
FINANCIAL STRATEGY AND RESOURCES 2022/23

Report by Director Finance & Corporate Governance

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

22 February 2022

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the estimated revenue and capital resources available for financial year 2022/23 following publication of the Local Government Finance Settlement (LGFS) on the 20th December 2021 and the subsequent announcement of further one off funding of £120m for Local Government on 27th January 2022.**
- 1.2 The report recommends the financial strategy to be followed by the Council next financial year and identifies the financial constraints and major risks to be addressed.
- 1.3 The report also outlines the process supporting the construction of the draft revenue and capital Financial Plans for 2022/23 as well as draft plans for future years.
- 1.4 The Strategic Leadership Team has supported Members to set a corporate revenue and capital budget, meeting identified pressures facing the Council. These pressures have arisen from a variety of factors. The principal pressures identified are due to the anticipated continuing constraints on external revenue and capital funding from central government, the uncertainty around national pay negotiations, the increasing pressures from demographics, particularly the increasing numbers of older people requiring care services, as well as general inflation.
- 1.5 The budget development process has been conducted to ensure that the financial plans of the Council are aligned with its business and people planning objectives and the level of resources available.
- 1.6 The report highlights that total revenue resources of £324.871m are available to Elected Members assuming the Council accepts the 2022/23 settlement offer from Scottish Government. The settlement gives Councils full flexibility to set the Council Tax rate that is appropriate for their local authority area for 2022/23. The impact of other potential variations in the Council Tax is shown in the tables in paragraph 7.2 and 9.1.
- 1.7 The benefits, in terms of financial stability and effective change management, derived from adopting a longer term corporate approach to the revenue and capital planning process are widely accepted. This

approach has been developed for financial year 2022/23 with a 10 year revenue financial strategy being included for approval elsewhere on this agenda. This brings the long term planning horizon for both revenue and capital in line at 10 years.

- 1.8 Financial year 2022/23 represents the fifth year of the revenue 5 year financial plan for the Council first agreed in February 2018. It is anticipated members will continue to adopt a longer term approach to financial planning. Estimates will continue to be updated annually as the detail of the financial settlement from Scottish Government becomes known.
- 1.9 The Council approved a revised approach to organisational change under the banner of 'Fit for 2024' when the budget was set for 2019/20 in February 2019. This approach continues to reshape the transformation programme ensuring individual projects are more cross-cutting and focused on joined up business process review. The Fit for 2024 programme has been a strong driver in developing financial plan proposals for the 5 year period of the plan.
- 1.10 This report also seeks approval of the financial strategy for the Council covering the period 2022/23 – 2026/27. The strategy provides the overall framework for the financial management of the Council and covers the revenue budget, capital investment plan, the Council's treasury management arrangements and the recommended policy on reserves.
- 1.11 The 2022/23 budget has once again been prepared against a background of significant financial uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The impact of COVID-19 on wider society has been profound. This in turn has significant implications for the Council's finances and its service delivery model. It is anticipated that these impacts will continue to be felt for some time to come. It is anticipated that the COVID-19 reserve will continue to be deployed in 2022/23 to support the Council during the COVID-19 recovery period. The Council's financial strategy has been adapted accordingly using the best information available at this time.
- 1.12 A risk based approach has once again been used to set the level of recommended balances to be held in contingency recognising the uncertainty caused by the Pandemic.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that Council:

- (a) notes the estimated revenue resources for 2022/23 to 2026/27;**
- (b) notes the estimated capital resources for 2022/23 to 2031/32 and the requirement to adhere to the prudential code for capital borrowing;**
- (c) notes the flexibility provided through the LGFS process giving Councils full flexibility to set the Council Tax rate that is appropriate for their local authority area for 2022/23,**
- (d) approves the financial strategy set out in section 4.6 (a) to (i) of this report, including the recommendation to maintain unallocated reserves at £8.421m for 2022/23, having considered the risk register highlighted in appendix 1; and**
- (e) proceeds to consider the proposed Financial Plan for 2022/23.**

3 THE REVENUE FINANCIAL PLANNING PROCESS 2022/23 TO 2026/27

3.1 Financial year 2022/23 represents the fifth year of the 5 year financial plan for the Council first agreed in February 2018 with this updated plan covering the period 2022/23 to 2026/27. A corporate approach has again been pursued with a focus on aligning the financial, business and people planning elements of the Council's Corporate Plan.

