

For Publication

Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority
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SUBJECT: 2022/23 REVENUE BUDGET, CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND COUNCIL TAX SETTING

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Background Papers: 2021/22 FRA Budget Papers

Implications (tick ✓):

LEGAL		FINANCIAL	✓
HUMAN RESOURCES		EQUALITY IMPACT	
ENVIRONMENTAL		POLICY	
CORPORATE RISK	Known	OTHER (please specify)	
	New		

Any implications affecting this report are noted at the end of the report.

PURPOSE

To present the current planning arrangements for the 2022/23 Revenue Budget and Capital Programme and agree the timetable accordingly.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the report and timescales within be reviewed, considered and agreed.

1. Introduction

1.1 On 10th February 2021, the Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA) approved a Revenue Budget Requirement for 2021/22 of £31.773m, a Capital Programme of £1.038m and the Band D council tax at £102.41.

1.2 This report introduces the process for 2022/23.

2. The 2022/23 Revenue Budget and Capital Programme

2.1 **Funding Updates:**

2.1.1 **Revenue** – The 2020/21 and 2021/22 have both been single year funding settlements from the Government. Due to the pandemic, the planned 2021/22 Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) covering a three year period was delayed. It is hoped and anticipated that the 2022/23 settlement will cover a three-year period. Single year settlements do not enable robust medium term financial planning to take place, due to the uncertainty of grant income in the following years.

2.1.2 **Capital** – There was no capital funding or bidding round for the 2021/22 financial year and it is anticipated that this will be the same position for 2022/23 too. The Authority's Capital Programme is funded by revenue, unless where a specific grant has been received or there has been a sale of an asset, such as vehicles.

2.2 **2021/22 Corporate Management Team (CMT) Post Budget Review:**

2.2.1 A post 2021/22 budget process review was held by CMT.

2.2.2 The outcome of this meeting was:

- i. In the main, to continue with the process adopted for 2021/22.
- ii. Continue to work on existing and new savings, efficiencies and income work streams that will take place during the 2021/22 financial year and subject to approval, the 2022/23 to 2025/26 years.
- iii. To continue a Zero Base Budgeting (ZBB) approach where deemed appropriate, on a rotation basis.
- iv. For the short bid form to be continued, these are for initial bids to be reviewed by a CMT gateway. If successful, the longer form will then be completed for review.

2.3 **Timescales:**

2.3.1 For 2022/23, there will be a draft budget set by the FRA on 14 December 2021 for consultation. The budgets and council tax will finally be set by the FRA, post consultation on 10 February 2022. The Authority will need to consult with the community and businesses. This will again be linked in with the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).

2.3.2 The proposed timetable for the 2022/23 budget process is attached at Appendix 1.

2.4 Proposals:

2.4.1 The proposals below are included for discussion and are currently anticipated being part of the 2022/23 revenue and capital budget setting process:

- *Roll Forward* – As agreed for the 2021/22 process last year, it is again proposed to roll forward the 2021/22 budget and scrutinise the appropriateness of the 2022/23 budgets during the officer review process.
- *Scrutiny/Review* – As identified above, the scrutiny process will continue for 2022/23, reviewing the draft 2022/23 budgets, compared to 2021/22 actuals/forecast year end position and 2020/21 final outturn figures.
- *Savings/Efficiencies* – The savings/efficiency work that CMT carried out for the 2021/22 budget cycle will need to be revisited to ensure initiatives previously proposed in future years are still appropriate and deliverable. However, the budget scrutiny meetings will of course be looking for efficiencies on top of those worked up during the 2021/22 budget process. The 2021/22 planned savings/efficiencies will be monitored via CMT in year and FRA budget monitoring reports.
- *Budget Forms* – A short bid form will again be used for initial proposals, so that a limited amount of input is required to get through the first gateway in the bid process. Should CMT approve a bid, for revenue or capital, a more detailed submission will be required.
- *Planning Assumptions* - A summary list of planning assumptions will be presented to Members during the budget process both for information purposes but also to input and agree on.
- *Capital* – The Capital Programme for 2022/23 onwards needs to be focussed on more than the forthcoming year. The returns to Government ask for our three year indicative capital expenditure figures.
- *Innovation/Transformation* – that there will be funding set aside for 2022/23 budget and also in year transformation/innovation initiatives.

3. Summary

3.1.1 This report introduces the 2022/23 budget timetable and process to Members. Members will be kept informed of progress.

**ANDREW HOPKINSON
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**

**GAVIN CHAMBERS
ACO/TREASURER**

2022/23 BUDGET TIMETABLE

GROUP	AREA OF REVIEW	DATE
Corporate Management Team (CMT)	Budget memo sent out, including Budget Bid form. Cost centre sheets to be provided at least a fortnight before Finance review meetings.	By 12th August 2021
FRA	Initial budget report setting out timetable	7 th September 2021
CMT	Budget bid requests (revenue and capital) & signed budget sheets back to Finance	By 13th September 2021
CMT	Initial budget report/verbal update	tbc September 2021
<i>CMT</i>	<i>Head of Service and Finance Meeting, to review cost centre sheets (agree virements etc).</i>	<i>During September & October</i>
CMT Budget Meeting (only ACO as Principal Officer lead)	Discuss current budget position/efficiencies.	During October and November 2021
CMT & all Principal Officers	CMT and POs to review draft budget and CRMP prior to 1 st Members budget workshop.	(date tbc) November 2021
FRA	1 st Members budget workshop – draft budget and draft CRMP.	23rd November 2021
FRA	Draft budget set and CRMP for consultation.	14th December 2021
Public Consultation on draft budget and CRMP	From 15 December 2021 to 31 January 2022.	15th December 2021 to 31st January 2022
CMT	Update to CMT as required.	January 2022
FRA	2nd Members budget workshop – post main consultation period. Draft CRMP post consultation.	25th January 2022
FRA	2022/23 Budget and Council Tax Precept set. CRMP – with consultation outcomes incorporated.	10th February 2022