £1.733Million (51% of total reserves) from 1 April 2020. The allocated reserves are summarised in the following table.

Movements to/from Allocated Reserves £'000					
Allocated Reserve	Balance as at 1 April 2020	Anticipated transfer to/from reserves	Forecast balance as at 31 March 2021	Anticipated transfer to/from reserves	Forecast balance as at 31 March 2022
New Homes Bonus	(£ 630)	£ 169	(£ 461)	£ 227	(£ 234)
Business Rates Reserve	(£ 1,235)	(£ 572)	(£ 1,807)	(£ 455)	(£ 326)
Business Rates Reserve S31 grants	£ 0	(£ 8,000)	(£ 8,000)	(£ 454)	£ 0
Regeneration Assets	(£ 630)	£ 234	(£ 396)	(£ 156)	(£ 552)
Insurance Reserve	(£ 103)	£ 35	(£ 68)	£ 0	(£ 68)
Regeneration Fund (SG1)	(£ 724)	£ 155	(£ 569)	£ 370	(£ 199)
Town Centre	(£ 34)	£ 0	(£ 34)	£ 0	(£ 34)
Transformation Reserve	(£ 60)	£ 0	(£ 60)	£ 0	(£ 60)
Planning Delivery Grant	(£ 40)	£ 40	£ 0	£ 0	£ 0
Income equalisation reserve	£ 0	£ 0	£ 0	£ 0	(£ 250)
Total	(£ 3,456)	(£ 7,939)	(£ 11,395)	(£ 468)	(£ 1,723)

14.5.2 The use of reserves does not take into account any use of the Income Equalisation reserve which may be required in 2021/22 and assumes the level of business rates as set out in paragraph 4.12.3.

4.16 Consultation

4.16.1 The residents' survey has not been completed this year due to COVID and would be in principle completed next year. The previous survey (2017) asked for the views of residents and stakeholders on their preferences for reducing services, increasing fees and charges and increasing Council Tax. Residents were asked how best to make the savings required by ranking the options provided from 1 to 5, with 1 being the most preferred option and 5 being the least preferred option. The results are shown in the table below. A number of the savings options relate to new ways of working (24%)

Table 13: Resident's preferences for means of making savings. Rank analysis.

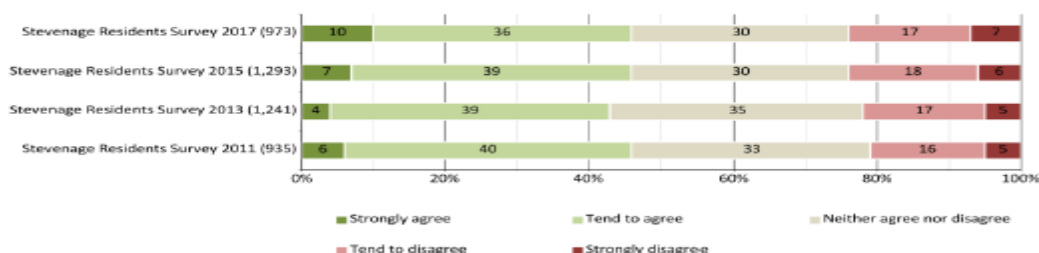
Option	Overall Rank
Reduce time and money spent on paperwork by interacting with more residents and customers online	1
Spend less by reducing or cutting the services that you tell us are not a priority	2
Increase income from fees and chargeable services, to keep the council's element of Council Tax as low as possible	3
Increase our element of Council Tax (for example from 48p per day to 50p per day)	4
Make money by selling more of our services to residents and customers	5

4.16.2 The 2017 residents' survey asked residents a number of questions relating to how the Council conducts its financial affairs. Residents were asked whether the council tax represented value for money and only 7% strongly disagreed as shown in the chart below.

Value for money

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Council Tax paid to Stevenage Borough Council provides good value for money?

Figure 50: Responses to whether residents agree or disagree that the Council Tax paid to Stevenage Borough Council provides good value for money



4.16.6 The Financial Security package includes staff related options for which informal consultation has commenced, however all the option will be subject to the outcome of the formal consultation process. The impact on staff is summarised below, this is subject to consultation.

Option	No of staff	Redundancy	Vacant /retire/ turnover/no impact
Community Transport	5	4	1
Director support	1	0	1
Member Services	1	0	1
Constitutional services	3	0	3
CSC/Customer focus	7	2	5
Print Room	1	1	0
Facilities Management	4	0	4
Revs and Bens	1	0	1
Financial Services	3	0	3
Total	26	7	19

4.16.7 The LFSG will review the Financial Security options before the final General Budget report to the February Executive and their comments will be included in that report.

4.16.8 An all Member session was held on the 2021/22 General Fund budget on 11 January 2021 a number of questions were raised about staff redeployment and ensuring that the impact of measures such as not strimming round objects was properly assessed. Members also requested that consideration be given when finances improve to relook at the;

- Level of LCB budgets for each ward member
- The reintroduction of the graduate scheme
- The community transport scheme

4.16.9 The General Fund MTFs has a set of principles used for financial purposes, one of which is to ensure that resources are aligned with the Council's Corporate Plan

and Future Town Future Council (FTFC) priorities and that growth is limited to the Council's top priorities. The Corporate Plan is included in the Budget and Policy Framework and is therefore subject to Council approval.

4.16.10 The current FTFC Co-operative Corporate Plan was approved as a five year plan from 2016 to 2021 and is therefore due for revision. At the present time Member and officer focus continues to be on responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, and EU transition. Furthermore, the Covid-19 recovery plans agreed by the Executive in July 2020 will help shape the Council's priorities and programmes and associated funding for the coming financial year. In this context, officers proposed to the Executive at its December meeting that the current plan and existing FTFC programmes are extended into 2022/23. This will provide officers and Members with the opportunity to thoroughly review the plan. Having considered this proposal, Executive resolved that, in accordance with the Council's Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, the Council be recommended to continue the adoption of the current Co-operative Corporate Plan, subject to further review in Autumn 2022.'

4.17 Chief Finance Officer's Commentary

4.17.1 The Chief Finance Officer is the Council's principal financial advisor and has statutory responsibilities in relation to the administration of the Council's financial affairs (Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 and Section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988). This commentary is given in light of these statutory responsibilities.

4.17.2 The Council has evolved its budget strategy to meet the ongoing challenging economic conditions whether because of funding cuts, welfare reforms or inflationary increases and latterly to meet the financial threat of COVID. The financial strategy to deal with this is the 'Financial Security' strand of 'Future Town Future Council'.

4.17.3 Officers regularly update the MTFs to ensure that a clear financial position for the Council can be demonstrated over the next five years. This medium term view of the budget gives a mechanism by which future 'budget gaps' can be identified allowing for a measured rather than reactive approach to reducing net expenditure. The Financial Security year round approach to identifying budget options means that work is on-going throughout the year to bridge the gap.

4.17.4 The Council has taken significant steps over recent years to balance its budget and one of the principle aims of the MTFs is 'achieve an on-going balanced budget by 2023/24 by ensuring inflationary pressures are matched by increases in fees and income or reductions in expenditure'.

4.17.5 The impact of COVID has increased the need to implement further financial resilience measures, which were contained in the June 2020 COVID Recovery MTFs report, September 2020 MTFs and in the December 2020 Financial Security Report. This has been a difficult budget to set but financial resilience measures taken/for approval have increased the security of the Council's position, these are:

- Monthly monitoring of COVID financial impacts to allow any required financial remedies to be taken quickly.

- Holding General Fund capital and revenue expenditure in 2020/21 (June 2020 COVID Recovery MTFS report).
- Reduce the use of reliance on Revenue Contributions to Capital (RCCO) by identifying sites for disposal and using capital receipts rather than revenue (September 2020 MTFS report).
- Identification of sufficient level on-going Financial Security options to ensure General Fund balances are above or a the minimum level required for 2021/22.
- Identify £500K of further options to be worked up by March 2021, that if required can be implemented if the financial challenges in 2021/22 are worse than currently projected.
- Increase the level of minimum balances required to reflect an allowance for further COVID losses (December 2020 Financial Security Report)
- Implement an Income Equalisation Reserve of £250K to allow for fluctuations in fee increases realised and income during 2021/22 (December 2020 Financial Security Report).
- Ring-fence COVID funding in the provisional settlement for housing and a COVID secure election in 2021/22.
- Recommended approval of Financial Security options and fees of £1.5Million

4.17.6 There is small contribution to balances projected in 2023/24, however there is a significant draw on balances through the MTFS period and a need to deliver savings through the MTFS period, this is also in the context of COVID and Brexit on the Council's finances.

4.17.7 The current projections of balances and the measures the Council has taken to date and as set in this report have meant the level of balances projected are sufficient to set the 2021/22 budget, if all options included in the report are approved. **However the CFO considers that as set out in the December Financial Security report, further options of a minimum £500K should be considered by the Executive so that additional action can be taken quickly if the financial position worsens or options recommended for approval are not delivered early on 2021.**

4.17.8 While delivering one of the most difficult budgets, the Council is also is continuing with one of its most ambitious phases with the Council looking to redevelop and regenerate the town centre and at the same time improve the housing market in Stevenage. Both these priorities come with the risk of potentially needing to invest more resources. There is a ring fenced reserve for Regeneration and further estimates of resources have been included in the General Fund MTFS.

4.18 Leaders Financial Security Group

4.18.1 The LFSG chaired by the portfolio holder for Resources on behalf of the Leader and with cross party representation has been meeting frequently since August 2016. The group has reviewed the GF 2020/21 Fees and charges and is scheduled to review the Financial Security options before the February 2021 Final budget report to the Executive.

5. IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial Implications

5.1.1 The report deals with Council policy and finances and as such all implications are contained in the main body of the report.

5.2 Legal Implications

5.2.1 The Council is required to set a balanced budget each year. The Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires the Council to estimate revenue expenditure and income for the forthcoming year from all sources, together with contributions from reserves, in order to determine a net budget requirement to be met by government grant and council tax.

5.3 Risk Implications

5.3.1 There are risk implications to setting a prudent General Fund budget if the Fees and charges (Appendix C) and Financial Security options (Appendix B) are not achieved and crucially if future options are not found to meet the targets outlined in the report. The risk to financial security has also been increased as a result of COVID but decisive measures have been taken as outlined in paragraph 4.17.5.

5.3.2 The Council's ambitions have meant significant growth bids and service pressures included in the MTFS assumptions. However, decisions to invest are backed by business cases to do so.

5.3.3 The Council faces considerable risks with future reductions to central government grant funding and the ever changing landscape of Local Government Finance. Areas of risk include:

- Fair Funding Review – still to be concluded
- Business rates reset and the ability for Council's to retain growth in the yield-still to be concluded
- Changes to borrowing rules- PWLB changes November 2020 meaning the inability to spend for yield and borrow from PWLB.
- Ensuring sufficient funding for government initiatives such as rough sleeper and COVID pressures.

5.3.2 Risk implications are dealt within the body of the report and specifically within sections 4.12, 4.13 and 4.17.

5.4 Equalities and Diversity Implications

5.4.1 In carrying out or changing its functions (including those relating to the provision of services and the employment of staff) the Council must comply with the Equality Act 2010 and in particular section 149 which is the Public Sector Equality Duty. The Council has a statutory obligation to comply with the requirements of The Act, demonstrating that as part of the decision-making process, due regard has been given to the need to:

- Remove discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is unlawful under this Act
- Promote equal opportunities between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Encourage good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

5.4.2 These duties are non-delegable and must be considered by Council when setting the Budget in February 2021.

- 5.4.3 To inform the decisions about the Budget 2021/22 officers have begun Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) for service-related savings proposals. These are currently in draft form, since they must consider appropriate evidence and the findings of consultation with various stakeholders to inform the decision by Council in February 2021. Where there is a potentially negative impact, officers will collect further information and identify actions to mitigate the impact as far as possible. These EqIAs are summarised and attached in **Appendix E** with further information on the process to date and planned activity. EqIAs for future years' savings will be presented alongside the draft Budget for the relevant year.
- 5.4.4 An overarching EqIA will also be developed once individual EqIAs are finalised for Council in February 2021. This will consider the collective impact of the Budget on people with protected characteristics.
- 5.4.5 As well as considering the impact on service delivery and equality, an EqIA concerning all strands of potential discrimination will be required by the Head of Paid Service on proposed redundancies and restructures per savings proposal and as a whole. It is proposed that this will be produced alongside the required restructure consultation documents as it is only at this stage that the actual impact on staff will start to be known. As the proposals will be delivered over a range of different timescales, the whole, i.e. combined EqIA, will be reviewed periodically with the Council's Strategic Management Board. All staff impacts are summarised at **Appendix F**.

5.5 Climate Change Implications

- 5.5.1 The Council declared a climate change emergency at the June 2019 Council meeting with a resolution to work towards a target of achieving net zero emissions by 2050.
- 5.5.2 To support the work required to achieve this aim, time limited resources have been included in the 2021/22 budget.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

BD1 General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy (2020/21-2024/25)

BD2 Financial Security Options (December Executive)

APPENDICES

- A Risk Assessment of Balances 2021/22
- B Financial Security Options 2021/22
- C Fees and Charges 2021/22
- D Growth Options and new pressures 2021/22
- E Equalities Impact Assessment General Fund
- F Equalities Impact Assessment staffing

APPENDIX A: RISK BASED ASSESSMENT OF THE LEVEL OF GENERAL FUND BALANCES 2021/22

Potential Risk Area	Comments including any mitigation factors		
Income from areas within the base budget where the Council raises "Fees and Charges"	Potential risk that the budgeted level of income from activities where the Council is charging for services will not be achieved. This is anticipated largely to be as a result of the downturn in economy, but could also be as a result of poor weather, new competition and the impact of Covid-19. All "fees and charges" income is reviewed as part of the monthly/quarterly budget monitoring process. All budgets are profiled over the year based upon previous experience.		
	Calculated Risk		
Specific Areas	Estimated Income	Likelihood Percentage	Balances Required
Parking Income* (on street/off-street)	£3,264,690	2.0%	£65,294
Development Control Income	£410,830	5.0%	£20,542
Recycling Income	£396,220	2.5%	£9,906
Garages	£3,582,020	1.0%	£35,820
Trade Refuse & Skips	£821,320	2.5%	£20,533
Indoor Market	£431,600	5.0%	£21,580
Commercial Property Income	£3,569,280	5.0%	£178,464
NEW : COVID losses arising from a loss of fees and charges			£1,000,000
Total			£1,352,138

* The council has a parking account which identifies how parking fees are spent on parking and related costs

Potential Risk Area	Comments		
Demand Led Budgets	Potential risk that spending on parts of the budget where the Council has a legal duty to provide the service increases significantly (including as an impact of Covid-19). Individual budgets reviewed as part of the monthly budget monitoring process. All budgets are profiled over the year based upon previous experience and so any variances should show up during the year.		
	Calculated Risk		
Specific Areas	Estimated Exposure	Likelihood Percentage	Balances Required
Housing Benefit maximum risk based on not meeting threshold for Local Authority errors.	£180,000	40%	£72,000
Loss of Business Rates yield	£1,869,336	maximum loss (7.5%)	£140,200
Lower S31 Grants than anticipated which means the NNDR yield would be higher but would not be returned to the General Fund until 2022/23.	£850,000	5%	£42,500
REVISED : Increase in bad debts as a economic changes impacting on charging for services	£52,000	100%	£52,000
NEW : There is an increased cost of Bed and Breakfast as a result of higher homelessness (exposure based on impact of COVID)	£80,000	100%	£80,000
risk of capital works requiring funding as a result of rephasing/deferring works in the Capital Strategy	£200,000	50%	£100,000
NEW : Costs related to COVID in ICT, PPE and other related costs			£68,000
Housing Benefit overpayment net income reduces and results in a pressure on the General Fund	£492,480	10%	£49,248
Total			£603,948

Potential Risk Area	Comments including any mitigation factors		
Changes since budget was set	Potential risk that things change since the budget estimates were made and the estimates are then under budgeted for.		
	Calculated Risk		
Specific Areas	Estimated Exposure	Likelihood Percentage	Balances Required
Transitional Vacancy Rate 4.5%	£543,780	5.00%	£27,189
Less staff time charged to capital than budgeted	£641,320	10.00%	£64,132
REVISED : pay award is higher than budgeted for-not considered applicable for 2021/22	£19,440,128	0.00%	£45,420
Contractual inflation 1% increase	£8,974,626	1.00%	£36,188
Utility and fuel inflation usage/costs increase	£884,170	4.50%	£39,788
Borrowing costs will be higher than estimated on new borrowing in Capital Strategy	£238,649	0.5% increase in basis points	£10,977
Total			£223,693

Potential Risk Area	Comments including any mitigation factors		
Other Risks	Potential risk that savings options will not be realised as a result of delay or unforeseen circumstances.		
	Calculated Risk		
Specific Areas	Estimated Exposure	Likelihood Percentage	Balances Required
Savings Options	£1,462,682	13.50%	£197,462
Total			£197,462

Potential Risk Area	Comments including any mitigation factors		
Estimated balances required for any over spend or under-recovery of expenditure and income	This calculation replaces the calculation based on Net Expenditure		
	Calculated Risk		
Specific Areas	Estimated Exposure	Likelihood Percentage	Balances Required
Gross Income (excludes specific income listed above)	£44,182,254	1.50%	£662,734
Gross Expenditure (excludes specific expenditure listed above)	£40,907,564	1.50%	£613,613
Total			£1,276,347

Level of Balances Assumed in General Fund Based on risk

£3,653,589

This page is intentionally left blank

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

APPENDIX B

FINANCIAL SECURITY OPTIONS 2021/22

Fund	Projected 2021/22	Projected 2022/23
General Fund	£1,462,182	£1,588,047
HRA	£241,546	£283,372
Total	£1,703,728	£1,871,419

Ref No	Portfolio holder	Name of Service	Description of Savings Proposal	Implementati on costs (any redundancy/ capital)	If staff affected indicate no. of staff	Ongoing (Y/N) or No of further years available	Impact of Saving Proposal on Public/ Customers/ Staff/ Members/Partnerships etc. (include any impact on key corporate programmes/performance indicator measures) .	Potential Timing (put the date you estimate it will be implemented, consider any consultation required)	£ General Fund Year 1	£ HRA Year 1
--------	------------------	-----------------	---------------------------------	---	---	--	--	---	-----------------------	--------------

2021/22 Budget Options

FS1	Children, young people & Leisure	Play	Further rationalise Play Service and reduce dedicated holiday play schemes in Bedwell and Symonds Green to pop up activities as per Summer 2020 (The service received 47,310 attendances in 2019/20)			Y	Potential impact on children and families. The Play service rationalised in 2019/20 delivering a £50,000 saving. The service is highly regarded but discretionary and SBC remains one of the only councils to maintain a free play service. This option reduces activity for summer play schemes, currently dedicated to Bedwell and Symonds Green. These would be replaced with a rationalised pop-up play offer rotating across the town during School holidays. with some income generation through charges for professional child minders and those who are not <u>Stevenage residents</u> .	1 April 2021	15,000	0
FS2	Children, young people & Leisure	Stevenage Leisure Limited	Reduce Contract Sum working with SLL				The advance to SLL is based on no management fee for 2021/22 and 2022/23, however there is no plan as to how this will be delivered so an assumption of a £150K reduction has been assumed	1 April 2021	150,000	0
FS3	Community &Community Safety	PCSO's	Stop funding PSCO's		3	Y	Cease the funding to Hertfordshire Police for PCSOs. The council has introduced 4 Neighbourhood Wardens who maintain a visible neighbourhood presence. No performance data on the SBC investment is currently provided by the Police. A number of other districts in Hertfordshire have ceased funding of PCSOs in recent years.	1 April 2021	96,050	0
FS5	Environment & Regeneration	Allotments	Increase allotment fees to break even- Consider phasing the increase over 2 to 3 years, we have 16 sites and 100% occupation with a waiting list of 300.			Y	Allotments provide a leisure facility that supports physical health, mental wellbeing, and community. In order to breakeven, we would need to increase income from £39,890 to £71,570. The average plot size is 100.23m2 which currently costs £35.08 (at £0.35). The proposal to increase charges in 2020/21 was delayed and will implemented with the forthcoming charge for 2021/22, proposal was to increase to £54.00 per year on a 100.23m2). LSFSG recommended £60.00. (Increase would be £11K saving for 2020/21 and £4K saving 2021/22, total increase £15K) .For reference, in 2018/19 we charged £0.34/ m2 whilst WHDC and NHDC were charging £0.44 and £0.50/m2 respectively.	1 February 2021	4,000	0
FS6	Environment & Regeneration	Parks & Open Spaces	Leaving grass longer in parks - the reduction in cost will be from reduced agency and overtime costs			Y	Grass at Canterbury Way PF, Chells Park, Hampson Park, Meadway PF and Shephalbury Park will be largely left to grow long and be managed as meadow grassland i.e. a single cut, and clearance, once a year in September / October. Wide paths will be cut through the grass to enable access and closer enjoyment of the wildlife. Some reduction in area available for informal kickabouts, etc.	Spring 2021	60,000	0

FINANCIAL SECURITY OPTIONS 2021/22

Fund	Projected 2021/22	Projected 2022/23
General Fund	£1,462,182	£1,588,047
HRA	£241,546	£283,372
Total	£1,703,728	£1,871,419

Ref No	Portfolio holder	Name of Service	Description of Savings Proposal	Implementati on costs (any redundancy/ capital)	If staff affected indicate no. of staff	Ongoing (Y/N) or No of further years available	Impact of Saving Proposal on Public/ Customers/ Staff/ Members/Partnerships etc. (include any impact on key corporate programmes/performance indicator measures) .	Potential Timing (put the date you estimate it will be implemented, consider any consultation required)	£ General Fund Year 1	£ HRA Year 1
--------	------------------	-----------------	---------------------------------	---	---	--	--	---	-----------------------	--------------

2021/22 Budget Options

FS7	Environment & Regeneration		Stop strimming of obstacles in parks and open spaces- the reduction in cost will be from reduced agency and overtime costs				Longer grass around base of obstacles. No complaints received during 2020.	1 April 2021	25,000	0
FS10	Environment & Regeneration	Trade Waste & Junk removal	Recruit officer to sell trade waste service and related complementary SBC services			Y	Business case for expansion of current trade waste offer and development of total waste solutions offer with SLT for review. For year 1 potential revenue to be gained of £364k, net income of £109k dependent on the recruitment and performance of a Commercial Officer.		54,500	0
FS11	Environment & Regeneration	SDS overtime and Agency budgets	Reduce spend on overtime and agency costs in Stevenage Direct Services			Y	Reduce overtime/agency budgets across Stevenage Direct Services (SDS) through active management of staffing, there is a risk if there is significant sickness increase or turnover of staff costs may increase		50,000	0
FS12	Environment & Regeneration	Planning Policy	EC17 Planning Policy and ET700 Staff costs for Technical Support, AD and Business Relationship Manager	£0	0	Y	None. Declined demands as Local Plan and ass. Documents being completed and being replaced by more Joint Planning work across Herts. Saving from Junes team restructure	Immediate	14,000	0
FS13	Housing & Older People	Community Transport	Cease service entirely.(The Community transport service provides 95 trips per year and 310 registered users, at a cost of £1,566 per trip)	£51,000	5	Y	The service currently cannot be run due to the vulnerability of the users and the majority of drivers who are also in the vulnerable category. Due to the rationale that the service is not likely to be operational for a considerable amount of time and maybe the way this type of service is run will need to be changed permanently which would make the service not operable. This will be subject to consultation and require the vehicles to be sold. Cease service completely and signpost to HCC service and North Herts Community Transport scheme.	1 May 2021	91,670	0
FS14	Leader of the Council	Fairtrade	Cease payment			Y	The Council pays a subscription which costs £1,500 per year.	1 April 2021	1,005	495
FS15	Leader of the Council	CE, Directors & Support	Reduce support to Directors and CE by reducing Executive support by 0.5FTE	£0	1	Y	Reduce the Executive support to 2.5FTE from 3.5FTE	1 April 2021	14,742	6,318
FS16	Leader of the Council	Members Expenses	Cease provision of refreshments			Y	Delete refreshment budgets due to new ways of working	1 April 2021	2,100	1,400
FS17	Leader of the Council	Democratic Services	Delete 18.5 hour post in Member services due to retirement	£0	1	Y	The post holder is retiring and the work will be absorbed within the existing team	1 April 2021	8,940	5,960

FINANCIAL SECURITY OPTIONS 2021/22

Fund	Projected 2021/22	Projected 2022/23
General Fund	£1,462,182	£1,588,047
HRA	£241,546	£283,372
Total	£1,703,728	£1,871,419

Ref No	Portfolio holder	Name of Service	Description of Savings Proposal	Implementati on costs (any redundancy/ capital)	If staff affected indicate no. of staff	Ongoing (Y/N) or No of further years available	Impact of Saving Proposal on Public/ Customers/ Staff/ Members/Partnerships etc. (include any impact on key corporate programmes/performance indicator measures) .	Potential Timing (put the date you estimate it will be implemented, consider any consultation required)	£ General Fund Year 1	£ HRA Year 1
--------	------------------	-----------------	---------------------------------	---	---	--	--	---	-----------------------	--------------

2021/22 Budget Options

FS46	Leader of the Council	Constitutional Services - Management Restructure	Streamlining management arrangements within Constitutional Services upon the retirement of the current Constitutional Services Manager post holder.	£0	3	Y	The current post holder for the position of Constitutional Services Manager is due to retire in October 2021. It is envisaged that current members of the Constitutional Services team would be appointed into the newly created roles and that there would be no redundancies. Option is to delete the Constitutional Services Manager (Grade 10) and Elections and Land Charges Manager (Grade 9) posts. Create a new Constitutional and Electoral Services Manager (Grade 12) role. Involves converting a Constitutional Services Officer(Grade 6) to a Senior Constitutional Services Officer (Grade 8) and the creation of a new Electoral Services Officer Post (Grade 4 and 0.5fte)	Nov 2021	6,624	4,416
FS19	Leader of the Council	Policy	Combine Residents and Star survey			N-every 3 years	Commission both surveys together and explore the potential to combine and rationalise. This may limit statistical reliability due to sample size, but could also supplement this with community engagement work with those who do not traditionally participate in surveys. i.e. children and young people	1 April 2021	8,500	8,500
FS20	Leader of the Council	Member Training	Reduce Member training by 50%			Y	Training will be limited to LGA related training and smaller training offer to Members	1 April 2021	2,550	1,700
FS47	Leader of the Council	Member General Expenses	Removal of budget			Y	No longer needed as have an alternative Miscellaneous Budget	1 April 2021	300	200
FS48	Leader of the Council	Member Travel Expenses	Reduction in travel expenses budget due to new ways of working e.g. remote meetings			Y	Reduction in Member Travel Expenses budget.	1 April 2021	1,200	800
FS18	Leader of the Council	Communications	Cease Community Reception dinner function			Y	Cease holding the evening function but still celebrate with awards.	1 April 2021	12,300	2,700
FS21	Neighbourhood & Co-operative working	Grants to sundry Bodies	Reduce grant funding			Y	There is a residual £17K of grant funding that can be removed from the budget and does not impact on CA funding		17,000	0
FS23	Neighbourhood & Co-operative working	CSC and Customer Focus Re-design and efficiencies, supported by implementation of new digital technology resulting in channel shift and automation.	Streamline Customer Focus and Customer Services into one team including: A reduction of 1 FTE Grade 9 post from the combining the Customer Focus and Customer Services Manager roles in a single post. A reduction of 1FTE Manager/Team Leader (currently 5 in total, assumed Grade 5). A reduction of 4FTE Customer Service Advisors at Grade2/3 A reduction of 1 Customer Insight Adviser at Grade 3.	£110,000	2	Y	Customers - Functionality enabled by the Digital Platform project in 2020/21 will enable some shift of contact away from more resource intensive telephony and face to face channels which will reduce the adviser levels needed in order to maintain current performance for customers. Aligning the customer focus team with customer services will ensure continuous improvement can be embedded in service delivery. Other Business Units - The reduction in the Customer Insight adviser (complaints) would be mitigated by implementing a new digital case work solution using Firmstep (which is less resource intensive than emails) and better early management of cases by customer services to reduce the escalation to formal complaints. Digital case management for complaints will make it easier to track and manage cases. However, there may be some temporary additional pressure on service areas in order to support complaints handling while the tools are embedded, and to deal with complex cases.	1 June 2021	69,668	100,401

FINANCIAL SECURITY OPTIONS 2021/22

Fund	Projected 2021/22	Projected 2022/23
General Fund	£1,462,182	£1,588,047
HRA	£241,546	£283,372
Total	£1,703,728	£1,871,419

Ref No	Portfolio holder	Name of Service	Description of Savings Proposal	Implementati on costs (any redundancy/ capital)	If staff affected indicate no. of staff	Ongoing (Y/N) or No of further years available	Impact of Saving Proposal on Public/ Customers/ Staff/ Members/Partnerships etc. (include any impact on key corporate programmes/performance indicator measures) .	Potential Timing (put the date you estimate it will be implemented, consider any consultation required)	£ General Fund Year 1	£ HRA Year 1
--------	------------------	-----------------	---------------------------------	---	---	--	--	---	-----------------------	--------------

2021/22 Budget Options

FS26	Neighbourhood & Co-operative working	Print Room	Remove the Document Centre Officer (Grade 3) post in ICT.	£60,000	1	Y	This requires services to find alternative solutions for printing or to reduce the need for bulk printing. The key users are Housing Investment and members (committee papers). Members would need to print their own committee papers or to use Modern Gov to view papers for meetings.	1 June 2021	12,722	8,841
FS27	Neighbourhood & Co-operative working	Printing and photocopiers	Remove 4 MFD's from Daneshill & reduce Click usage to 50% of 19/20's volume			Y	Reduce the amount of printing in 2019/20 there were 594,000 prints in qtr. 1 , this had reduced to 200,000 in qtr1 2020/21, increasing to 270,000 in qtr. 2 2020/21. If printing could be reduced by 50% this would give the saving shown	1 April 2021	9,157	6,363
FS28	Neighbourhood & Co-operative working	Reduce Postage costs	Reduce posted items through email and new ways of communicating during the pandemic			Y	Reduce the amount of postage but this requires staff to continue with new ways of working and contacting residents.	Immediate- savings taken as one off in year	21,730	23,270
FS28	Neighbourhood & Co-operative working	LCB budgets	Reduce LCB budgets.			Y	Reduce the amount of LCBs from £2,300 per Member to £1,500 per Member and reduce Youth Mayor LCB from £3,300 to £2,000. There is a growth bid of £18K to provide seed money for the Neighbourhood working. There will be less discretionary funding for community groups to bid for. Community Development Officers will also support groups in accessing other sources of funding.	1 June 2021	40,300	0
FS29	Resources	Commercial Properties	Projected change in lease renewals on the commercial portfolio			Y	While the market is very challenging at the moment the current rental projections show an increase in line with the assumed growth. This will be subject to business being able to remain profitable. There are 176 shops, 20 work shops, 54 misc. properties	1 April 2021	32,470	0
FS30	Resources	Facilities Management	Combine FM and compliance Manager role in one post and delete the FM manager and Compliance Manager, delete vacant FM roles (all posts vacant) , create data manager post to manage Assets and the insourced compliance contract.	£0	0	Y	Combining compliance and insourcing compliance is projected to reduce costs further. However these cannot be released until the backlog of repairs is completed a fuller assessment made.	Immediate	19,665	6,555
FS31	Resources	MRP, Interest Payments and Provisions	Reduce Revenue contributions to capital (RCCO) from £124K to zero. (Dependent on sale of Locality sites)	£0	0	Y- 6 years	The September MTFS had assumed that the RCCO to fund capital would reduce from £474,000 to £124,000 with the use of Locality Receipts. This left a remaining £124K to be funded from revenue, this is now proposed to be reduced to zero.	1 April 2021	124,000	0
FS32	Resources	Audit, Anti Fraud & Corp Banking Charges	Reduce the number of Audit days from Shared Anti Fraud Service (SIAS) by 10%.			Y	The number of Audit days was reduced a number of years ago, SIAS will be factoring this into their budgets next year. This could lead to a wait list for audits. There are currently 350 days and this would reduce the programme by 35 days. Potentially reducing operational audits but sufficient days for a council of SBC size.	1 April 2021	9,209	2,231

FINANCIAL SECURITY OPTIONS 2021/22

Fund	Projected 2021/22	Projected 2022/23
General Fund	£1,462,182	£1,588,047
HRA	£241,546	£283,372
Total	£1,703,728	£1,871,419

Ref No	Portfolio holder	Name of Service	Description of Savings Proposal	Implementati on costs (any redundancy/ capital)	If staff affected indicate no. of staff	Ongoing (Y/N) or No of further years available	Impact of Saving Proposal on Public/ Customers/ Staff/ Members/Partnerships etc. (include any impact on key corporate programmes/performance indicator measures) .	Potential Timing (put the date you estimate it will be implemented, consider any consultation required)	£ General Fund Year 1	£ HRA Year 1
--------	------------------	-----------------	---------------------------------	---	---	--	--	---	-----------------------	--------------

2021/22 Budget Options

FS33	Resources	Banking Charges	Reapportion cost between HRA & GF based on case load, the number of cases has increased for housing services			Y	This increases the cost to the HRA as the caseload data shows that a greater proportion of the service is used by the HRA (Stats:156 referrals of which 64 housing 2019/20 & 7 properties recovered and 1 RTB cancelled)	1 April 2021	22,400	-22,400
FS34	Resources	Revenues, Benefits and Local Taxation	Reduction in staff due to retirement opportunity			Y	There have been 2 posts removed by the service in the last 2 years, to go further may be difficult in a recessionary period, however reducing the headcount would mean slower claims handling and less overpayments handling, alternative delete visiting officers, however these posts identify where anomalies appear in rating lists and pick up unreported changes. (circa 103 staff shared between EHDC and SBC)	1 April 2021	11,000	0
FS35	Resources	Financial Services	Delete one Graduate Post and one apprentice post		posts vacant	Y	Reduce by one apprentices and one trainee not filled, this will reduce ability to react to organisation requests and will not allow for any succession planning. Significant proportion of the staff are 50+ and this reduces succession planning and does not alleviate current high work demands which was the intention when the structure was approved.	1 April 2021	50,944	11,096
FS36	Resources	Financial Services- procurement	Increase provision to EHDC and Hertsmere Borough Council (2.59FTE's , production of CSO's, training, Procurement Strategy, advice which ahs avoided legal challenges).			Y	The service has been shared with Hertsmere and East Herts and a total of circa £82K of costs reduced by sharing the equivalent of 0.91FTE out of 2.59FTE. The saving shown is the additional savings of the SLA's above that originally estimated.	1 April 2021	21,296	25,273

FINANCIAL SECURITY OPTIONS 2021/22

Fund	Projected 2021/22	Projected 2022/23
General Fund	£1,462,182	£1,588,047
HRA	£241,546	£283,372
Total	£1,703,728	£1,871,419

Ref No	Portfolio holder	Name of Service	Description of Savings Proposal	Implementati on costs (any redundancy/ capital)	If staff affected indicate no. of staff	Ongoing (Y/N) or No of further years available	Impact of Saving Proposal on Public/ Customers/ Staff/ Members/Partnerships etc. (include any impact on key corporate programmes/performance indicator measures) .	Potential Timing (put the date you estimate it will be implemented, consider any consultation required)	£ General Fund Year 1	£ HRA Year 1
--------	------------------	-----------------	---------------------------------	---	---	--	--	---	-----------------------	--------------

2021/22 Budget Options

FS37	Resources	Financial Services-paralegal (There are 2 paralegals posts or 1.91FTE dealing with RTB's, debt recovery, deeds)	Reduce hours in paralegal team, there are 2 posts or 1.67FTE. This would reduce the hours per week by 12 hours		vacant post	Y	The would take out the 0.27 FTE out of the service and would mean that debt recovery would be slowed as would RTB application process if caseload increases. This would reduce the capacity to deal with commercial arrears which are likely to increase due to COVID and the delay to evictions until the end of December 2020 as a result of non-payment.	Immediate	9,816	5,004
FS38	Resources	Garages	Current charge is for 50 weeks, the proposal is to charge for 52 weeks and not give 2 free rent weeks			Y	Garages are currently charged on a 50 week year and this proposal is to charge rents over a 52 week period. May cause some attrition to rental income	1 April 2021	100,000	0
FS39	Resources		Letting of garages remodelled and improved as part of the garage improvement programme			Y	This is the financial benefit for 2021/22 of the reduction in voids through the refurbishment of garages as part of the Garage improvement programme.	1 April 2021	40,000	0
FS40	Resources		Move the '£2 a week' VCS organisations to lower demand areas - £36k could be achieved by April 2021.			Y	Some of the VCO garages are in high demand areas and as such the proposal is move VCO's into lower demand areas and reduce the waiting lists in the higher demand areas		36,020	0
FS41	Resources		Increase the £2 a week rate to £2.25, benchmarking shows that many other councils charge VCS full rates.			Y	An admin charge of £2.00 was introduced for managing the VCO garages in April 2019. The proposed increase of 25pence per week is recommended		950	0
FS41	Resources		Increase on average in garage rents for Category A-C by £0.25 per week and Road facing garages by £0.30 per week			Y	Garages for 2021/22 will be as follows (excluding VAT) Category A £12.05, Category B £11.85, Category C £11.45 Road facing garages £13.70	1 April 2021	55,000	0
FS42	Resources	Human Resources and Training	Delete job advertising budgets- fund any costs from the vacancy of the post	£0	0	Y	There is a risk the transitional vacancy factor may not be achieved this will need to managed as part of the recruitment process. £45K-£50K has been traditionally spent on GF recruitment, exceeding the budget (there have been a number of senior recruitment drives) and for the HRA £6K-£26K over the last 3 years	1 April 2021	19,240	16,760
FS43	Resources		Reduce professional training budget			Y	Where ever possible all professional qualifications will be funded by the apprentice levy. In circumstances where professional qualification is deemed necessary for an individuals roles, SBC will now funded 50% of this through a bursary scheme and ask the individual to fund 50% themselves.	1 April 2021	3,000	4,000
FS44	Resources	Graduate Scheme (There are 3 graduates and AD's pitch for their services. One of the three is dedicated to Estates as a graduate to support the grow your own due to difficulties with recruitment)	Reduce professional training budget for graduates. Remaining budget will pay for NGDP development as part of the graduate scheme			Y	The graduate programme has already been reduced from four graduates to three (with a further saving due in 2021/22). The other area of spend is to reduce the training. The budget is £12K and the expenditure annually for the last two years has been £4-5K.	1 April 2021	6,000	0
NEW	Resources		Cease the graduate scheme			Y	This is in addition the saving shown above and would mean no graduate resource from 1 October 2021 (GF saving increases to £98K in 2022/23). This is likely to impact on the succession planning in the Estates team.	1 October 2021	67,114	16,663

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

APPENDIX B

FINANCIAL SECURITY OPTIONS 2021/22

Fund	Projected 2021/22	Projected 2022/23
General Fund	£1,462,182	£1,588,047
HRA	£241,546	£283,372
Total	£1,703,728	£1,871,419

Ref No	Portfolio holder	Name of Service	Description of Savings Proposal	Implementati on costs (any redundancy/ capital)	If staff affected indicate no. of staff	Ongoing (Y/N) or No of further years available	Impact of Saving Proposal on Public/ Customers/ Staff/ Members/Partnerships etc. (include any impact on key corporate programmes/performance indicator measures) .	Potential Timing (put the date you estimate it will be implemented, consider any consultation required)	£ General Fund Year 1	£ HRA Year 1
--------	------------------	-----------------	---------------------------------	---	---	--	--	---	-----------------------	--------------

2021/22 Budget Options

FS45	Resources	Cash Collection	Stop taking cash for car parks, depot and CSC ATM. (saving is the cash contract costs less projected increase in card fees) .			Y	During COVID no cash has been taken due to safety reasons, the alternative provision for those using the ATM has been to use the post office. This could be continued into 2021/22 to determine whether this causes any issues. NB: If car park card machine software goes off line no income can be taken	1 April 2021	45,000	5,000
TOTAL				£ 221,000	16				£1,462,182	£241,546

This page is intentionally left blank

FEEs AND CHARGES -RECOMMENDED FEE INCREASES FOR 2021/22

APPENDIX C

Service	Fees and Charges for 2021/22	2020/21 Price £	2021/22 Price	Increase £	% Increase	Total Budget 2020/21 £	Rebased Budget for 2021/22 (taking into account estimated improvement in usage)	Income (Reduction) / Increase	Total Budget 2021/22 £	Options considered/Rationale	Date of Price Increase
Car Parks: Option 1											
New Town:											
	7am-7pm (6am-7pm at St Georges only) :										
	Mon-Saturday up to 30 Mins (St Georges & Westgate only)	£0.50	£0.50	£0.00	0.00%						
	Mon-Saturday up to 1 hour	£1.70	£1.80	£0.10	5.88%			£15,000			
	Mon-Saturday up to 2 hours	£2.50	£2.60	£0.10	4.00%			£12,000			
	Mon-Saturday up to 3 hours	£3.20	£3.30	£0.10	3.12%			£5,000			
	Mon-Saturday up to 5 Hours	£3.80	£4.00	£0.20	5.26%			£1,800			
	Sunday	£2.00	£2.20	£0.20	10.00%			£3,000			
	Night Parking 7pm to 7am	£2.00	£2.00	£0.00	0.00%						
	Total Short Stay					£1,331,800	£1,061,000	£36,800	£1,097,800		
Long stay											
	Mon-Fri before 8.30am	£7.50	£8.00	£0.50	6.67%						
	Mon-Fri 8.30am to 7pm	£4.90	£5.00	£0.10	2.04%						
	Saturday 6am - 6pm	£4.90	£5.00	£0.10	2.04%						
	Sunday	£2.00	£2.20	£0.20	10.00%						
	Night Parking (7pm to 6am or 6pm - 6am)	£2.00	£2.00	£0.00	0.00%						
	Total Long Stay					£816,200	£412,000	£13,500	£425,500		
Railways											
	Mon-Fri 4am to 4am	£8.50	£9.00	£0.50	5.88%	£785,000	£394,000	£17,000			
	Saturday	£7.00	£7.20	£0.20	2.86%	£94,000	£49,500	£1,000			
	Sunday	£6.50	£6.80	£0.30	4.62%	£86,000	£43,500	£1,000			
	Total Railways					£965,000	£487,000	£19,000	£506,000		
Season Tickets											
	New Town (price per month)	£87.00	£89.00	£2.00	2.30%						
	Blue Badge Holders (Season Ticket, price per Annum)	£41.00	£44.00	£3.00	7.32%						
	Rail (price per month)	£151.00	£160.00	£9.00	5.96%						
	Season Tickets SubTotal					£431,440	£176,000	£8,800	£184,800		
	New Town GRAND TOTAL					£3,544,440	£2,136,000	£78,100	£2,214,100		
Old Town:											
Primett Rd North											
	Monday - Saturday 0600-1600 hours										
	up to one hour	£1.10	£1.10	£0.00	0.00%						
	up to two hours	£1.50	£1.50	£0.00	0.00%						
	up to three hours	£1.90	£1.90	£0.00	0.00%						
	More than three hours	£5.00	£5.00	£0.00	0.00%						
Primett Rd South											
	Monday-Friday										
	0600-1600hrs	£2.90	£2.90	£0.00	0.00%						
	1600-0600hrs	£0.50	£0.50	£0.00	0.00%						
Church Lane North											
	Saturday 0600-1600:										
	up to one hour	£1.10	£1.10	£0.00	0.00%						
	up to two hours	£1.50	£1.50	£0.00	0.00%						
	up to three hours	£1.90	£1.90	£0.00	0.00%						
	More than three hours	£2.70	£2.70	£0.00	0.00%						
	Saturday 4pm-Monday 6am	£0.50	£0.50	£0.00	0.00%						
Season Tickets											
	Mon-Sat 0600-1600hrs										
	up to one hour	£1.10	£1.10	£0.00	0.00%						
	up to two hours	£1.50	£1.50	£0.00	0.00%						
	up to three hours	£1.90	£1.90	£0.00	0.00%						
	More than three hours	£2.70	£2.70	£0.00	0.00%						
	Saturday 4pm-Monday 6am	free	free		0.00%						
	Old Town (price per month)	£46.00	£46.00	£0.00	0.00%						
	Old Town GRAND TOTAL					£163,000	£73,000	£0	£73,000		
Car Parks: Business Tokens/ Commercial Income											
		various	various	£0.00	0.00%	£209,690	£136,000		£136,000	No increase proposed	
Loss of income due to price increase											
			7.75%			-£28,000		-£7,000	-£7,000	Assume 7.75% attrition rate due to economic climate	
TOTAL "All Off Street Car Parks"											
						£3,889,130	£2,345,000	£71,100	£2,416,100		

FEEES AND CHARGES -RECOMMENDED FEE INCREASES FOR 2021/22

APPENDIX C

Service	Fees and Charges for 2021/22	2020/21 Price £	2021/22 Price	Increase £	% Increase	Total Budget 2020/21 £	Rebased Budget for 2021/22 (taking into account estimated improvement in usage)	Income (Reduction) / Increase	Total Budget 2021/22 £	Options considered/Rationale	Date of Price Increase
On Street Parking											
Town Centre	up to 30 mins	£0.60	£0.60	£0.00	0.00%	£188,000	£135,000	£0	£135,000		01 February 2021
	Up to 1 Hour	£1.80	£1.80	£0.00	0.00%						
	Up to 2 Hours	£2.70	£2.70	£0.00	0.00%						
	Up to 3 Hours	£3.50	£3.50	£0.00	0.00%						
	Up to 4 Hours	£4.50	£4.50	£0.00	0.00%						
	Up to 5 Hours	£6.00	£6.00	£0.00	0.00%						
	Over 5 hours	£10.00	£10.00	£0.00	0.00%						
Corey's Mill Lane	up to 2 hrs £1.70 up to 3 hrs (max stay) £2.20	see description	no change		0.00%	£274,600	£274,600	£0	£274,600		
On Street Parking Total						£462,600	£409,600	£0	£409,600		
Street Naming/Numbering											
Various Options, some examples shown here	First Dwelling Numbering	£100.00	£105.00	£5.00	5.00%	£9,000		£400	£9,400		
	Next ten dwellings (per dwelling)	£53.00	£56.00	£3.00	5.66%						
	Naming of new street	£202.00	£212.00	£10.00	4.95%						
	Commercial numbering first unit	£265.00	£278.00	£13.00	4.91%						
	Commercial numbering further units	£132.00	£139.00	£7.00	5.30%						
External Works (e.g. Other LAs)											
Examples of Hourly Charge out rate for staff time (VAT to be added)	Engineering Services Manager	£57.42	£63.10	£5.68	9.89%	£19,410		£1,000	£20,410		
	Principal Engineer	£53.06	£58.30	£5.24	9.88%						
	Traffic & Parking Enforcement Manager	£49.95	£55.00	£5.05	10.11%						
	Engineer	£39.60	£43.50	£3.90	9.85%						
	Inspector	£37.45	£41.20	£3.75	10.01%						
Town Centre Charges											
Street Hoarding Licences	Hoarding/Scaffold Licence (per week/100m run)	£44.00	£48.00	£4.00	9.09%	£3,520		£100	£3,620		
	Crane Licence	£2,083.00	£2,187.00	£104.00	4.99%						
	Skip Licence (per fortnight)	£39.00	£41.00	£2.00	5.13%						
On Street Parking											
Parking Permits (e.g. Burymead) (selected example charges shown)	H Bar Marking Application fee	£0.00	£30.00	£30.00	4.55%	£20,000		£800	£20,800		
	H Bar Marking Fee	£110.00	£85.00	-\$25.00							
	First Permit	£56.00	£56.00	£0.00	0.00%						
	Second Permit	£82.00	£82.00	£0.00	0.00%						
	Third Permit	£108.00	£108.00	£0.00	0.00%						
20 visitor vouchers	£20.00	£20.00	£0.00	0.00%							
Garages:											
Prices shown are "NET" of VAT. Housing Tenants generally do not pay VAT but other customers do pay VAT, meaning the actual weekly increase for a Category A garage would be 60p. Around 2/3rd of all customers do pay VAT.	Standard Garage (Category A)	£11.80	£12.05	£0.25	2.12%	£3,356,000		£55,000	£3,411,000	Increase of circa 2% in addition to 52 week rent year	01 April 2021 (In line with Housing rent increases)
	Standard Garage (Category B)	£11.60	£11.85	£0.25	2.16%						
	Standard Garage (Category C)	£11.20	£11.45	£0.25	2.23%						
	Premium Sized Garages	n/a	£15.00	new	new						
	Road Facing Garages	£13.40	£13.70	£0.30	2.24%						
Garages Total						£3,356,000	£3,356,000	£55,000	£3,411,000		
Markets:											
		various	various		2.80%	£416,000	£390,000	£6,000	£396,000	Increase 2.8% . Based on the average stall price of £94.96	Revised to 1 July 2021

FEEES AND CHARGES -RECOMMENDED FEE INCREASES FOR 2021/22

APPENDIX C

Service	Fees and Charges for 2021/22	2020/21 Price £	2021/22 Price	Increase £	% Increase	Total Budget 2020/21 £	Rebased Budget for 2021/22 (taking into account estimated improvement in usage)	Income (Reduction) / Increase	Total Budget 2021/22 £	Options considered/Rationale	Date of Price Increase
Markets Total						£416,000	£390,000	£6,000	£396,000		
Bulky Waste:											
	6 Items	£72.00	£75.00	£3.00	4.17%	£82,000		£1,300	£83,300	Pricing to be reviewed re No of items 2021/22	01 February 2021
	Cancellation Fee	£11.00	£11.00	£0.00	0.00%						
Bulky Waste Total						£82,000	£82,000	£1,300	£83,300		
Trade Refuse:	Increase in fees to cover additional increase in disposal costs (example of pricing shown, 1100 litre bin)	£21.40	£22.25	£0.85	3.97%	£713,340		£26,000	£739,340		01 February 2021
Skips:	Increase in fees to cover additional increase in disposal costs (example of pricing shown 6yard skip)	£284.00	£294.00	£10.00	3.52%	£133,800		£4,000	£137,800		01 February 2021
Transfer Station:	Increase in fees to cover additional increase in disposal costs (example of pricing shown, medium panel van)	£195.00	£202.00	£7.00	3.59%	£78,000		£2,000	£80,000		01 February 2021
	Increase disposal cost of waste for Trade, Clinical, Skips and Transfer Station:					-£392,000		-£18,000	-£410,000		01 February 2021
Cemeteries:		various	various			£231,000	£191,000	£27,500	£218,500	Fee Increases would range from 3% to 30% across the board.	01 February 2021
Cemeteries Total						£231,000	£191,000	£27,500	£218,500		
Parks and Open Spaces:		various	various			£120,000		£2,800			
Parks and Open Spaces Total						£120,000	£120,000	£2,800	£122,800		01 February 2021
Allotments:	Price per M ² per year	£0.36	£0.60	£0.24	66.67%	£39,690	£28,690	£16,000	£44,690	16 sites and 100% occupied. waiting list of 300. 2018/19 SBC £0.34/ m2 v WHDC and NHDC £0.44 and £0.50/m2 respectively.	01 February 2021
	100M ² per year	£36.00	£60.00	£24.00	66.67%						
	250M ² per year	£90.00	£150.00	£60.00	66.67%						
Allotments Total						£39,690	£28,690	£16,000	£44,690		
Fishing	Adult Day Ticket	£8.00	£8.20	£0.20	2.50%	£5,000				Benched marked against Stanborough Lakes	01 February 2021
	Junior Day Ticket	£6.00	£6.15	£0.15	2.50%						
	Night Fishing	£18.00	£18.40	£0.40	2.22%						
	Average of above	£10.67	£10.92	£0.25	2.34%						
Fishing Total						£5,000	£5,000	£130	£5,130		
Planning:	Major development					£45,000		£1,500	£46,500		01 February 2021
	100+ residential units, 6000+sqm of commercial /change of use or where the site is 3ha+ PER 100 units /6000sqm/3ha or part of.	£3,700	£3,800	£100	2.70%						
	25-99 residential units, 2001-5999sqm of commercial /change of use or where the site is 1ha-3ha.	£3,700	£3,800	£100	2.70%						
	Development requiring an EIA if not within the above categories	£3,600	£3,700	£100	2.78%						
	Other Major Developments										
	Provision of 10-24 dwellings or where the site is between 0.5ha and 1ha.	£2,175	£2,250	£75	3.45%						
	Change of use or provision of 1001sqm - 2000sqm of commercial floor space or on a site with an area exceeding 1ha.	£2,175	£2,250	£75	3.45%						
	Minor Development										
	Single dwelling/replacement dwelling	£220	£225	£5	2.27%						
	2-5 dwellings	£435	£445	£10	2.30%						
	6-9 dwellings	£1,110	£1,150	£40	3.60%						
	Change of use of buildings/new commercial buildings with a floor space between 0-500sqm or on a site with an area up to 0.5ha.	£220	£225	£5	2.27%						
	Change of use of buildings/new commercial buildings with a floor space between 501sqm and 1000sqm or on a site with an area between 0.5ha and 1 ha	£725	£740	£15	2.07%						

FEEES AND CHARGES -RECOMMENDED FEE INCREASES FOR 2021/22

APPENDIX C

Service	Fees and Charges for 2021/22	2020/21 Price £	2021/22 Price	Increase £	% Increase	Total Budget 2020/21 £	Rebased Budget for 2021/22 (taking into account estimated improvement in usage)	Income (Reduction) / Increase	Total Budget 2021/22 £	Options considered/Rationale	Date of Price Increase
	Householder Domestic extensions, conservatories etc. and alterations to residential properties.	£65	£67	£2	3.08%						
	Specialist Advice Works to listed buildings Developments affecting a conservation area	£155	£159	£4	2.58%						
	Advertisements Per Site	£65	£67	£2	3.08%						
Planning Total						£45,000		£1,500	£46,500		
Hackney Carriages:		various	various			£24,750		£0	£24,750	No increase proposed	01 February 2021
Env Health & Licensing:	Housing Act 2004					£11,750		£140	£11,890	2.5% increase recommended however, most of the income in this budget comes from 5 year licenses (rolling over into budget each year) - therefore,	01 February 2021
	Licence for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO)	£730	£750	£20	2.74%						
	Service of Housing Act Notices	£382	£395	£13	3.40%						
Env Health & Licensing:	Food Premises	various	various			£11,000		£270	£11,270	Cost recovery only; 2.5% increase recommended by Environmental Health	01 February 2021
	Destruction Certificate	£133	£136	£3	2.26%						
	Health Certificate	£108	£111	£3	2.78%						
Env Health & Licensing:	Licensing including: Acupuncture, street trading etc.	various	various			£13,000		£260	£13,260		01 February 2021
Local Land Charges	Residential Property (Con 29)	£63.60	£65.40	£1.80	2.83%						
VAT is PAYABLE on these fees (fees shown is GROSS of VAT) Integra Code = RC110	Residential Property (LLC1)	£17.00	£17.50	£0.50	2.94%						
	Commercial Property and Areas of Land (Con 29)	£82.80	£85.20	£2.40	2.90%						01 February 2021
	Commercial Property and Areas of Land (LLC1)	£22.20	£22.80	£0.60	2.70%						
No VAT is payable for this service	Additional Enquiry	£10.60	£10.90	£0.30	2.83%	£63,600		£1,900	£65,500		
Housing General Fund:	Careline Alarm- private (Shortfall funded from General Fund)	various	various			£124,000		£2,500	£126,500		
Sub Totals						Increase		£202,700			

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

APPENDIX D

GROWTH PROPOSALS & KNOWN BUDGET PRESSURES 2021/22

GF	HRA
£166,966	£46,700
£656,540	£20,460
£823,506	£67,160

Ref No	Name of Service	Description of Growth Proposal	Ongoing (Y/N) or No of	Impact of Growth Proposal on Public/ Customers/ Staff/ Members/Partnerships etc. (include any impact on key corporate programmes/performance indicator measures) .	Potential Timing	£ General Fund Year 1	£ HRA Year 1
REVENUE GROWTH - New Proposals / Services							
G1	SDS	New Commercial Officer post (to help deliver the Cooperative Commercial & Insourcing Strategy - Salary TBC, growth figure assumes inclusion of on-costs)	Y	To provide additional resource to help delivery the new cooperative, commercial and insourcing strategy. This is in addition to the Commercial Manager post.	01 January 2021	£33,000	£22,000
G3	Culture, Wellbeing and Leisure	Mainstream culture post	Y	Delivery of cultural strategy and town deal cultural ambitions i.e. framing of heritage centre, meanwhile use of empty spaces and art installations	2021/22	£50,000	£0
G4	Community Safety	Mainstream No More -Core	Y	Community safety- support for those with multiple and complex needs who are either housed by or present to the council.	2021/22	£37,500	£12,500
G5	Information Governance	Enhanced Information Governance Service. We currently have one role covering statutory responsibilities with regard to Information Governance and Data Protection, including GDPR responsibilities and FOI requests. The proposal is to create an additional information Officer (Permanent) There is also a requirement for non-salary costs to cover membership renewals, licenses etc.	Y	Enables SBC to meet statutory responsibilities with regard to Information Governance and Data Protection, including GDPR responsibilities. The current manager's time is taken up with responding to Subject Access Requests and FOI requests, and there is a high risk that we will not meet statutory deadlines. The impact of not resourcing this area is increased risk of: Regulatory enforcement action for non-compliance by the ICO. Monetary penalties and fines of up to €10m for potential breaches of data protection laws Legal claims/class actions for breaches of data protection by customers Adverse impact on service delivery with team members time spent assisting complaint investigations/ appeals regarding miss-handling of personal data Regulatory enforcement action for non-compliance by the ICO. Loss of customer trust and confidence in council's handling of customer information. Adverse publicity from press coverage of complaints and/ or from publication of enforcement action taken by the regulator.	01 April 2021	£28,466	£12,200
G6	Co-operative Neighbourhoods	Provide seed money for CNM for next tranche of wards as no NHB available	Y	Since NHB rules changed there is no funding for the programme so this growth bid provides a small amount of funding to continue the programme	2021/22	£18,000	£0
TOTAL GROWTH OPTIONS						£166,966	£46,700

SERVICE PRESSURES - These are budget pressures in your SDU that you know are aware of over the next 3 years							
G10	SDS	Decreasing market rates for recycling. Current contracted rate not being achieved and due to Covid (possibly Brexit) global market dictating selling prices.	Y	Since setting the budget for 2020/21 the market has dropped for recycling plastics. We were receiving £140 per tonne which dropped to £10 to £20 per tonne and incurring haulage costs. Currently paying £4.72 per tonne for removal following a procurement exercise.	2021/22	£120,000	£0
G11	SDS	Third party tipping revenue into T/S. Budgeted £80k - not able to accept tonnages within licenced capacity	Y	Due to household waste being significantly higher since Covid the capacity for third party tipping at the transfer station no longer viable.	2021/22	£80,000	£0

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

APPENDIX D

GROWTH PROPOSALS & KNOWN BUDGET PRESSURES 2021/22

GF	HRA
£166,966	£46,700
£656,540	£20,460
£823,506	£67,160

Ref No	Name of Service	Description of Growth Proposal	Ongoing (Y/N) or No of	Impact of Growth Proposal on Public/ Customers/ Staff/ Members/Partnerships etc. (include any impact on key corporate programmes/performance indicator measures) .	Potential Timing	£ General Fund Year 1	£ HRA Year 1
UPDATED	SDS	Loss of AFM funding due to increased waste	Y	Increased waste volumes being generated and associated increased disposal costs to HCC, are resulting in a drop in AFM payments, which may reduce to zero. The budget was reduced in 2020/21 by £115,000 due to the impact of increased waste disposal, however this is now assumed on-going together with the residual budget of £100,000. (The September MTFs had assumed a £30,000 reduction based on the County Council's saving target on the AFM model).	2021/22	£185,000	£0
G13	SDS	Cemetery income loss	Y	Fees were increased in the preceding years, however this level of income has not been achieved for 2020/21. The fee increases for 2021/22 are targeted towards the demand in services now being experienced and this will be monitored closely during 2021/22.	2021/22	£40,000	£0
NEW	SDS	Parks and Open spaces income	Y	The level of fee income for 2019/20 was £10,000 below the budgeted amount and the trend is continuing. The budget had been increased in prior years based on an savings option to increase use in pavilions (£2,000). The budget has been adjusted to reflect more realistic levels of income at £118,000	2021/22	£10,000	£0
G14	Finance & Estates	Loss of housing Benefit overpayments due to trfs to UC	Y	The Council can keep 100% of overpayments raised alongside 40% of claimable through the subsidy system. However, the level of overpayments is reducing due to the impact of the governments real time information from DWP and HMRC so overpayment levels are now lower and in addition claimants are transferring to UC rather than HB.	2021/22	£180,000	£0
G15	ICT	ICT pressures	Y	Unavoidable ICT licensing and upgrade costs. This includes upgrade to the Real Asset Management system used by finance, additional costs for Java licensing, and licensing costs for Robotic Process Automation to support digital transformation	2021/22	£41,540	£20,460
TOTAL SERVICE PRESSURES						£656,540	£20,460
TOTAL GROWTH AND SERVICE						£823,506	£67,160

Equality at Stevenage Borough Council

Stevenage Borough Council as a service provider, employer and community leader is committed to achieving equal opportunities for everyone. We want to deliver services that are fair, accessible and open to everyone who needs them.

Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) are an important part of the process in ensuring that our intention is translated into action. They help to ensure that decisions are made in a fair, transparent and accountable way, considering the needs and the rights of different people in the community.

Based on the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, the EqIA considers the impact on the following groups when making decisions, updating policies and starting new projects:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marital status
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation.

Although non-statutory, the Council has chosen to adopt the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion in considering the impact on people in terms of their social or economic background.

EqIAs also help the Council to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). The Duty states that a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is unlawful under this Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Savings Proposals 2021/22

Prior to their consideration at Executive in December 2020, all savings proposals were reviewed to determine any potential impact on Stevenage residents in terms of their protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. Some of these have no public impact and so have not been subject to any further EqIA.

Where a negative, positive or disproportionate impact is likely, Assistant Directors and other appropriate managers have drafted Brief or Full EqIAs. These have been summarised over the following pages and will inform the recommendations made at Executive on 20/1/2021 and 10/2/2021. Action to further analyse or mitigate the impact on equality groups is identified where appropriate.

The following activity has taken/will take place:

December 2020 – February 2021	EqIAs finalised considering further evidence as necessary
January and February 2021	Consideration of all completed EqIAs at Council meetings

Saving Ref	Saving/Income proposed	Summary of potential impact	Action	Contact Officer
FS1	Reduce Holiday play schemes to pop-up activities similar to the offer throughout Summer 2020.	<p>Full – Positive / Negative Impact</p> <p>Overview This unique service is highly valued by its users and members of the council. These initiatives are part of the wider service review undertaken in 2019/20 which has not yet been able to be implemented due to the pandemic.</p> <p>This will be further augmented by the introduction of an advanced booking system for the three play centres combined with a pay and play system for non-Stevenage residents and professional childminders.</p> <p>Age & Socio-Economic There may be a barrier to access for users who cannot access technology to make an advanced booking. We will introduce a non-mandatory advanced booking system to allow people without the ability to make an advanced booking to still access the service.</p> <p>However, the project will be more reactive and be able to respond to a wider group of young people who would not normally be able to access the service.</p>	<p>1. Define an appropriate user friendly easy to use cost effective advanced booking system and implement. Implement a cashless payment system.</p> <p>2. Stakeholder consultation as part of the 2019/20 delayed Play Review</p>	Rob Gregory/ Geoff Caine
FS3	Cease funding of PCSOs.	<p>Full – Slight Negative Impact</p> <p>Overview This proposal would mean that there are likely to be less PCSOs available in the Community. However, there is</p>	The introduction of the Co-Operative Neighbourhood programme	Rob Gregory/ Sarah Pateman

Saving Ref	Saving/Income proposed	Summary of potential impact	Action	Contact Officer
		<p>significant cross over between the duties of the SBC Neighbourhood Wardens and the PCSOs. This financial security saving is made possible due to the success of this team and is expected to reach further maturity as the Council's Co-operative Neighbourhoods approach becomes fully embedded.</p> <p>A number of other districts across Hertfordshire have ceased funding PCSOs over recent years. This reflects the situation nationally where funding is allocated through Police and Crime Commissioners.</p>		
	<p>Increase allotment fees to breakeven levels. Consider phasing the increase over 2/3 years.</p>	<p>Full – Positive / Negative Impact</p> <p>Overview Increases to the allotment charges will ensure that this service remains available to residents, whilst ensuring that it is not subsidised as is currently the case. Allotment charges will be increased gradually over two years and concessions of 25% will be available to those residents who qualify for means tested benefits.</p> <p>Increases to fees would see Stevenage charge similar fees to nearby local authorities. Feedback from plot holders indicates that Stevenage has one of the best allotment services in Hertfordshire</p> <p>Socio-Economic / Age Whenever fees and charges are raised, this is the main category that is impacted. Despite a rise in costs, concessions</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Raise awareness of concessions available to those on means tested benefits. 2. Undertake consultation with plot holders to determine levels of satisfaction with the allotment service, including fees and charges. 3. Monitor level of waiting list and the number of plots given up following the increase, and compare with previous years. 	<p>Steve Dupoy/ Julia Hill</p>

Saving Ref	Saving/Income proposed	Summary of potential impact	Action	Contact Officer
		<p>are available for those on means tested benefits. Some plot holders with multiple plots may have to reduce the area of land they allotment garden at present and those plot who can no longer afford their plots may have to give them up.</p>		
FS13	Cease the community transport provision in entirety.	<p>Full – Negative / Unequal Impact</p> <p>Overview The service is highly valued by its users as it enables them to socialise with others outside of their homes. However, there are no other district councils in Hertfordshire that provide a similar service relying instead on services provided by North Herts CVS and HCC Dial a Ride.</p> <p>Age The primary user group are older people; this local service will no longer be made available to them. We can signpost existing users to other local services.</p> <p>Disability Many of the current users have health issues that inhibit them from social events outside of their homes. The loss of service could adversely affect their general health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Socio-Economic As the service is not means tested we cannot define any differential impact on users. However, this is likely to have a disproportionate impact upon those of greater socio-economic need.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consultation with stakeholders. Work with Stevenage & North Herts CVS and HCC Dial a ride to fully understand how those services can mitigate the loss of SBC Community Transport Service 2. From information derived from other partners and the community, design a leaflet/download to be distributed to both existing and potential users outlining the services available to them. Ensure every client is contacted and talked through options. 	Rob Gregory/ Geoff Caine

Saving Ref	Saving/Income proposed	Summary of potential impact	Action	Contact Officer
FS23	CSC and Customer-Focus redesign and efficiencies.	<p>Full – Unequal Impact</p> <p>Overview Overall the proposal will not have negative impacts as we aim to maintain current service levels. Customers will still be able to access services over the telephone or access services face to face.</p> <p>If the Council failed to provide non-digital means of engaging with it, that could be to the detriment of people who do not have the skills or capabilities to engage online which may overlap with many of the protected characteristics.</p> <p>Age Research evidence from ONS data suggests that older people tend to be less digitally active, and potentially at risk of digital exclusion, although the picture is complex and social class / income can be a relevant factor too.</p> <p>If the Council stopped providing telephone or face to face support that could be to the detriment of those older people who do not have the skills or capabilities to engage online.</p> <p>Disability People with some types of disability may have difficulties using or making the most of digital technologies. These people may benefit less from enhanced digital channels.</p> <p>Socio-Economic</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Measure the take up of digital services by different groups and use the insight to design future services. 2. Ensure the customer service model supports those who cannot benefit from digital channels by providing alternatives. 	Ruth Luscombe/ Greg Arends

Saving Ref	Saving/Income proposed	Summary of potential impact	Action	Contact Officer
		<p>Low income, social class and social housing tenancy have been identified in some research as indicators of whether someone is likely to have the competence, confidence and capability to make the most of digital technologies.</p>		
FS25	Print Room	<p>Brief – Unequal Impact</p> <p>Overview This saving involves the closing of the print room and the putting into place of alternative arrangements including paperless committee meetings, digital alternatives and directing work through Docmail print service.</p> <p>Age Digital alternatives to printed documents may disproportionately impact on older people. Research evidence from ONS data suggests that older people tend to be less digitally active, and potentially at risk of digital exclusion, although the picture is complex and social class / income can be a relevant factor too.</p> <p>Socio-Economic Digital alternatives to printed documents may disproportionately impact some socio economic groups. Low income, social class and social housing tenancy have been identified in some research as indicators of whether someone is likely to have the competence, confidence and capability to make the most of digital technologies.</p> <p>If the Council failed to provide non-digital means of engaging</p>	Complete Full EQIA assessment.	Ruth Luscombe

Saving Ref	Saving/Income proposed	Summary of potential impact	Action	Contact Officer
		with it, that could be to the detriment of people who do not have the skills or capabilities to engage online.		
FS28	Reduce LCB costs budgets and convene with Neighbourhood areas	<p>Full – Positive / Negative / Unequal Impact</p> <p>Overview LCB funding will be reduced to £1500 from £2500 for each Ward Member from the new financial year (21/22 budget). This means that LCB funding is still available, judged by the same criteria that it has been in previous years. However, as funding is reduced this may impact on the current offer available and impede new activities from commencing.</p> <p>The application process supports equal opportunities in the way it is administered and how decisions are made as to whose application is approved.</p> <p>Age Previous LCB applications have often focussed around supporting the older population and the very young. It is apparent that both these groups disproportionately benefit from the funding.</p> <p>Disability Less than 10% of applications last year were from groups supporting this protected characteristic. This suggests they are less likely to benefit from the funding in its current format.</p> <p>Sex About 85% of LCB applications are currently made by women,</p>	To promote LCB funding wider and to provide Community Development support to consider other sources of funding.	Rob Gregory/ Jane Konopka

Saving Ref	Saving/Income proposed	Summary of potential impact	Action	Contact Officer
		<p>suggesting that this group may be disproportionately affected by a reduction in available funding.</p> <p>Socio-Economic Individuals with greater socio-economic need are more likely to benefit from the LCB process, although they may not submit applications themselves, the organisations that do often cater for individuals in this group.</p>		
<p>FS38 FS41</p>	<p>Charge garages for 52 weeks, rather than 50.</p> <p>Increase on average the garage rents for Category A-C by £0.25/week and road facing garages by £0.30/week.</p> <p>Increase £2 VCS charge to £2.25.</p>	<p>Full – Negative Impact</p> <p>Overview Changes to charging for garages from April 2021 onwards. Transition to charging for 52 weeks per year (as opposed to 50 weeks per year) plus a 2% increase in garage charges, equating to an overall 6% increase in fees in real terms. Changes to garages charging for the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) from £2 per week to £2.25 per week.</p> <p>Benchmarking information shows that with the new pricing SBC will be middle of the range for garage charging. Dacorum council charge £15.78 per week over 52 weeks of the year (£16.86 if in one of their ‘high demand’ areas), Luton council £12.00 over 52 weeks of the year and Brentwood council £11.74 over 52 weeks of the year.</p> <p>Disability Residents with disabilities are placed at the top of the garages waiting list after 6 months and can select from available garages at this stage.</p>	<p>1. Offer cheaper garages where possible to tenants who do not wish to incur additional charges.</p> <p>2. Offer flexible payment plans to clear arrears</p> <p>3. Monitor feedback from VCS organisations on the impact of increased charges.</p>	<p>Steve Dupoy/ Nadia Capuano</p>

Saving Ref	Saving/Income proposed	Summary of potential impact	Action	Contact Officer
		<p>Socio-Economic</p> <p>The changes to pricing may impact on those who are unemployed or who have seen their income reduced; this figure is likely to be higher than in recent times due to the impact of Covid-19.</p> <p>Despite these increases to charges, a number of mitigating factors have already been considered. These include the offer of cheaper garages to those seeking to terminate their tenancy and the offer of bubble garages for storage options. Payment plans are also offered as a temporary measure to those that are struggling to pay garage rentals.</p> <p>There is likely to be a low negative impact on VCS as a result of the increase in their pricing as this equates to 25p extra per week or £13 per year, which is lower in monetary terms than the increase on the majority of the garage stock.</p>		
FS40	Relocate VCS garages to lower demand areas.	<p>Brief – Neutral Impact</p> <p>Overview</p> <p>SBC’s Conditions of Tenancy state that VCS organisations occupying high demand garages are ‘required and agree to transfer to an area of low demand’. This is applicable to 47 organisations.</p> <p>This proposal does not reduce the number of available VCS garages available, nor does it prevent organisations from registering on the waiting list.</p>	Monitoring feedback from VCS organisations following proposal of move into low-demand garages.	Steve Dupoy/ Nadia Capuano

Saving Ref	Saving/Income proposed	Summary of potential impact	Action	Contact Officer
		<p>Tenants will be moved to garages as close to their existing garage as possible to minimise disruption.</p> <p>Age Older members of VCS organisations may find it more difficult to move items into a different garage.</p> <p>Disability Disabled members of VCS organisations may find it more difficult to move items into a different garage.</p>		
FS43	Reduce Professional Training Budget	<p>Brief – Unknown / Neutral Impact</p> <p>Overview This proposed saving involves the reduction of the professional training budget. Where possible professional qualifications would be paid for by the apprenticeship levy.</p> <p>Currently no workforce information is monitored on the take up of learning and development opportunities by protected characteristic group.</p> <p>However, learning and development opportunities are available and taken up by all staff regardless of their background. In response to the Covid pandemic more learning and development offers are available virtually.</p>	Record protected characteristics data on staff completing learning and development courses	Clare Davies/ Kirsten Frew

Saving Ref	Saving/Income proposed	Summary of potential impact	Action	Contact Officer
FS44	Reduce Graduate Training Budget.	<p>Brief – Insignificant Impact</p> <p>Overview This proposed saving involves the reduction of the graduate training budget. The number of employees impacted by the savings is less than 5 and therefore the protected characteristics have not identified in the EQIA for reasons of anonymity.</p> <p>However, all graduates at SBC are from the National Local development Government Scheme and have a full learning and programme.</p>		Clare Davies/ Kirsten Frew
FS45	Stop taking cash payments for Car Parks, depot and CSC ATM.	<p>Brief – Equal Impact</p> <p>Overview We know that Cash represented only 1.17% of payments collected last year and alternative means are available for all services. This saving proposes that the council stop collecting cash in order to support financial security.</p> <p>We do not know who pays for car parking in cash. However there are a number of alternatives, including card for car parks and phone payments for on street parking.</p> <p>Socio-Economic Those small minorities of people who may not have a bank account may be negatively impacted. Cash payments which would have been made to Customer Services can still be made via the Post Office.</p>	Keep payment options under review in response to customer feedback	Ruth Luscombe

Saving Ref	Saving/Income proposed	Summary of potential impact	Action	Contact Officer
FS19	Combine the Residents and Star Surveys	<p>Brief – Positive / Negative / Unequal Impact</p> <p>Overview This proposal suggests combining the Town-wide Resident Survey and the Council Tenant Satisfaction Survey (STAR). There are also plans to undertake other complementary community engagement activities.</p> <p>Age - Older People It will not be possible within a combined, shorter survey to ask specific additional questions to Independent Living Scheme tenants, and the number of responses from these tenants will be lower. This may be mitigated through a separate engagement activity.</p> <p>Age - Younger People As the Resident Survey is targeted at householders, the profile of respondents is inherently older than the general resident population. By undertaking other engagement activity specifically targeted at younger people, the views of this group will be better captured.</p> <p>Sex/Age/Ethnic Origin/Disability/Marital & Working Status</p> <p>The surveys collect information in respect of sex, age, ethnic origin, disability, marital status and working status. This enables some analysis of the profile of tenants and residents to be undertaken and enables significant differences to be identified.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish the revised Resident/STAR survey sampling/questionnaire approach 2. Develop an engagement plan incorporating both the Resident/STAR survey and other engagement activities 	Rob Gregory/ Katrina Shirley

Saving Ref	Saving/Income proposed	Summary of potential impact	Action	Contact Officer
		<p>However, all results are subject to sampling tolerances and not all differences are statistically significant. By complementing the surveys with a range of focused engagement activities, a greater diversity of views can be captured.</p> <p>Religion or Belief/Gender Reassignment /Sexual Orientation</p> <p>Previous surveys have not analysed results in relation to religion, gender reassignment and sexual orientation. Plans to undertake further engagement activities will provide the opportunity to capture the views of these protected characteristic groups.</p>		
Fees and Charges	Increase in cemeteries fees and charges.	<p>Full – Negative / Unequal Impact</p> <p>Overview</p> <p>Increases in fees and charges related to burials will likely result in some disproportionate impacts to several of the protected characteristic groups.</p> <p>However, alternatives are in place that would offer those groups some mitigation against these changes.</p> <p>Socio-Economic</p> <p>Increased charges will impact on ability to pay for service for some users; this is likely to disproportionately affect users of a lower socio-economic group. However, the council offers a</p>	Continue to monitor impact of charges on service and numbers of services being undertaken	Steve Dupoy/ Lloyd Walker

Saving Ref	Saving/Income proposed	Summary of potential impact	Action	Contact Officer
		range of interment options of differing fees to ensure the services are inclusive to all including the new Sanctum product range. This product is a more affordable offering compared to burial or interment options.		
FS6-FS7	Grassland management	<p>Full – Positive / Neutral Impact</p> <p>Overview Residents will still be able to access public spaces due to pathways being cut through meadow grasslands.</p> <p>Parks are still able to be used by all residents, at no charge. There are no further barriers to entry for residents due to these changes.</p> <p>Disability Paths cut through meadows will be wide enough to ensure that disabled access is still possible.</p> <p>Socio-Economic The parks are freely open to all members of the community.</p> <p>Parks have good public transport links through bus routes, cycle tracks and pedestrian footpaths.</p>	Implement interpretation boards to explain why, how, and the benefits of managing meadow grassland in the parks. Signage will be designed to be as inclusive as possible for all Stevenage residents and visitors	Steve Dupoy/ Julia Hill

Full Equality Impact Assessment

For a policy, project, service or other decision that is new, changing or under review

What is being assessed?		FS1 – Pop up Play and advanced bookings plus cashless payment systems in play.			
Lead Assessor	Geoff Caine			Assessment team	Geoff Caine Diane Wenham
Start date	9 November 2020	End date	31 March 2021		
When will the EqlA be reviewed?	Monthly				

Page 60

Who may be affected by it?	Young people, families with children, professional childminders, people who use the service who do not reside in Stevenage. Two summer playschemes in Symonds Green and Bedwell
What are the key aims of it?	The delivery of pop up play schemes in the summer school holidays within our parks and town centre, this will provide opportunities for a wider group of young people to access play as opposed to the two fixed locations where pop up play was previously provided. The introduction of an advanced booking system for the three play centres combined with a pay and play system for non-Stevenage residents and professional childminders will aid us in organising staffing resources, primarily deliver the service to Stevenage based young people and derive a small but new income stream.

What positive measures are in place (if any) to help fulfil our legislative duties to:					
Remove discrimination & harassment	Current Corporate policy on Equality and Diversity	Promote equal opportunities	Current Corporate policy on Equality and Diversity	Encourage good relations	Current Corporate policy on Equality and Diversity

What sources of data / information are you using to inform your assessment?	Current usage data, unique number of users per centre, term and non-term time per annum.
---	--

In assessing the potential impact on people, are there any overall comments that you would like to make?	This unique service is highly valued by its users and members of the council, These initiatives are part of the wider service review undertaken in 2019\20 which has not yet been able to be implemented due to the pandemic as the centres have not been open since March 2020. The review will allow the play service to provide services where it is shown there is most demand and whilst reducing the overall cost to the council.
--	---

Evidence and impact assessment

Explain the potential impact and opportunities it could have for people in terms of the following characteristics, where applicable:

Age					
Positive impact	The project will be more reactive and be able to respond to a wider group of young people who would not normally access the service	Negative impact	The fixed pop up play offer at Symonds Green and Bedwell may reduce the opportunities for play in those areas.	Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		Due to the lockdown we have not been able to implement to new operating model as defined in the play review, however we have been able to trial pop up play in our parks within the summer albeit on a limited basis.			
What opportunities are there to promote	The play service will promote of its activities to ensure equality	What do you still need to find out? Include in	The service needs to reopen to test the new operating model and new		

equality and inclusion?	and inclusion for access to its services.	actions (last page)	technology needs to be implemented, e.g. advanced booking system and cashless payment systems.
-------------------------	---	---------------------	--

Disability e.g. physical impairment, mental ill health, learning difficulties, long-standing illness					
Positive impact	The service is open to all young people with disabilities.	Negative impact	Young people in Symonds Green and Bedwell areas may not be able to access pop up play or play centres.	Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		Due to the lockdown we have not been able to implement to new operating model as defined in the play review, however we have been able to trial pop up play in our parks within the summer albeit on a limited basis.			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	The play service will promote of its activities to ensure equality and inclusion for access to its services.	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	The service needs to reopen to test the new operating model and new technology needs to be implemented, e.g. advanced booking system and cashless payment systems.		

Gender reassignment					
Positive impact	The service is open to all young people.	Negative impact	Young people in Symonds Green and Bedwell areas may not be able to access pop up play or play centres.	Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this		No evidence to support negative differing impact on gender reassignment			

assessment			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	The play service will promote of its activities to ensure equality and inclusion for access to its services.	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	The service needs to reopen to test the new operating model and new technology needs to be implemented, e.g. advanced booking system and cashless payment systems.

Marriage or civil partnership			
Positive impact		Negative impact	Unequal impact
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		No evidence to support negative differing impact on civil partnerships	
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Pregnancy & maternity			
Positive impact	The service is open to all young people within Stevenage.	Negative impact	Unequal impact
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		No evidence to support negative differing impact on pregnancy or maternity.	
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Race					
Positive impact	The project will be more reactive and be able to respond to a wider group of young people who would not normally access the service	Negative impact	Young people in Symonds Green and Bedwell areas may not be able to access pop up play or play centres.	Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		No evidence to support negative differing impact on race.			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	The play service will promote of its activities to ensure equality and inclusion for access to its services.	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	The service needs to reopen to test the new operating model and new technology needs to be implemented, e.g. advanced booking system and cashless payment systems.		

Religion or belief					
Positive impact	The project will be more reactive and be able to respond to a wider group of young people who would not normally access the service	Negative impact	Young people in Symonds Green and Bedwell areas may not be able to access pop up play or play centres.	Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		No evidence to support negative differing impact on religion or belief.			

What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	The play service will promote of its activities to ensure equality and inclusion for access to its services.	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	The service needs to reopen to test the new operating model and new technology needs to be implemented, e.g. advanced booking system and cashless payment systems.
---	--	--	--

Sex					
Positive impact	The project will be more reactive and be able to respond to a wider group of young people who would not normally access the service	Negative impact		Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		No evidence to support negative differing impact on sex.			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	The play service will promote of its activities to ensure equality and inclusion for access to its services.	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	The service needs to reopen to test the new operating model and new technology needs to be implemented, e.g. advanced booking system and cashless payment systems.		

Sexual orientation e.g. straight, lesbian / gay, bisexual					
Positive impact	The project will be more reactive and be able to respond to a	Negative impact		Unequal impact	

	wider group of young people who would not normally access the service				
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		No evidence to support negative differing impact on sexual orientation.			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	The play service will promote of its activities to ensure equality and inclusion for access to its services.	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	The service needs to reopen to test the new operating model and new technology needs to be implemented, e.g. advanced booking system and cashless payment systems.		

Socio-economic¹ e.g. low income, unemployed, homelessness, caring responsibilities, access to internet, public transport users, social value in procurement					
Positive impact	The project will be more reactive and be able to respond to a wider group of young people who would not normally access the service	Negative impact	There may be a barrier to access for users who cannot access technology to make an advanced booking. We will introduce a non-mandatory advanced booking system to allow people without the ability to make an advanced booking to still access the service.	Unequal impact	

¹Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

			Users within the Symonds Green and Bedwell areas may not be able to afford or get access to transport to other play services within the town.		
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		Previous usage of the schemes at Symonds Green and Bedwell and the limited pop up play schemes with provided during the pandemic. Without an advanced booking system we have not be able to determine usage in advance the team therefore are staffing the facilities based on previous usage which can sometimes lead to over or understaffing of schemes. A new system will allow us to staff facilities more efficiently and economically. The payment system for non-residents and professional child minders will generate a small amount of income or deter those groups from not attending. We cannot determine at this stage the defined impact of this project on them until the service re-opens.			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	The play service will promote its activities to ensure equality and inclusion for access to its services. We will promote the service changes in an effective manner which will include a programme of educational initiatives on how to use the advanced booking systems	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	Further detailed investigations on the scope of NHCVS & HCC Dial a ride to provide a similar capacity and cost effective service.		

Other

please feel free to consider the potential impact on people in any other contexts

Positive impact		Negative impact		Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

What are the findings of any consultation with:

Staff?	Staffs have been fully involved in this project through the play review undertaken in 2019\20.	Residents?	We will consult with users, families and local residents once the play service re opens and include an educational programme on how to use the advanced booking system.
Voluntary & community sector?	We will consult with the voluntary and community sectors once the play service has reopened. As an integral part of the play review we will promote the availability of the play centres to be used by local groups outside of play service operating times this will increase occupancy and generate a small amount of income.	Partners?	We will consult with partners once the play service has reopened. As an integral part of the play review we will promote the availability of the play centres to be used by local groups outside of play service operating times this will increase occupancy and generate a small amount of income. We would encourage or partners to also promote this to groups that they work with.
Other stakeholders?	We will consult with key stakeholders once the play service has reopened.		

Overall conclusion & future activity

Explain the overall findings of the assessment and reasons for outcome (please choose one) :	
1. No inequality, inclusion issues or opportunities to further improve have been identified	
Negative / unequal impact, barriers to inclusion or improvement opportunities identified	2b. Continue as planned

Detail the actions that are needed as a result of this assessment and how they will help to remove discrimination & harassment, promote equal opportunities and / or encourage good relations :				
Action	Will this help to remove, promote and / or encourage?	Responsible officer	Deadline	How will this be embedded as business as usual?
Define an appropriate user friendly easy to use cost effective advanced booking system and implement. Implement a cashless payment system.	Easy to use accessible software which is free for the user can generate considerable interest and in turn usage of facilities. This will include an educational pice of the usage of the software for service users.	Geoff Caine	April 2020	Staff will be trained and we will be heavily promoting the advanced booking system. Pop up play is a model staff are well versed in delivering
Stakeholder consultation as part of the 2019/20 delayed Play Review	Enable a feedback mechanism for service users to help iterate upon the current model and improve performance.	Geoff Caine	November 2021	Once the play service is able to reopen this can be embedded into business as usual by creating a feedback loop with service users.

Approved by Assistant Director: Rob Gregory

Date: 13/11/20

Full Equality Impact Assessment

For a policy, project, service or other decision that is new, changing or under review

What is being assessed?		FS3 – The Funding of PCSOs by SBC			
Lead Assessor	Sarah Pateman/Rob Gregory			Assessment team	Communities and Neighbourhoods
Start date	12/11/2020	End date			
When will the EqlA be reviewed?	N/A				

Who may be affected by it?	Hertfordshire Police
What are the key aims of it?	To meet the council's need for financial security.

What positive measures are in place (if any) to help fulfil our legislative duties to:					
Remove discrimination & harassment	N/A	Promote equal opportunities	N/A	Encourage good relations	Maintaining the council's Neighbourhood Warden team to maintain community relations and provide community reassurance. The council also

					provides a reporting centre for Hate Crime and has trained officers to address forms of hate crime witnessed.
--	--	--	--	--	---

What sources of data / information are you using to inform your assessment?	A number of other districts across Hertfordshire have ceased funding PCSOs over recent years. This reflects the situation nationally where funding is allocated through Police and Crime Commissioners.
---	---

In assessing the potential impact on people, are there any overall comments that you would like to make?	<p>The council does not receive performance data on the impact of the funding provided to Hertfordshire Constabulary.</p> <p>There is significant cross over between the duties of the SBC Neighbourhood Wardens and the PCSOs provided by the Hertfordshire Constabulary. This financial security necessity is made possible due to the success of this team and is expected to reach further maturity as the Council's Co-operative Neighbourhoods approach becomes fully embedded.</p>
--	---

Evidence and impact assessment

Explain the potential impact and opportunities it could have for people in terms of the following characteristics, where applicable:

Age					
Positive impact		Negative impact	There may be less	Unequal impact	

			PCSOs available in the community		
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		The OPCC office have informed us that there are now more Police Officers/PCSO than there were in the last financial year			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	Working in the community through Communities and Neighbourhood Officers especially through the Co-Operative Neighbourhood model		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	N/A	

Disability e.g. physical impairment, mental ill health, learning difficulties, long-standing illness					
Positive impact		Negative impact	There may be less PCSOs available in the community	Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		The OPCC office have informed us that there are now more Police Officers/PCSO than there were in the last financial year			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	Working in the community through Communities and Neighbourhood Officers especially through the Co-Operative Neighbourhood model		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	N/A	

Gender reassignment					
Positive impact		Negative impact	There may be less PCSOs available in the	Unequal impact	

			community		
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		The OPCC office have informed us that there are now more Police Officers/PCSO than there were in the last financial year			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	Working in the community through Communities and Neighbourhood Officers especially through the Co-Operative Neighbourhood model		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Marriage or civil partnership					
Positive impact		Negative impact		Unequal impact	No Affect
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Pregnancy & maternity					
Positive impact		Negative impact	There may be less PCSOs available in the community	Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		The OPCC office have informed us that there are now more Police Officers/PCSO than there were in the last financial year			
What opportunities are there to promote	Working in the community through Communities and		What do you still need to find out? Include in		

equality and inclusion?	Neighbourhood Officers especially through the Co-Operative Neighbourhood model	actions (last page)	
-------------------------	--	---------------------	--

Race					
Positive impact		Negative impact	There may be less PCSOs available in the community	Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		The OPCC office have informed us that there are now more Police Officers/PCSO than there were in the last financial year			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	Working in the community through Communities and Neighbourhood Officers especially through the Co-Operative Neighbourhood model		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Religion or belief					
Positive impact		Negative impact	There may be less PCSOs available in the community	Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		The OPCC office have informed us that there are now more Police Officers/PCSO than there were in the last financial year			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	Working in the community through Communities and Neighbourhood Officers		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

	especially through the Co-Operative Neighbourhood model		
--	---	--	--

Sex					
Positive impact		Negative impact	There may be less PCSOs available in the community	Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		The OPCC office have informed us that there are now more Police Officers/PCSO than there were in the last financial year			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	The OPCC office have informed us that there are now more Police Officers/PCSO than there were in the last financial year		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Sexual orientation e.g. straight, lesbian / gay, bisexual					
Positive impact		Negative impact	There may be less PCSOs available in the community	Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		The OPCC office have informed us that there are now more Police Officers/PCSO than there were in the last financial year			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	The OPCC office have informed us that there are now more Police Officers/PCSO than there were in the last financial year		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Socio-economic² e.g. low income, unemployed, homelessness, caring responsibilities, access to internet, public transport users, social value in procurement					
Positive impact		Negative impact	There may be less PCSOs available in the community	Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		The OPCC office have informed us that there are now more Police Officers/PCSO than there were in the last financial year			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	The OPCC office have informed us that there are now more Police Officers/PCSO than there were in the last financial year		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Other please feel free to consider the potential impact on people in any other contexts					
Positive impact		Negative impact		Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

²Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

What are the findings of any consultation with:

Staff?	This may have an indirect impact on Police staff.	Residents?	The impact should be mitigated by continuing to have uniformed neighbourhood officers available in neighbourhoods. Consultation with residents should be a natural by-product of the Co-operative Neighbourhoods model. This should let us factor in the impacts of this change over time.
Voluntary & community sector?	N/A	Partners?	N/A
Other stakeholders?	N/A		

Overall conclusion & future activity

Explain the overall findings of the assessment and reasons for outcome (please choose one):		
1. No inequality, inclusion issues or opportunities to further improve have been identified		
Negative / unequal impact, barriers to inclusion or improvement opportunities identified	2a. Adjustments made	2a
	2b. Continue as planned	
	2c. Stop and remove	

Detail the actions that are needed as a result of this assessment and how they will help to remove discrimination & harassment, promote equal opportunities and / or encourage good relations :				
Action	Will this help to remove, promote and / or encourage?	Responsible officer	Deadline	How will this be embedded as business as usual?
The Introduction of the Co-Operative Neighbourhood programme	Encourage positive engagement with the community	Rob Gregory		At the RAG meetings and as part of the Co-Operative Neighbourhood programme

Approved by Assistant Director: Rob Gregory
Date: 13/11/20

Full Equality Impact Assessment

For a policy, project, service or other decision that is new, changing or under review

What is being assessed?		FS5 – Above Inflation Increase in Allotment Fees & Charges	
Lead Assessor	Julia Hill		Assessment team
Start date	December 2020	End date	
When will the EqIA be reviewed?	November 2021		

Page 79

Who may be affected by it?	Allotment plot holders
What are the key aims of it?	<p>To provide, manage, and let, suitable land to allow local people to grow their own vegetables, fruit and flower produce. The allotments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide a sustainable food source ▪ Promote healthy living for all age groups ▪ Provide an educational resource ▪ Provide informal access to nature and wildlife <p>However, the allotment service is subsidised. By increasing the allotment charges by 50% it will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • remove the need for all Stevenage residents to subsidise a service benefiting a relatively small number of people; • cover the additional cost associated with the allotment administration management returning to SBC.

--	--

What positive measures are in place (if any) to help fulfil our legislative duties to:					
Remove discrimination & harassment	Concessions available to those on means tested benefits	Promote equal opportunities	Allotments available to all Stevenage residents.	Encourage good relations	

What sources of data / information are you using to inform your assessment?	<p>Benchmarking Data for 2020:</p> <p>Dacorum: £0.24/m²</p> <p>East Herts: £0.15/m²</p> <p>Hertsmere: £0.24/m²</p> <p>North Herts: £0.58/m²</p> <p>St Albans: £0.19/m²</p> <p>Stevenage: £0.36/m²</p> <p>Watford: £0.27/m²</p> <p>Welwyn Hatfield: £0.46/m²</p> <p>Feedback from plot holders indicates that Stevenage has one of the best allotment services in Hertfordshire, following investment resulting from disposal of allotment land around 2005. Sites provide security fencing, car parking, toilets, water provision.</p>
---	--

In assessing the potential impact on people, are there any overall comments that you would like to make?	<p>The allotment fees and charges will be increased by 50%, however this will be implemented over two years – 2021/22 and 2022/23 – as follows:</p> <p>2020: £0.36/m²</p> <p>2021/22: £0.54/m²</p> <p>2022/23: £0.73/m²</p> <p>Concessions (25%) will be available to those on means tested benefits in accordance with the Council’s Concession Policy The waiting list for an allotment in Stevenage is currently at around 370 people.</p>
--	--

Evidence and impact assessment

Explain the potential impact and opportunities it could have for people in terms of the following characteristics, where applicable:

Age					
Positive impact	Concessions available to those on means tested benefits. If people have to give up plots it makes them available to others on the waiting list.	Negative impact	Some plot holders with multiple plots may have to reduce the area of land they allotment garden at present.	Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		There are currently around 370 on the waiting list for an allotment in Stevenage.			

What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	
---	--	--	--

Disability e.g. physical impairment, mental ill health, learning difficulties, long-standing illness					
Positive impact	None	Negative impact	None	Unequal impact	None
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)			

Gender reassignment					
Positive impact	None	Negative impact	None	Unequal impact	None
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					

What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	
---	--	--	--

Marriage or civil partnership					
Positive impact	None	Negative impact	None	Unequal impact	None
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Pregnancy & maternity					
Positive impact	Concessions available to those on means tested benefits.	Negative impact		Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					

What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)			
Race					
Positive impact	None	Negative impact	None	Unequal impact	None
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)			

Religion or belief					
Positive impact	None	Negative impact	None	Unequal impact	None
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)			

Sex					
Positive impact	None	Negative impact	None	Unequal impact	None
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Sexual orientation e.g. straight, lesbian / gay, bisexual					
Positive impact	None	Negative impact	None	Unequal impact	None
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Socio-economic³ e.g. low income, unemployed, homelessness, caring responsibilities, access to internet, public transport users, social value in procurement					
Positive impact	Concessions available to those on means tested benefits	Negative impact	Some plot holders may have to give up their allotment if they can no longer afford it.	Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		Benchmarking Data for 2020: Dacorum: £0.24/m ² East Herts: £0.15/m ² Hertsmere: £0.24/m ² North Herts: £0.58/m ² St Albans: £0.19/m ² Stevenage: £0.36/m ² Watford: £0.27/m ² Welwyn Hatfield: £0.46/m ²			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	Awareness raising of concessions available to those on means tested benefits	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)			

³Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

Other please feel free to consider the potential impact on people in any other contexts					
Positive impact		Negative impact		Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

What are the findings of any consultation with:

Staff?		Residents?	
Voluntary & community sector?		Partners?	
Other stakeholders?			

Overall conclusion & future activity

Explain the overall findings of the assessment and reasons for outcome (please choose one) :	
1. No inequality, inclusion issues or opportunities to further improve have been identified	

Negative / unequal impact, barriers to inclusion or improvement opportunities identified	2a. Adjustments made			
	2b. Continue as planned	Allotments will remain affordable to the majority of Stevenage residents.		
	2c. Stop and remove			
Detail the actions that are needed as a result of this assessment and how they will help to remove discrimination & harassment, promote equal opportunities and / or encourage good relations :				
Action	Will this help to remove, promote and / or encourage?	Responsible officer	Deadline	How will this be embedded as business as usual?
Raise awareness of concessions available to those on means tested benefits.	Promote equal opportunities	Julia Hill / Joel Gainsford	April 2021	Information provided on the Council's web pages.
Undertake consultation with plot holders to determine levels of satisfaction with the allotment service, including fees and charges.	Encourage good relations	Julia Hill / Joel Gainsford	September 2021	
Monitor level of waiting list and the number of plots given up following the increase, and compare with previous years	Encourage good relations	Julia Hill / Joel Gainsford	April 2022	

Approved by Assistant Director / Strategic Director: Steve Dupoy

Date: 11/11/20

Full Equality Impact Assessment

For a policy, project, service or other decision that is new, changing or under review

What is being assessed?		FS13 – Cessation of Community Transport Service			
Lead Assessor	Geoff Caine			Assessment team	Geoff Caine Diane Wenham
Start date	9 November 2020	End date	31 March 2021		
When will the EqIA be reviewed?	Monthly				

Who may be affected by it?	Staff employed within the service. Service users - loss of service to users
What are the key aims of it?	Cost reduction and the inability to provide a service during the pandemic as the users are classed as vulnerable or Clinically Extremely Vulnerable due to both age and pre-existing health conditions.

What positive measures are in place (if any) to help fulfil our legislative duties to:					
Remove discrimination & harassment	Current Corporate policy on Equality and Diversity	Promote equal opportunities	Current Corporate policy on Equality and Diversity	Encourage good relations	Current Corporate policy on Equality and Diversity

What sources of data / information are you using to inform your assessment?	Current usage data including number attending leisure and community trips, unique number of users, number of leisure and community trips provided per annum. There are no other district councils in Hertfordshire that provide a similar service.
---	--

In assessing the potential impact on people, are there any overall comments that you would like to make?	The service is highly valued by its users as it enables them to socialise with others outside of their homes. The service is not means tested and therefore we are unaware if users could use a less cost effective solution. We also need to investigate what other services transport providers and partners are available to our existing and potential users.
--	---

Evidence and impact assessment

Explain the potential impact and opportunities it could have for people in terms of the following characteristics, where applicable:

Age					
Positive impact	We can signpost existing users to other local services such as Stevenage & North Herts CVS Community Transport Services and HCC Dial a Ride	Negative impact	The primary user group are older people; this local service will no longer be made available to them.	Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		Current user group. Comparisons with other nearby District and Borough Community Transport offerings. Initial appraisal of nearby alternative Community Transport alternatives, including NHCVS & HCC Dial a Ride.			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	Further detailed investigations on the scope of NHCVS & HCC Dial a ride to provide a similar capacity and cost effective service.	

Disability

e.g. physical impairment, mental ill health, learning difficulties, long-standing illness

Positive impact	We can signpost	Negative impact	Many of the current	Unequal impact	
-----------------	-----------------	-----------------	---------------------	----------------	--

	existing users to other local services such as Stevenage & North Herts CVS Community Transport Services and HCC Dial a Ride		users have health issues that inhibit them from social events outside of their homes. The loss of service could adversely affect their general health and wellbeing.		
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		Current user group. Comparisons with other nearby District and Borough Community Transport offerings. Initial appraisal of nearby alternative Community Transport alternatives, including NHCVS & HCC Dial a Ride.			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	Further detailed investigations on the scope of NHCVS & HCC Dial a ride to provide a similar capacity and cost effective service	

Gender reassignment					
Positive impact		Negative impact		Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		No evidence to support negative differing impact on gender reassignment			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Marriage or civil partnership					
Positive impact		Negative impact		Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and		No evidence to support negative differing impact on civil partnerships			

information you used to support this assessment			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Pregnancy & maternity			
Positive impact	Negative impact	Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	No evidence to support negative differing impact on pregnancy or maternity.		
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Race			
Positive impact	Negative impact	Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	No evidence to support negative differing impact on race.		
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Religion or belief			
Positive impact	Negative impact	Unequal impact	

Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		No evidence to support negative differing impact on religion or belief.	
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Sex			
Positive impact		Negative impact	Unequal impact
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		No evidence to support negative differing impact on sex.	
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Sexual orientation e.g. straight, lesbian / gay, bisexual			
Positive impact		Negative impact	Unequal impact
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		No evidence to support negative differing impact on sexual orientation.	
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Socio-economic⁴ e.g. low income, unemployed, homelessness, caring responsibilities, access to internet, public transport users, social value in procurement			
Positive impact	Negative impact	Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	<p>As the service is not means tested we cannot define any differential impact on users other than that some will be able to afford alternative provision and for some an increased cost may be prohibitive. That said there may be local cost effective services available that provide similar services to those currently provided to SBC. This reflects arrangements in other districts where the CVS is relied upon for community transport provision.</p> <p>Comparisons with other nearby District and Borough Community Transport offerings. Initial appraisal of nearby alternative Community Transport alternatives, including NHCVS & HCC Dial a Ride.</p> <p>We currently have two low mileage relatively new vehicles that are used for this service, we could consider selling both or offering either one or both to a partner such as the NHCVS with some caveats such as specific service provision to be provided to Stevenage where there are known areas of need e.g. Douglas Drive.</p>		
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	Further detailed investigations on the scope of NHCVS & HCC Dial a ride to provide a similar capacity and cost effective service.

⁴Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

Other**please feel free to consider the potential impact on people in any other contexts**

Positive impact		Negative impact		Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

What are the findings of any consultation with:

Staff?	Once this proposal has been agreed we will need to enter into consultation with staff	Residents?	Once we have consulted with partners and stakeholders and have a clear idea of what services from alternative suppliers are available we will consult with the existing user base and key user groups who may make use of the community transport services.
Voluntary & community sector?	We would need to identify whether the identified alternative options are providing an adequate service for service users by conducting stakeholder consultation with this group to assess the suitability of this alternate provision	Partners?	We would need to identify whether the identified alternative options are providing an adequate service for service users by conducting stakeholder consultation with this group to assess the suitability of this alternate provision.'

Other stakeholders?	We would need to identify whether the identified alternative options are providing an adequate service for service users by conducting stakeholder consultation with this group to assess the suitability of this alternate provision	
---------------------	---	--

Overall conclusion & future activity

Explain the overall findings of the assessment and reasons for outcome (please choose one) :		
1. No inequality, inclusion issues or opportunities to further improve have been identified		
Negative / unequal impact, barriers to inclusion or improvement opportunities identified		
	2b. Continue as planned	

Detail the actions that are needed as a result of this assessment and how they will help to remove discrimination & harassment, promote equal opportunities and / or encourage good relations :				
Action	Will this help to remove, promote and / or encourage?	Responsible officer	Deadline	How will this be embedded as business as usual?
Consultation with stakeholders. Work with Stevenage & North Herts CVS and HCC Dial a ride to fully understand how those services can mitigate the loss of SBC Community Transport	We will be able to define what local suitable resources are available to existing and potential users of the SBC Community Transport service; this will aid officers in effectively engaging with	Geoff Caine	February 2021	

Service	the client base in a positive way.			
From information derived from other partners and the community design a leaflet\download to be distributed to both existing and potential users outlines the services available to them. Ensure every client is contacted and talked through options.	The leaflet\download will be a valuable information tool for service users to refer to for similar services available within the local area.	Geoff Caine	March 2021	

Approved by Assistant Director: Rob Gregory
Date: 13/11/20

Full Equality Impact Assessment

For a policy, project, service or other decision that is new, changing or under review

What is being assessed?		FS23 – Savings to Customer Service Centre and Customer Focus Service			
Lead Assessor	Ruth Luscombe			Assessment team	
Start date		End date			
When will the EqIA be reviewed?	April 2021				

Page 98

Who may be affected by it?	Council customers (residents, businesses, voluntary organisations and other partners), Customer Service Centre and Customer Focus staff
What are the key aims of it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect current service levels while delivering structural savings by reducing avoidable demand and increasing self-service through digital channels. • Improve customer awareness of digital channels and encourage take up • Enable better value for money customer service and complaints handling provision • Improve consistency and transparency through adopting enhanced digital case management for complaints. • Embed insight and continuous improvement as a core part of the Customer Service model

What positive measures are in place (if any) to help fulfil our legislative duties to:					
Remove discrimination & harassment		Promote equal opportunities	A new website launched in September 2020 to meet government accessibility	Encourage good relations	Improved access channels for customers and staff, digital options available 24/7

		guidelines		
--	--	------------	--	--

What sources of data / information are you using to inform your assessment?	Desk research drawing on a broad range of national (Office Of National Statistics), local survey research (STAR survey 2017, 'Big Knock' 2017), MySociety.org website as well as examples from other councils (Cambridge City Council, Sutton Council)
---	--

In assessing the potential impact on people, are there any overall comments that you would like to make?	<p>Overall the proposal will not have negative impacts as we aim to maintain current service levels as our customers increasingly choose to adopt digital self-service channels. Customers will still be able to access services over the telephone, or where required access services face to face by booking an appointment. This proposal has been enabled by our Connected to our Customers (CTOC) programme which has delivered a new website & digital platform, as well as an online portal for housing, and enhancements to waste processes e.g. for missed collections. An EQIA has been undertaken for this programme and will be kept under review.</p> <p>As technology evolves, (and is adopted by different communities differently) the ways in which people can be excluded or disadvantaged will change too. We will need to review our digital access solutions regularly to ensure changes in requirements are identified and potential solutions agreed on.</p>
--	---

Evidence and impact assessment

Explain the potential impact and opportunities it could have for people in terms of the following characteristics, where applicable:

Age				
Positive impact		Negative impact		Unequal impact
Please evidence the data and		Research evidence from ONS data suggests that older people tend to be less digitally		

<p>information you used to support this assessment</p>	<p>active, and potentially at risk of digital exclusion, although the picture is complex and social class / income can be a relevant factor too.</p> <p>Older people are much less likely to use the internet than other age groups. In 2019, 47% of adults in the UK aged 75 years or over had used the internet in the last 3 months, compared to 91% of all adults.</p> <p>During Housing's 2017 'Big Knock' Tenants Survey, 77% of all respondents reported having access to the internet. (This result compares to STAR survey which indicated 74% of residents using internet at home and further 9% outside of home). Of the 23% that don't have access, 76% were over 65 years old. 48% of over 75 year olds reported to having access to the internet, which is similar to the national statistics.</p> <p>If the Council stopped providing telephone or face to face support that could be to the detriment of those older people who do not have the skills or capabilities to engage online; however this is not an aim of this proposal and we are retaining these more traditional channels.</p>		
<p>What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?</p>		<p>What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)</p>	

Disability e.g. physical impairment, mental ill health, learning difficulties, long-standing illness			
Positive impact		Negative impact	Unequal impact X
<p>Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment</p>	<p>People with some types of disability may have difficulties using or making the most of digital technologies, which may not be adapted to their needs related to their specific disability. These people may benefit less from enhanced digital channels.</p> <p>Disabled people are less likely to use the internet than people without disabilities. In 2019 78% of disabled adults (10 million) in the UK used the internet, which is a massive increase compared with 25% in 2016, but still significantly lower than the all adult rate of 95% (ONS 2019). Although disabled people are reported to be less likely</p>		

		<p>to continue using the internet after they have first accessed it. The difference between internet use in disabled and non-disabled adults was greater in the older age groups. For adults aged 75 years and over, 41% of disabled adults and 54% of non-disabled adults were recent internet users. In comparison, there was only a small difference in recent internet use for disabled and non-disabled adults in the 16 to 24 age group; 98% of disabled adults and 99% of non-disabled adults in this age group were recent internet users.</p> <p>There are a number of tools (software and hardware) available now to make that more possible, we continue through the CTOC programme to explore their feasibility and future implementation. The Council also plans to continue to provide assisted digital approaches and, where necessary for those who cannot engage digitally, more traditional channels or routes through which people with these characteristics can engage with us.</p>	
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Gender reassignment			
Positive impact		Negative impact	Unequal impact
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	Our research has not identified any particular negative impacts (or differential impacts)		
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Marriage or civil partnership

Positive impact	Negative impact	Unequal impact
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	Our research has not identified any particular negative impacts (or differential impacts)	
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)

Pregnancy & maternity		
Positive impact	Negative impact	Unequal impact
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	Our research has not identified any particular negative impacts (or differential impacts)	
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)

Race		
Positive impact	Negative impact	Unequal impact
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	Our research has not identified any particular negative impacts (or differential impacts)	
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)

Religion or belief			
Positive impact		Negative impact	Unequal impact
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	Our research has not identified any particular negative impacts (or differential impacts)		
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Sex			
Positive impact		Negative impact	Unequal impact
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	Our research has not identified any particular negative impacts (or differential impacts)		
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Sexual orientation e.g. straight, lesbian / gay, bisexual			
Positive impact		Negative impact	Unequal impact
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	Our research has not identified any particular negative impacts (or differential impacts)		
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Socio-economic⁵ e.g. low income, unemployed, homelessness, caring responsibilities, access to internet, public transport users, social value in procurement			
Positive impact	Negative impact	Unequal impact	X
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	<p>Low income, social class and social housing tenancy have been identified in some research as indicators of whether someone is likely to have the competence, confidence and capability to make the most of digital technologies.</p> <p>People living in social housing are less likely to access the internet than people living in other housing tenures. During Housing's 2017 'Big Knock' Tenants Survey 23% of all respondents reported not having access to the internet (the same results were also received during the STAR survey).</p> <p>The evidence also suggests that people on low incomes are less likely to have digital access and basic digital skills. Nationally, 17% of people earning less than £20,000 never use the internet, as opposed to 2% of people earning more than £40,000. 44% of people without basic digital skills are on lower wages or are unemployed.</p> <p>People with any of the protected characteristics may be more vulnerable to poverty, and may therefore be at greater risk of digital exclusion, which may be exacerbated by inter-sectionality between their characteristics and their income.</p> <p>If the Council failed to provide non-digital means of engaging with it, that could be to the detriment of people who do not have the skills or capabilities to engage online.</p>		
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

⁵Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

Other			
please feel free to consider the potential impact on people in any other contexts			
Positive impact		Negative impact	Unequal impact
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		Our research has not identified any particular negative impacts (or differential impacts)	
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

What are the findings of any consultation with:

Staff?		Residents?	
Voluntary & community sector?		Partners?	
Other stakeholders?			

Overall conclusion & future activity

Explain the overall findings of the assessment and reasons for outcome (please choose one) :		
1. No inequality, inclusion issues or opportunities to further improve have been identified		
Negative / unequal impact, barriers to inclusion or improvement opportunities identified	2a. Adjustments made	
	2b. Continue as planned	X
	2c. Stop and remove	

Detail the actions that are needed as a result of this assessment and how they will help to remove discrimination & harassment, promote equal opportunities and / or encourage good relations :				
Action	Will this help to remove, promote and / or encourage?	Responsible officer	Deadline	How will this be embedded as business as usual?
Measure the take up of digital services by different groups and use the insight to design future services	Promote equal opportunities	Ruth Luscombe	From April 2021	As part of the new customer service model
Ensure the customer service model supports those who cannot benefit from digital channels by providing alternatives.	Promote equal opportunities	Ruth Luscombe	From April 2021	As part of the new customer service model

Approved by Assistant Director / Strategic Director: Ruth Luscombe
Date: 18.11.20

Brief Equality Impact Assessment

For a minor operational change / review / simple analysis

What is being assessed?	FS25 – Closing the Print Room	What are the key aims of it?	Remove the document centre staff post and put in place alternative arrangements including paperless committee meetings, digital alternatives and directing work through Docmail print service.		
Who may be affected by it?	Staff, Councillors and Customers				
Date of full EqIA on service area (planned or completed)	April 2021				
Form completed by:	Ruth Luscombe	Start date	June 2021	End date	n/a
		Review date			

What data / information are you using to inform your assessment?	ONS Data, Housing STAR and “Big Knock” Survey data	Have any information gaps been identified along the way? If so, please specify	We need to do further analysis of the documents currently printed by the Print Service and ensure a clear alternative plan in place for each. This will be reviewed in a full EQIA.
--	--	--	---

Explain the potential positive, negative or unequal impact on the following characteristics and how likely this is:			
Age	Unequal – Digital alternatives to printed documents may disproportionately impact on older people. Research evidence from ONS data suggests that older people tend to be less digitally active, and potentially at risk of digital	Race	N/A

	<p>exclusion, although the picture is complex and social class / income can be a relevant factor too.</p> <p>Older people are much less likely to use the internet than other age groups. In 2019, 47% of adults in the UK aged 75 years or over had used the internet in the last 3 months, compared to 91% of all adults.</p> <p>During Housing's 2017 'Big Knock' Tenants Survey, 77% of all respondents reported having access to the internet. (This result compares to STAR survey which indicated 74% of residents using internet at home and further 9% outside of home). Of the 23% that don't have access, 76% were over 65 years old. 48% of over 75 year olds reported to having access to the internet, which is similar to the national statistics.</p>		
Disability	N/A	Religion or belief	N/A
Gender reassignment	N/A	Sex	N/A
Marriage or civil partnership	N/A	Sexual orientation	N/A

Pregnancy & maternity	N/A	Socio-economic ⁶	<p>Unequal – Digital alternatives to printed documents may disproportionately impact some socio economic groups. Low income, social class and social housing tenancy have been identified in some research as indicators of whether someone is likely to have the competence, confidence and capability to make the most of digital technologies.</p> <p>People living in social housing are less likely to access the internet than people living in other housing tenures. During Housing's 2017 'Big Knock' Tenants Survey 23% of all respondents reported not having access to the internet (the same results were also received during the STAR survey).</p> <p>The evidence also suggests that people on low incomes are less likely to have digital</p>
-----------------------	-----	-----------------------------	--

⁶Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

			<p>access and basic digital skills. Nationally, 17% of people earning less than £20,000 never use the internet, as opposed to 2% of people earning more than £40,000. 44% of people without basic digital skills are on lower wages or are unemployed.</p> <p>People with any of the protected characteristics may be more vulnerable to poverty, and may therefore be at greater risk of digital exclusion, which may be exacerbated by intersectionality between their characteristics and their income.</p> <p>If the Council failed to provide non-digital means of engaging with it, that could be to the detriment of people who do not have the skills or capabilities to engage online.</p>
Other			

Where there is a likely positive impact , please explain how it will help to fulfil our legislative duties to:			
Remove discrimination		Promote equal	Encourage good

& harassment		opportunities		relations	
--------------	--	---------------	--	-----------	--

What further work / activity is needed as a result of this assessment?

Action	Responsible officer	How will this be delivered and monitored?	Deadline
Full EQIA assessment	Ruth Luscombe	Project to be set up to review the impacts and alternatives to be put in place .	June 2021

Approved by Assistant Director / Strategic Director: Ruth Luscombe

Date: 18.11.20

Full Equality Impact Assessment

For a policy, project, service or other decision that is new, changing or under review

What is being assessed?		FS28 – Local Community Budgets – reduction in funding			
Lead Assessor	Jane Konopka			Assessment team	Paula Mills
Start date	9/11/2020	End date			
When will the EqIA be reviewed?	9/11/2021 (or following LCB review completion)				

Who may be affected by it?	Community Groups and Organisations in Stevenage applying for Local Community Budgets
What are the key aims of it?	LCB funding will be reduced to £1500 from £2500 for each Ward Member from the new financial year (21/22 budget). This EQIA will determine if there will be any detrimental effects on community groups and organisations with protected characteristics

What positive measures are in place (if any) to help fulfil our legislative duties to:					
Remove discrimination & harassment	LCB application process is available online and through word of mouth via Ward Members and SBC Officers	Promote equal opportunities	The application process supports equal opportunities in the way it is administered and how decisions are made as to whose application is approved for which there is a criteria to adhere to	Encourage good relations	SBC process is to encourage applicants to contact their Ward Member prior to making the application and the Community Development team are available to support when

					required
--	--	--	--	--	----------

What sources of data / information are you using to inform your assessment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established guidance on applying for the funding for SBC and applicant • Using the criteria as a tool to base decision on. • Auditing a selection of successful applications each year. • Staff and Ward Member training • Information gathered as a result of LCB review currently underway to be completed by April 2021.
---	---

In assessing the potential impact on people, are there any overall comments that you would like to make?	Currently promotion of the LCB funding is from SBC Officers and Ward Members by word of mouth or via the SBC website. This may result in a general reduction of potential applicants and is being looked into as part of the wider LCB review currently underway.
--	---

Evidence and impact assessment

Explain the potential impact and opportunities it could have for people in terms of the following characteristics, where applicable:

Age					
Positive impact	LCB Funding is still available for community groups and organisations to apply to	Negative impact	LCB funding is reduced which may have an impact on the services offered and new services set up	Unequal impact	The elderly and the young are more likely to benefit from the services that apply and are then awarded LCB funding
Please evidence the data and		Previous LCB applications have often focussed around supporting the older population			

information you used to support this assessment	and the very young amongst other protected characteristics. It is apparent that both these groups disproportionately benefit from the funding.		
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	To ensure LCB funding is advertised to as many community groups and organisations as possible by a variety of media	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	How to reach out to the wider community to ensure access to LCB funding is equitable. This will be picked up in the LCB review which is currently underway

Disability e.g. physical impairment, mental ill health, learning difficulties, long-standing illness					
Positive impact	Groups focussing on supporting physical impairment, mental health, learning difficulties and long term illnesses are supported to keep activities and support groups going.	Negative impact	LCB funding reduced which may impact on the current offer available and that of any potential new service	Unequal impact	Less than 10% of applications last year were from groups supporting this protected characteristic. This suggests they are less likely to benefit from the funding in its current format and therefore with the suggested decrease in overall budget this will need to be picked up as part of the wider LCB review
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		Analysis of previous LCB applications			

What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	To ensure LCB funding is advertised to as many community groups and organisations as possible by a variety of media	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	How to reach out to the wider community to ensure access to LCB funding is equitable. This will be picked up in the LCB review which is currently underway
---	---	--	--

Gender reassignment					
Positive impact	LCB Funding is still available for community groups and organisations to apply to	Negative impact	Funding is reduced and therefore may not be as available as in previous years to support existing and new services	Unequal impact	Groups from this protected characteristic generally do not apply for LCB funding
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		Analysis of previous LCB applications			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	To ensure LCB funding is advertised to as many community groups and organisations as possible by a variety of media	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	How to reach out to the wider community to ensure access to LCB funding is equitable. This will be picked up in the LCB review which is currently underway		

Marriage or civil partnership					
Positive impact	LCB funding is still available for community groups and organisations to apply to	Negative impact	Funding is reduced and therefore may not be as available as in previous years to support existing and new	Unequal impact	Groups from this protected characteristic are generally not highlighted

			services		specifically as part of the application process and therefore it is difficult to determine the impact funding may have had on this protected characteristic
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		Analysis of previous LCB applications			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	To ensure LCB funding is advertised to as many community groups and organisations as possible by a variety of media	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	How to reach out to the wider community and in particular how we capture our engagement with this particular protected characteristic to ensure access to LCB funding is equitable. This will be picked up in the LCB review which is currently underway		

Pregnancy & maternity					
Positive impact	LCB funding is still available for community groups and organisations to apply to	Negative impact	LCB funding reduced which may impact on the current offer available and impede new activities from commencing	Unequal impact	Groups from this protected characteristic generally do not apply for LCB funding specifically to support this but may benefit from

					the services the funding provides
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		Analysis of previous LCB applications			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	To ensure LCB funding is advertised to as many community groups and organisations as possible by a variety of media	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	How to reach out to the wider community and in particular how we capture our engagement with this particular protected characteristic to ensure access to LCB funding is equitable. This will be picked up in the LCB review which is currently underway		

Race					
Positive impact	LCB funding is still available for community groups and organisations to apply to	Negative impact	LCB funding reduced which may impact on the current offer available and impede new activities from commencing	Unequal impact	Due to the current way in LCB funding is promoted, people from this protected characteristic group may be unable to gain access to the information its current format making the process unequal from the start
Please evidence the data and		Analysis of previous LCB applications			

information you used to support this assessment			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	To ensure LCB funding is advertised to as many community groups and organisations as possible by a variety of media	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	How to reach out to the wider community and in particular how we capture our engagement with this particular protected characteristic to ensure access to LCB funding is equitable. This will be picked up in the LCB review which is currently underway

Religion or belief					
Positive impact	LCB funding is still available for community groups and organisations to apply to	Negative impact	LCB funding reduced which may impact on the current offer available and impede new activities from commencing	Unequal impact	Approx 20% of current applications are from groups/organisations promoting religion and or belief and therefore are less likely to benefit from LCB funding
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		Analysis of previous LCB applications			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	To ensure LCB funding is advertised to as many community groups and organisations as possible by a variety of media	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	How to reach out to the wider community and in particular how we capture our engagement with these particular protected characteristics to		

			ensure access to LCB funding is equitable. This will be picked up in the LCB review which is currently underway
--	--	--	---

Sex					
Positive impact	LCB funding is still available for community groups and organisations to apply to	Negative impact	LCB funding reduced which may impact on the current offer available and impede new activities from commencing	Unequal impact	About 85% of LCB applications are currently made by women
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		Analysis of previous applications			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	To ensure LCB funding is advertised to as many community groups and organisations as possible by a variety of media	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	How to reach out to the wider community and in particular how we capture our engagement with these particular protected characteristics to ensure access to LCB funding is equitable. This will be picked up in the LCB review which is currently underway		

Sexual orientation e.g. straight, lesbian / gay, bisexual					
Positive impact	LCB funding is still available for	Negative impact	LCB funding reduced which may impact on	Unequal impact	Groups from these protected

	community groups and organisations to apply to		the current offer available and impede new activities from commencing		characteristics generally do not apply for LCB funding specifically to support this but may benefit from the services the funding provides
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		Analysis of previous applications			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	To ensure LCB funding is advertised to as many community groups and organisations as possible by a variety of media	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	How to reach out to the wider community and in particular how we capture our engagement with these particular protected characteristics to ensure access to LCB funding is equitable. This will be picked up in the LCB review which is currently underway		

Socio-economic⁷

e.g. low income, unemployed, homelessness, caring responsibilities, access to internet, public transport users, social value in procurement

Positive impact	LCB Funding is still available	Negative impact	LCB funding is reduced. LCB funding reduced which may impact on the current offer available and impede new activities	Unequal impact	People with a socio-economic disadvantage may be less likely to benefit from community groups
-----------------	--------------------------------	-----------------	---	----------------	---

⁷Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

			from commencing Publicity of availability of LCB funding is limited to on line and word of mouth via Ward Members and SBC Officers		accessing LCB funds or may also be less likely to apply
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		Analysis of previous LCB applications			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	LCB applications go through a thorough monitoring and auditing process	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	How to improve publicity of LCB funding to those who may not engage or use the internet		

Other please feel free to consider the potential impact on people in any other contexts					
Positive impact	N/A	Negative impact	N/A	Unequal impact	N/A
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)			

What are the findings of any consultation with:

Staff?	LCB review currently underway will explore this – to be completed by April 2021	Residents?	LCB review currently underway will explore this through audit of approved LCB schemes– to be completed by April 2021
Voluntary & community sector?	LCB review currently underway will explore this through the Social Inclusion	Partners?	LCB review currently underway will explore this with Ward Members– to be

	Partnership – to be completed by April 2021		completed by April 2021
Other stakeholders?	Audits of future LCBS		

Overall conclusion & future activity

Explain the overall findings of the assessment and reasons for outcome (please choose one) :			
1. No inequality, inclusion issues or opportunities to further improve have been identified			
Negative / unequal impact, barriers to inclusion or improvement opportunities identified	2a. Adjustments made	To ensure that opportunities for residents in the protected characteristics groups, remain available despite a reduction in overall budgets. Specific consideration for this will be tied into the planned LCB review in 2021	
	2b. Continue as planned		
	2c. Stop and remove		

Detail the actions that are needed as a result of this assessment and how they will help to remove discrimination & harassment, promote equal opportunities and / or encourage good relations :				
Action	Will this help to remove, promote and / or encourage?	Responsible officer	Deadline	How will this be embedded as business as usual?
To promote LCB funding wider and to provide CD support to consider other sources of funding.	Help remove discrimination by making the information easier to access, therefore promoting equal opportunities and encouraging good relationships	Jane Konopka	April 2021	Completion of LCB review in partnership with Portfolio Holder and Members

Approved by Assistant Director: Rob Gregory
Date: 13/11/20

Full Equality Impact Assessment

For a policy, project, service or other decision that is new, changing or under review

What is being assessed?		FS38/FS41 – Changes to charging for garages from April 2021 onwards. Transition to charging for 52 weeks per year (as opposed to 50 weeks per year) plus a 2% increase in garage charges, equating to an overall 6% increase in fees in real terms. Changes to garages charging for the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) from £2 per week to £2.25 per week.		
Lead Assessor	Nadia Capuano		Assessment team	
Start date	1 st April 2021	End date		Ongoing
When will the EqlA be reviewed?	October 2021			

Page 123

Who may be affected by it?	The changes to charges will apply to everyone who rents a garage in Stevenage.
What are the key aims of it?	<p>The proposal recommends ceasing the historical alignment of garage charging with the charging that takes place in Housing and the current set up on Northgate, through which the weekly rental charge is multiplied by 50 weeks of the year. The aim is to shift to charging for garages for 52 weeks of the year and apply a 2% inflationary increase for 21/22 to assist with the financial security of the council and move towards the establishment of a commercial charging policy, with concessions.</p> <p>The key difference between garages and housing is that in housing a yearly charge is calculated based on the sum of 52 weeks per year rental charge and is then divided by 50 weeks to calculate a weekly figure; for garages however the multiplication of the weekly charge by 50 leads to a two week deficit or 4% in lost rental income on an annual basis. Housing operate this system on the premise that the two rent-free weeks allow residents the opportunity to catch up on any arrears around Christmas time and the end of the financial year. For the garages portfolio the opportunity to ‘catch up’ on payments makes</p>

a difference in the short-term to the levels of outstanding debt, however historical data shows that arrears have crept up again by half three months later.
 At present the rates for the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) are set at £2 per week. The proposal recommends that in 21/22 the rates are increased to £2.25 per week in order to bring increased revenue to the council and assist with the financial security challenges.

What positive measures are in place (if any) to help fulfil our legislative duties to:					
Remove discrimination & harassment	Residents with disabilities are placed at the top of the garages waiting list after 6 months and can select from available garages at this stage	Promote equal opportunities	Council tenants do not pay the VAT on garages and therefore less than non-council tenants VCS benefit from a largely reduced rate (they pay just 18% of the costs of a standard garage)	Encourage good relations	Changes to garages charging will be communicated as early as possible to tenants so that they can decide as to whether they wish to move to a cheaper garage/terminate their garage tenancy. Payment plans are offered as a temporary measure to those that are struggling to pay garage rentals.

What sources of data /	
------------------------	--

<p>information are you using to inform your assessment?</p>	<p>Data held in the garages function</p> <p>Comparative pricing and policy data for the following District/Borough councils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welwyn-Hatfield District Council • Dacorum District • Brentwood Borough Council • Luton Borough Council
---	---

<p>In assessing the potential impact on people, are there any overall comments that you would like to make?</p>	<p>Residents in Stevenage rent garages for two reasons; parking or storage; they are non-essential items that are nice to have. Garage prices vary according to the specification but in real terms, for a resident renting a standard garage (category A) at £11.80 per week, the weekly price would increase to £12.05 per week, an increase of 35p. As they will be paying for 2 extra weeks per year, in real terms this equates to an additional £37 per year or 71p per week (net of VAT, which varies as housing tenants do not pay VAT whilst non-housing tenants do).</p> <p>New pricing will be introduced for the 6 new premium garages that are coming on stream as a result of the GIP, at £15 per week, reflective of their larger, more modern specification.</p> <p>These changes bring SBC in line with Welwyn-Hatfield Council, who have shifted to 52 week charging for garages in recent years. Benchmarking information shows that with the new pricing SBC will be middle of the range for garage charging. Dacorum council charge £15.78 per week over 52 weeks of the year (£16.86 if in one of their 'high demand' areas), Luton council £12.00 over 52 weeks of the year and Brentwood council £11.74 over 52 weeks of the year. In the private garage rental market Harpenden (Willow Way) charge £28 per week plus £200 refundable deposit and £49.50 set up fee, Watford (Trevallace Way) charge £21 per week plus £200 refundable deposit, and £49.50 set up fee and Bedford (The Pastures) charge £16 per week plus £200 refundable deposit and £49.50 set up fee.</p>
---	---

Evidence and impact assessment

Explain the potential impact and opportunities it could have for people in terms of the following characteristics, where applicable:

Age					
Positive impact	N/A		Negative impact	N/A	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Disability e.g. physical impairment, mental ill health, learning difficulties, long-standing illness					
Positive impact	N/A		Negative impact	N/A	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Gender reassignment					
Positive impact	N/A		Negative impact	N/A	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this					

assessment			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Marriage or civil partnership			
Positive impact	N/A	Negative impact	N/A
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Pregnancy & maternity			
Positive impact	N/A	Negative impact	N/A
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Race			
Positive impact	N/A	Negative impact	N/A
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this			

assessment			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Religion or belief			
Positive impact	N/A	Negative impact	N/A
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Sex			
Positive impact	N/A	Negative impact	N/A
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Sexual orientation e.g. straight, lesbian / gay, bisexual			
Positive impact	N/A	Negative impact	N/A

Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Socio-economic⁸ e.g. low income, unemployed, homelessness, caring responsibilities, access to internet, public transport users, social value in procurement					
Positive impact	N/A	Negative impact	Yes	Unequal impact	Yes
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		<p>Information on our current garage tenants. Comparative data with other local councils, including Welwyn-Hatfield, Dacorum, Luton and Brentwood to check against their pricing and process. Comparative data with private garage rental companies, including those in Harpenden, Watford and Bedford. The changes to pricing may impact on those who have recently become unemployed or who have seen their income reduced; this figure is likely to be higher than in recent times due to the impact of Covid-19. There is likely to be a low negative impact on VCS as a result of the increase in their pricing as this equates to 25p extra per week or £13 per year, which is lower in monetary terms than the increase on the majority of the garage stock. Many of the VCS have multiple members, meaning that the costs may be able to be divided between them.</p>			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	Offer of cheaper garages to those seeking to terminate their tenancy, including the offer of	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)			

⁸Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

	bubble garages for storage options.		
--	-------------------------------------	--	--

Other			
please feel free to consider the potential impact on people in any other contexts			
Positive impact		Negative impact	Unequal impact
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

What are the findings of any consultation with:

Staff?		Residents?	
Voluntary & community sector?		Partners?	
Other stakeholders?			

Overall conclusion & future activity

Explain the overall findings of the assessment and reasons for outcome (please choose one) :		
1. No inequality, inclusion issues or opportunities to further improve have been identified		
Negative / unequal impact, barriers to inclusion or improvement opportunities identified	2a. Adjustments made	
	2b. Continue as planned	2b. Continue as planned with actions listed below
	2c. Stop and remove	

Detail the actions that are needed as a result of this assessment and how they will help to remove discrimination & harassment, promote equal opportunities and / or encourage good relations :				
Action	Will this help to remove, promote and / or encourage?	Responsible officer	Deadline	How will this be embedded as business as usual?
Offer cheaper garages where possible to tenants who do not wish to incur additional charges	Equal opportunities and good relations	Rebecca Millett/ Michelle Upchurch	Following communication of increases	Directives to garages management team and monitoring of activity of Garage Lettings and Technical Officer
Offer flexible payment plans to clear arrears	Equal opportunities and good relations	Rebecca Millett/ Michelle Upchurch	Following implementations of increases	Directives to garages management team and monitoring of the activity of the Garages and Markets Technical Officer.

Monitor feedback from VCS on the impact of increased charges	Equal opportunities and good relations	Rebecca Millett/ Michelle Upchurch	Following communication of increases	Directives to garages management team and monitoring if correspondence to the Garages and Markets Technical Officer
--	--	---------------------------------------	--------------------------------------	---

Approved by Assistant Director / Strategic Director: Steve Dupoy

Date: 11/11/20

Brief Equality Impact Assessment

For a minor operational change / review / simple analysis

Page 133

What is being assessed?	FS40 – Movement of Voluntary and Community Sector garages (VCS) from high demand areas into low demand areas	What are the key aims of it?	SBC's Conditions of Tenancy state that VCS organisations occupying high demand garages are 'required and agree to transfer to an area of low demand'. This is applicable to 47 organisations and is ongoing. The aim is to rent out the freed up high demand garages with tenants paying full rental, thus bringing in additional income to the council and assisting with financial security challenges.		
Who may be affected by it?	Voluntary and Community Sector organisations who rent garages in Stevenage				
Date of full EqlA on service area (planned or completed)					
Form completed by:	Nadia Capuano	Start date	01/10/20	End date	31/03/22
		Review date	01/10/21		

What data / information are you using to inform your assessment?	Current data on numbers of VCS in Stevenage and feedback from organisations on the proposals so far. Demand data to establish where lower demand areas for VCS garages may be.	Have any information gaps been identified along the way? If so, please specify	No
--	---	--	----

Explain the potential positive, negative or unequal impact on the following characteristics and how likely this is:			
Age	Unequal – older members of	Race	N/A

	VCS may find it more difficult to move items into a different garage		
Disability	Unequal – disabled members of VCS may find it more difficult to move items into a different garage	Religion or belief	N/A
Gender reassignment	N/A	Sex	N/A
Marriage or civil partnership	N/A	Sexual orientation	N/A
Pregnancy & maternity	N/A	Socio-economic ⁹	N/A
Other	N/A		

Where there is a likely positive impact , please explain how it will help to fulfil our legislative duties to:					
Remove discrimination & harassment		Promote equal opportunities	Tenants will be moved to garages as close to their existing garage as possible to minimise disruption.	Encourage good relations	
			Tenants will the option to pay the full rate for the garage if they wish to keep the specific plot		

⁹Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

What further work / activity is needed as a result of this assessment?

Action	Responsible officer	How will this be delivered and monitored?	Deadline
Monitor feedback from VCS	Michelle Upchurch	Monitoring feedback from VCS following proposal of move into low-demand garages	Commencing October 2020

Approved by Assistant Director / Strategic Director: Steve Dupoy
Date: 11/11/20

Brief Equality Impact Assessment

For a minor operational change / review / simple analysis

What is being assessed?	FS43 – Reduce Training Budget during 2021-22	What are the key aims of it?	To consider the potential impact of the proposed saving of reducing the training budget for 2021/22 on all staff and particularly those under the protected characteristics.		
Who may be affected by it?					
Date of full EqIA on service area (planned or completed)					
Form completed by:	Clare Davies	Start date	November 2020	End date	Ongoing
		Review date	November 2021		

What data / information are you using to inform your assessment?	Workforce Equalities Data as of November 2020	Have any information gaps been identified along the way? If so, please specify	Currently no workforce information is held on socio-economic status of the Stevenage Borough Council workforce and therefore this cannot be assessed.
--	---	--	---

Explain the potential positive, negative or unequal impact on the following characteristics and how likely this is:			
Age	We do not hold data on employee characteristics for take up of learning and development opportunities	Race	We do not hold data on employee characteristics for take up of learning and development opportunities
Disability	We do not hold data on employee characteristics for take up of learning and development opportunities	Religion or belief	We do not hold data on employee characteristics for take up of learning and development opportunities

Gender reassignment	Data for this protected characteristic is incomplete for the employees impacted by the proposed savings options.	Sex	We do not hold data on employee characteristics for take up of learning and development opportunities
Marriage or civil partnership	We do not hold data on employee characteristics for take up of learning and development opportunities	Sexual orientation	We do not hold data on employee characteristics for take up of learning and development opportunities
Pregnancy & maternity	No information is held on the pregnancy and maternity status of the employees impacted by the proposed savings.	Socio-economic ¹⁰	No information is held on the socio-economic status of the employees impacted by the proposed savings.
Other			

Where there is a likely positive impact , please explain how it will help to fulfil our legislative duties to:					
Remove discrimination & harassment	Learning and development opportunities are available and taken up by all staff regardless of their background In response to the Covid pandemic more learning and development offers	Promote equal opportunities	Access to the apprenticeship levy funded courses is available to all staff	Encourage good relations	

¹⁰Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

	and moving to virtual platforms and this often reduces costs.				
--	---	--	--	--	--

What further work / activity is needed as a result of this assessment?

Action	Responsible officer	How will this be delivered and monitored?	Deadline
Record protected characteristics data on staff completing learning and development courses	Clare Davies	Developing the HR System	April 2021

Approved by Assistant Director / Strategic Director: Clare Davies
Date:12.11.20

Brief Equality Impact Assessment

For a minor operational change / review / simple analysis

What is being assessed?	Reduced Graduate Training Budget	What are the key aims of it?	To consider the potential impact of the proposed saving of reducing the graduate training budget for 2021/22 on all staff and particularly those under the protected characteristics.		
Who may be affected by it?					
Date of full EqIA on service area (planned or completed)					
Form completed by:	Clare Davies	Start date	November 2020	End date	Ongoing
		Review date	November 2021		

What data / information are you using to inform your assessment?	Workforce Equalities Data as of November 2020	Have any information gaps been identified along the way? If so, please specify	Currently no workforce information is held on socio-economic status of the Stevenage Borough Council workforce and therefore this cannot be assessed.
--	---	--	---

Explain the potential positive, negative or unequal impact on the following characteristics and how likely this is:			
Age	The number of employees impacted by the savings is less than 5 and therefore not identified. However, all graduates at SBC are from the National Local Government Scheme and have a full learning and	Race	The number of employees impacted by the savings is less than 5 and therefore not identified.

	development programme. We also have vacant posts so they will not be disproportionately impacted.		
Disability	None of the employees impacted by the proposed savings have identified as disabled and therefore no disproportionate effects are anticipated.	Religion or belief	The number of employees impacted by the savings is less than 5 and therefore not identified.
Gender reassignment	Data for this protected characteristic is incomplete for the employees impacted by the proposed savings options.	Sex	The number of employees impacted by the savings is less than 5 and therefore not identified.
Marriage or civil partnership	The number of employees impacted by the savings is less than 5 and therefore not identified.	Sexual orientation	The number of employees impacted by the savings is less than 5 and therefore not identified.
Pregnancy & maternity	No information is held on the pregnancy and maternity status of the employees impacted by the proposed savings.	Socio-economic ¹¹	No information is held on the socio-economic status of the employees impacted by the proposed savings.
Other			

Where there is a likely **positive impact**, please explain how it will help to **fulfil our legislative duties** to:

Remove discrimination	Continue with	Promote equal	Access to the	Encourage good	
-----------------------	---------------	---------------	---------------	----------------	--

¹¹ Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

& harassment	National Graduate Programme Development Programme and promote other learning opportunities	opportunities	apprenticeship levy funded courses	relations	
--------------	--	---------------	------------------------------------	-----------	--

What further work / activity is needed as a result of this assessment?

Action	Responsible officer	How will this be delivered and monitored?	Deadline

Approved by Assistant Director / Strategic Director: Clare Davies
Date: 12.11.20

Brief Equality Impact Assessment

For a minor operational change / review / simple analysis

Page 142

What is being assessed?	FS45 – Removal of cash collection	What are the key aims of it?	Stop collecting cash in order to save money, as alternative payment methods are available.		
Who may be affected by it?	Residents, Businesses, Staff, Partners				
Date of full EqIA on service area (planned or completed)	N/A				
Form completed by:	Ruth Luscombe	Start date		End date	
		Review date			

What data / information are you using to inform your assessment?	Cash represented only 1.17% of payments collected last year and alternative means are available for all services.	Have any information gaps been identified along the way? If so, please specify	We do not know who pays for car parking in cash. However there are a number of alternatives available. There are health and hygiene reasons for not accepting cash during the COVID-19 pandemic – card and phone payments are available.
--	---	--	--

Explain the potential positive, negative or unequal impact on the following characteristics and how likely this is:			
Age	N/A	Race	N/A
Disability	N/A	Religion or belief	N/A
Gender reassignment	N/A	Sex	N/A
Marriage or civil partnership	N/A	Sexual orientation	N/A

Pregnancy & maternity	N/A	Socio-economic ¹²	Unequal – those small minority of people who may not have a bank account may be negatively impacted. Cash payments which would have been made to Customer Services can still be made via the Post Office.
Other			

Where there is a likely positive impact , please explain how it will help to fulfil our legislative duties to:				
Remove discrimination & harassment		Promote equal opportunities		Encourage good relations

What further work / activity is needed as a result of this assessment?

Action	Responsible officer	How will this be delivered and monitored?	Deadline
If a negative or unequal (high or low) impact has been identified, you should assess this further in a Full EqIA	Ruth Luscombe	Keep payment options under review in response to customer feedback	April 2022

Approved by Assistant Director / Strategic Director: Ruth Luscombe
Date: 12th November 2020

¹²Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

Brief Equality Impact Assessment

For a minor operational change / review / simple analysis

What is being assessed?	<p>FS19 - Combine the Town-wide Resident Survey and the Council Tenant Satisfaction Survey (known as 'STAR'), which are now undertaken every 3 years.</p>	<p>What are the key aims of it?</p>	<p>The Town-wide survey of resident householders seeks feedback and resident perception on a range of issues and services and supports the council's priority-setting process.</p> <p>The 'STAR' survey is used across the housing sector and enables the council to assess levels of tenant and leaseholder satisfaction, to identify their priorities and to shape its services accordingly.</p> <p>The proposal is to reduce the overall cost by combining the two surveys and/or reducing the survey length/overall numbers surveyed. Additionally, there are plans to increase other community engagement activities at the co-operative neighbourhood level, which will complement the Resident and STAR surveys. These will be undertaken 'in-house' by the council's community development team, supported by other colleagues – potentially using a “big knock” approach.</p>		
Who may be affected by it?	Resident householders and council tenants				
Date of full EqlA on service area (planned or completed)	N/A				
Form completed by:	Katrina Shirley	Start date	14.11.20	End date	
		Review date	N/A		

<p>What data / information are you using to inform your assessment?</p>	<p>SBC Resident Survey Report 2017/18 SBC STAR Survey Report SBC Community Engagement Framework SBC Equality and Diversity Policy Housemark STAR guidance Local Government Association (LGA) guidance on benchmarking resident satisfaction data.</p> <p><u>General Comments:</u></p> <p><u>Resident/STAR survey responses:</u></p> <p>In conducting the surveys, the views of random samples of resident householders and tenants are canvassed. In 2017/18, the surveys resulted in the following number of responses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resident survey – 1067 (margin of error in results = +/- 3%) • General Needs tenants – 483 (margin of error in results = +/- 4%) • Sheltered tenants – 367 (margin of error in results = +/- 3.75) <p>Returned samples are checked for differential response rates and results are weighted to correct for this, so that the reported results are broadly representative of the population of residents and tenants.</p> <p>The number of responses achieved in 2017/18 met good practice standards and benchmarking requirements. Every effort will be made to achieve the same level of responses from residents and general needs tenants in 2021/22 through the combined survey, if the budget allows. It is unlikely that the same level of sheltered tenant responses can be achieved as in 2017/18 however. It should be noted that the combined total number people surveyed will be lower than in 2017/18, and the</p>	<p>Have any information gaps been identified along the way? If so, please specify</p>	<p>Detailed information on the size of sample/ breadth of survey questions that can be achieved within the revised budget.</p>
---	--	---	--

range of issues consulted upon will be reduced (however, see comments below on addressing this and enhancing the approach through the use of other engagement channels).

Anonymised information on the protected characteristics of respondents is collected through the survey in respect of sex, age, ethnic origin, disability and working status. This enables some analysis of the profile of tenants and residents to be undertaken and enables significant differences in responses to be identified. It should be noted that all results are subject to sampling tolerances, which means that not all differences are statistically significant, particularly where the numbers within a particular protected characteristic group are relatively small.

SBC Community Engagement Framework

The Resident and STAR surveys are just one part of a broader approach to community engagement in Stevenage, which involves a range of ways in which the council consults with and involves residents and tenants. The Community Engagement Framework includes the following aim (which aligns with Goal 3 of the Equality & Diversity Policy):

- Providing and developing creative ways to engage with our communities, ensuring equality of opportunity in having a voice, which will be achieved by:
 - Promoting and supporting processes that engage and provide representation for communities in decision making
 - Developing more creative approaches that encourage engagement from all sections of our community, using digital and neighbourhood networks
 - Providing opportunities for our protected characteristic communities to come together in exploring the needs of minority communities, groups and organisations.

In this context, in 2021/22, a co-ordinated approach will be adopted, in

	<p>which the Resident/STAR survey will be complemented by other engagement activities at the Cooperative Neighbourhood level. This is a positive step that will enable us to reach new people in different ways, including those from protected characteristic groups.</p>		
--	--	--	--

<p>Explain the potential positive, negative or unequal impact on the following characteristics and how likely this is:</p>			
<p>Age</p>	<p>General (potential neutral impact) In general terms, if the same number of responses from residents and general needs tenants can be achieved as in 2017/18 within the revised budget, views of differing ages can continue to be canvassed and compared through the combined Resident/STAR survey to the same level of statistical accuracy.</p> <p>Older People (potential negative impact) It will not be possible within a combined, shorter survey to ask the specific additional questions to Independent Living Scheme tenants that were asked in the STAR 2017/18 and the number of responses from these tenants will be lower. This may be mitigated through a separate engagement activity, but this will require internal resource.</p> <p>Younger People (potential positive impact) As the Resident Survey is targeted at householders, the profile of respondents is inherently older than the general resident population. By undertaking other engagement</p>	<p>Race</p>	<p>Potential Positive Impact In general terms, if the same number of responses from residents and tenants can be achieved as in 2017/18, views of residents and tenants from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds can continue to be canvassed and compared through the combined survey, to the same level of statistical accuracy.</p> <p>However, the Resident/STAR survey has limitations in this regard, given the generalised nature of the survey and the relatively small number of responses that can be achieved through the sample from people from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds.</p> <p>By undertaking more focused engagement activity with the diverse range of black, Asian and minority ethnic communities in Stevenage, their views and feedback can be better captured.</p>

	activity specifically targeted at younger people, the views of this group will be better captured.		
Disability	<p>Potential Positive Impact In general terms, if the same number of responses from residents and tenants can be achieved as in 2017/18, views of residents and tenants with disabilities can continue to be canvassed and compared through the combined survey, to the same level of statistical accuracy.</p> <p>In addition, by undertaking complementary engagement activity specifically targeted at people with disabilities, more focused consultation with this group can be achieved.</p>	Religion or belief	<p>Potential Positive Impact Previous Resident and STAR surveys have not analysed results by respondents' religion or belief and because of the general nature of the surveys and the sampling approach, it is unlikely they would be particularly effective in this regard.</p> <p>By undertaking more focused engagement activity with faith groups the views of people of different religion or beliefs can be better captured.</p>
Gender reassignment	<p>Potential Positive Impact Previous Resident and STAR surveys have not analysed results by this protected characteristic and because of the general nature of the surveys and the sampling approach, it is unlikely they would be effective in this regard.</p> <p>There is the potential to undertake more focused engagement activity to capture the views of this protected characteristic group.</p>	Sex	<p>Potential Neutral Impact In general terms, if the same number of responses from residents and tenants can be achieved as in 2017/18, views of male and female respondents can continue to be canvassed and compared through the combined Resident/STAR survey to the same level of statistical accuracy.</p>
Marriage or civil partnership	<p>Neutral Impact: In general terms, if the same number of responses from residents and tenants can be achieved as in 2017/18, views of people of</p>	Sexual orientation	<p>Potential Positive Impact: The previous Resident and STAR surveys did not analyse results in relation to this protected characteristic and more focused engagement</p>

	different marital status can continue to be canvassed and compared through the combined Resident/STAR survey to the same level of statistical accuracy.		activity may enable views to be better captured.
Pregnancy & maternity	Neutral Impact: The Resident and STAR surveys do not analyse results in relation to this protected characteristic.	Socio-economic ¹³	Potential Neutral Impact: In general terms, if the same number of responses from residents and tenants can be achieved as in 2017/18, views of respondents from differing socio-economic backgrounds can continue to be canvassed and compared through the combined Resident/STAR survey to the same level of statistical accuracy.
Other			

Where there is a likely positive impact , please explain how it will help to fulfil our legislative duties to:					
Remove discrimination & harassment	By widening the range of engagement activities, the council can better understand whether perceptions of the town and the experience of council services differ amongst people from protected	Promote equal opportunities	The proposed approach to widen the range of engagement activities will increase opportunities for people from protected characteristic groups to express their views on issues and services and better	Encourage good relations	

¹³Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

	characteristic groups compared to the wider population		inform council decisions		
--	--	--	--------------------------	--	--

What further work / activity is needed as a result of this assessment?

Action	Responsible officer	How will this be delivered and monitored?	Deadline
Establish the revised Resident/STAR survey sampling/questionnaire approach	Corporate Policy & Business Support Manager	C&N Service Plan	February 2021
Develop an engagement plan incorporating both the Resident/STAR survey and other engagement activities	Community Development Manager	C&N Service Plan	February 2021

Approved by Assistant Director/ Strategic Director: Rob Gregory
Date: 16/11/20

Full Equality Impact Assessment

For a policy, project, service or other decision that is new, changing or under review

What is being assessed?		Introduction of revised charges for the cemetery provisions.			
Lead Assessor	L Walker			Assessment team	L Walker C Skeels
Start date	1 st January 2021	End date	31 st December 2021		
When will the EqlA be reviewed?					

Who may be affected by it?	Residents and customers choosing SBC cemeteries for the burial or interment of deceased relatives etc.
What are the key aims of it?	Increased charges to move towards it being a non-subsidised service

What positive measures are in place (if any) to help fulfil our legislative duties to:				
Remove discrimination & harassment		Promote equal opportunities		Encourage good relations

What sources of data / information are you using to inform your assessment?	<p>Current financial data / performance</p> <p>Market intelligence in terms of appetite for service. Benchmarking against other Hertfordshire Local Authorities data for burial fees and charges.</p>
---	---

In assessing the potential impact on people, are there any overall comments that you would like to make?	The fees and charges are applied consistently and are not influenced by any factors. Consideration is given specifically to the Socio-Economic category, as part of the range of interment options. This ensures that where there may be some unequal impact in the socio-economic category, that there are also options for individuals that may struggle to afford other options.
--	---

Evidence and impact assessment

Explain the potential impact and opportunities it could have for people in terms of the following characteristics, where applicable:

Age			
Positive impact	Negative impact	Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		No restrictions or impact relating to age. Same fees apply for service regardless of age	
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Disability e.g. physical impairment, mental ill health, learning difficulties, long-standing illness			
Positive impact	Negative impact	Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		No impact, charges relate to all those choosing to use the service	
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Gender reassignment			
Positive impact		Negative impact	Unequal impact
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	No impact, charges relate to all those choosing to use the service		
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Marriage or civil partnership			
Positive impact		Negative impact	Unequal impact
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	No impact, charges relate to all those choosing to use the service		
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Pregnancy & maternity			
Positive impact		Negative impact	Unequal impact
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	No impact, charges relate to all those choosing to use the service		
	Please note that for deceased babies and children (under 16) parents/guardians are not charged burial or ashes interment fees		
What opportunities are there to promote		What do you still need to find out? Include in	

equality and inclusion?		actions (last page)	
-------------------------	--	---------------------	--

Race			
Positive impact	Negative impact	Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	No impact, charges relate to all those choosing to use the service		
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Religion or belief			
Positive impact	Negative impact	Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	No impact, charges relate to all those choosing to use the service		
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Sex			
Positive impact	Negative impact	Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	No impact, charges relate to all those choosing to use the service		
What opportunities are there to promote		What do you still need to find out? Include in	

equality and inclusion?		actions (last page)	
-------------------------	--	---------------------	--

Sexual orientation e.g. straight, lesbian / gay, bisexual			
Positive impact	Negative impact	Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	No impact, charges relate to all those choosing to use the service		
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Socio-economic¹⁴ e.g. low income, unemployed, homelessness, caring responsibilities, access to internet, public transport users, social value in procurement			
Positive impact	Negative impact	Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	yes	Yes	
	Increased charges will impact on ability to pay for service for some users; this is likely to disproportionately affect users of a lower socio-economic group. Benchmarking against other local authorities suggests that overall our offering is still below others, especially when taking into account the new Sanctum product range.		
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	The council offers a range of interment options of differing fees to ensure the services are inclusive to all including the new Sanctum product range. This	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

¹⁴Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

	product is a more affordable offering compared to burial or interment options. If a family is financially struggling and in receipt of certain benefits there is government/social help available as well as the option to involve the assistance of our Environmental Health Dept.		
--	---	--	--

Other			
please feel free to consider the potential impact on people in any other contexts			
Positive impact	Negative impact	Yes	Unequal impact
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	Increased charges and triple fees may impact non Stevenage Borough residents' ability to pay for the service.		
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	All families have the ability to choose a cemetery within the deceased's own district which will not be charged additional for non-residency.	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

What are the findings of any consultation with:

Staff?	SDS management /Finance	Residents?	
Voluntary & community sector?		Partners?	
Other stakeholders?	LA benchmarking		

Overall conclusion & future activity

Explain the overall findings of the assessment and reasons for outcome (please choose one) :		
1. No inequality, inclusion issues or opportunities to further improve have been identified		
Negative / unequal impact, barriers to inclusion or improvement opportunities identified	2a. Adjustments made	
	2b. Continue as planned	To move towards a non-subsidised service
	2c. Stop and remove	

Detail the actions that are needed as a result of this assessment and how they will help to remove discrimination & harassment, promote equal opportunities and / or encourage good relations :				
Action	Will this help to remove, promote and / or encourage?	Responsible officer	Deadline	How will this be embedded as business as usual?
Monitor impact of charges on service and numbers of services being undertaken	Will help to inform future pricing policies	L Walker	31 Oct 21	Monthly budget monitoring Feedback from residents / funeral undertakers

Approved by Assistant Director / Strategic Director: Steve Dupoy
Date: 11/11/20

Full Equality Impact Assessment

For a policy, project, service or other decision that is new, changing or under review

What is being assessed?		Meadow Grassland Management to Selected Parks			
Lead Assessor	Julia Hill			Assessment team	Kris White Gordon Drake
Start date	February 2021	End date			
When will the EqIA be reviewed?	November 2021				

Who may be affected by it?	Residents; visitors; clubs; community groups; employees; organisations
What are the key aims of it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide accessible, clean, green and well managed public spaces To make provision across the town for a range of park users – formal and informal To provide a diversity of landscape within the main parks to benefit users and wildlife Financial security savings

What positive measures are in place (if any) to help fulfil our legislative duties to:					
Remove discrimination & harassment	• Parks are accessible to everyone, at	Promote equal opportunities	• Parks are accessible to everyone,	Encourage good relations	• Volunteering

	no cost.	s	at no charge.		opportunities • Community events
--	----------	---	---------------	--	-------------------------------------

What sources of data / information are you using to inform your assessment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous experience • Feedback from parks users and residents
---	--

In assessing the potential impact on people, are there any overall comments that you would like to make?	Wide paths will be cut through the meadow grassland so all visitors currently able to access the short mown grass will be able to access the meadows too. Areas of short mown grass will be maintained at each site to enable access to fixed equipment (play or outdoor gym) and to provide space for informal use such as family picnics, informal kickabout areas etc.
--	---

Evidence and impact assessment

Explain the potential impact and opportunities it could have for people in terms of the following characteristics, where applicable:

Age					
Positive impact	None	Negative impact	None	Unequal impact	None
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		The parks are freely open to all members of the community.			

What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	Make future interpretation boards easy to read for all ages.	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	
---	--	--	--

Disability e.g. physical impairment, mental ill health, learning difficulties, long-standing illness					
Positive impact	Better access to wildlife can improve mental wellbeing	Negative impact	None	Unequal impact	None
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		The parks are freely open to all members of the community. Wide paths will be cut through the meadow grass, so they are accessible to residents with disabilities.			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	Make future interpretation boards easy to access for all abilities.	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)			

Gender reassignment					
Positive impact	None	Negative impact	None	Unequal impact	None
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		The parks are freely open to all members of the community.			

What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	
---	--	--	--

Marriage or civil partnership					
Positive impact	None	Negative impact	None	Unequal impact	None
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		The parks are freely open to all members of the community.			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Pregnancy & maternity					
Positive impact	None	Negative impact	None	Unequal impact	None
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		The parks are freely open to all members of the community.			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Race					
Positive impact	None	Negative impact	None	Unequal impact	None
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		The parks are freely open to all members of the community.			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	Include opportunity for translation to any interpretation boards		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Religion or belief					
Positive impact	None	Negative impact	None	Unequal impact	None
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		The parks are freely open to all members of the community.			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Sex					
Positive impact	None	Negative impact	None	Unequal impact	None

Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	The parks are freely open to all members of the community.		
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Sexual orientation e.g. straight, lesbian / gay, bisexual					
Positive impact	None	Negative impact	None	Unequal impact	None
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		The parks are freely open to all members of the community.			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Socio-economic¹⁵ e.g. low income, unemployed, homelessness, caring responsibilities, access to internet, public transport users, social value in procurement					
Positive impact	The parks are freely open to all members of the community. Parks have good public transport links through bus routes, cycle tracks and pedestrian footpaths.	Negative impact	None	Unequal impact	None
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		The parks are freely open to all members of the community.			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	Promotion of parks and the variety of opportunities that they offer	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)			

¹⁵Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

Other please feel free to consider the potential impact on people in any other contexts					
Positive impact		Negative impact		Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

What are the findings of any consultation with:

Staff?		Residents?	A number of residents have requested more meadow managed grassland in the town
Voluntary & community sector?		Partners?	
Other stakeholders?	The introduction of more meadow managed grassland is an action within the Stevenage Biodiversity Action Plan, and fits with the towns efforts to tackle climate change		

Overall conclusion & future activity

Explain the **overall findings** of the assessment and **reasons for outcome (please choose one)**:

1. No inequality, inclusion issues or opportunities to further improve have been identified		No inequality / inclusion issues identified, but opportunities identified to promote equality and inclusion will be taken forward.
Negative / unequal impact, barriers to inclusion or improvement opportunities identified	2a. Adjustments made	
	2b. Continue as planned	
	2c. Stop and remove	

Detail the **actions that are needed** as a result of this assessment and how they will help to **remove discrimination & harassment, promote equal opportunities** and / or **encourage good relations**:

Action	Will this help to remove, promote and / or encourage?	Responsible officer	Deadline	How will this be embedded as business as usual?
Implement interpretation boards to explain why, how and benefits of managing meadow grassland in the parks	Signage will be designed to be as inclusive as possible for all Stevenage residents and visitors	Julia Hill	March 2021	Included within SDS Communications Plan for 2021 and beyond

Approved by Assistant Director / Strategic Director: Steve Dupoy

Date: 11/11/20

Brief Equality Impact Assessment APPENDIX F

For a minor operational change / review / simple analysis

What is being assessed?	Proposed Employee Related Savings for 2021/22	What are the key aims of it?	To consider the potential impact of the proposed employee related savings for 2021/22 on all staff and particularly those under the protected characteristics.		
Who may be affected by it?	Employees within the areas where savings have been identified				
Date of full EqIA on service area (planned or completed)	A				
Form completed by:	Kirsten Frew	Start date		End date	
		Review date			

What data / information are you using to inform your assessment?	Workforce Equalities Data as of November 2020	Have any information gaps been identified along the way? If so, please specify	Currently no workforce information is held on socio-economic status of the Stevenage Borough Council workforce and therefore this cannot be assessed.
--	---	--	---

Explain the potential positive, negative or unequal impact on the following characteristics and how likely this is:			
Age	The profile of the employees impacted by the proposed savings is 25% in the age category 40-49 and 75% in the over 60 age category. It is therefore likely that the	Race	The profile of those impacted by the proposed savings is 87.5% White British and 12.5% BAME.

	<p>proposed savings may have a disproportionate impact on those age groups. It should be noted that the staff related savings, do impact on a wider range of roles, such as Graduate vacancies and roles within customer service, however, as these roles have become vacant they have not been replaced. Had these not been vacant the age profile of the savings would have been impacted positively.</p>		
Disability	<p>None of the employees impacted by the proposed savings have identified as disabled and therefore no disproportionate effects are anticipated.</p>	Religion or belief	<p>All employees impacted by the proposed savings have identified themselves as Christian and therefore no disproportionate effects are anticipated.</p>
Gender reassignment	<p>Data for this protected characteristic is incomplete for the employees impacted by the proposed savings options.</p>	Sex	<p>The profile of the employees impacted by the proposed savings is 62.5% female and 37.5% male. The proposed savings are therefore likely to have disproportionate effect on more woman than men.</p>
Marriage or civil partnership	<p>12.5% of those impacted by the proposed savings are divorced, 25% are single and 62.5% are married.</p>	Sexual orientation	<p>All employees impacted by the proposed savings have identified themselves as Heterosexual.</p>

Pregnancy & maternity	No information is held on the pregnancy and maternity status of the employees impacted by the proposed savings.	Socio-economic ¹	No information is held on the socio-economic status of the employees impacted by the proposed savings.
Other			

Where there is a likely positive impact , please explain how it will help to fulfil our legislative duties to:					
Remove discrimination & harassment	Consider approach to address some of the unequal impacts	Promote equal opportunities		Encourage good relations	Consult with staff and trade unions on the proposed savings.

What further work / activity is needed as a result of this assessment?

Action	Responsible officer	How will this be delivered and monitored?	Deadline
A Full EqIA will be undertaken for each of the proposed savings that impacts upon employees as part of the wider consultation exercise on the proposed changes.	Individual ADs responsible for each proposed Saving	As part of the consultation process.	

Approved by Assistant Director / Strategic Director:

Date:

¹Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

This page is intentionally left blank