4 FINANCIAL STRATEGY

- 4.1 The Council along with all public bodies faces significant challenges as it aims to provide the best possible services within the resources available. The adoption of a longer term timeframe for financial planning has previously enabled the Council to plan the delivery of service changes across financial years through modernising services, investing in new technology, and in developing a range of strategic partnerships to provide longer term benefits. Despite the annual nature of the financial settlement this longer term approach has enabled the required changes to be delivered in a planned manner, mitigating the need for reactive cuts to services. This approach has been developed further for 2022/23 with the development of the 10 year Revenue Financial Strategy to align revenue and capital in planning over a 10 year timeframe.
- 4.2 The Fit for 2024 programme is now embedded within the budget process and delivery of cross cutting savings proposed by the programme are integral to balancing the budget in the period to 2024. It is recognised that further transformational change will be required beyond 2024 in line with the approved digital strategy and the refreshed Corporate Plan included elsewhere on the agenda. This further transformational change will focus in the first instance on delivering financial and service benefits through investment in digital solutions through significant investment in digital transformation as agreed as part of the CGI contract extension. Delivery of SBC's digital transformation programme is being prioritised with a focus on digitally enabling the frontline workforce, enabling data driven decision making and process automation.
- 4.3 It is recognised that COVID-19 has had a profound effect on the Council's finances. The budget in 2021/22 has continued to be impacted by additional costs, reduced income and delays in the delivery of savings associated with previously approved transformation plans. The monitoring report submitted to Executive Committee on the 8 February 2022 highlighted an impact of £22.224m in 2021/22. The Fit for 2024 transformation programme remains crucial to the delivery of service change and financial efficiencies.
- 4.4 The financial strategy for 2022/23 is therefore designed to ensure that;
- (a) resources are raised to meet approved service levels in the most effective manner;

- (b) officers manage the effective deployment of those resources in line with the Council's corporate objectives and priorities as set out in the refreshed Corporate Plan;
 - (c) the revenue and capital plans approved by Council provide stability in resource planning, and;
 - (d) the changes required to services are delivered in a properly planned manner through the Council's Fit for 2024 change programme.
- 4.5 This strategy seeks to ensure that the Council's budget is targeted so that it meets a number of strategic aims. While ongoing recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic is crucial, there are a number of different policy issues which require to be addressed including the need to ensure the budget:- provides the best possible stimulus to the local economy, responds appropriately to the wider Climate Emergency declared by the Council in 2020, looks after those who are most vulnerable in our society and targets resources through early intervention and prevention programmes to reduce future demand for public services. This approach will be crucial in continuing to support communities to respond and recover from COVID-19.
- 4.6 The recommended high level financial strategy to be followed over the period 2022/23 – 2026/27 is therefore, to:-
- (a) ensure the long term stability of the Organisation by setting a prudent, sustainable budget in line with available resources;
 - (b) continue to invest in education, community infrastructure and inclusive economic growth that will raise standards, address the threat of high unemployment levels where possible, improve quality of life for local people and encourage active, healthy lifestyles;
 - (c) work with community planning partners to invest in early intervention and prevention programmes to reduce future demand for services;
 - (d) continue to work with local RSL's deploying the affordable housing budget to provide safe warm homes through the Strategic Housing Improvement Plan;
 - (e) set a capital programme which keeps debt within prudent sustainable limits as set out in the treasury strategy;
 - (f) provide for loans charges of £19.284m (2022/23) to finance capital investment recognising the long term implications of capital borrowing. This figure is planned to rise in future years reflecting the Council's capital plans;
 - (g) maximise income while keeping fees charged to service users at an affordable level;
 - (h) continue to invest in transformation projects that deliver long term financial savings and service benefits; and
 - (i) recognising the challenges faced by the organisation, particularly in relation to responding to and recovering from COVID-19, maintain unallocated reserves of £8.421m, 2.6% of net revenue expenditure for 2022/23 as outlined in section 5 below and in line with the assessed risk register in appendix 1.

5 RESERVES

5.1 Reserves

The Council maintains a number of funds and balances which are reported to Elected Members at regular intervals during the financial year. Table 1 below shows the projected balance on each fund at 1 April 2022.

Table 1 Funds and Balances	1 April 2022 (est £m)
Specific Funds	
Corporate Property Repairs and Renewals Fund	0
Plant and Vehicles Renewals Fund	8.110
Pitch & Play Park Replacement fund	0.953
Insurance Fund	1.604
Capital Fund Excl Developer Contributions	1.370
General Fund – Earmarked	
Devolved School Management	0.684
Earmarked Departmental Reserves (incl COVID reserve)	24.802
Allocated reserves	3.004
General Fund – Non-Earmarked	8.421
Total	<u>48.948</u>

- 5.2 The Council holds reserves in order to manage identified risks, smooth uneven cash flows and provide a contingency against unforeseen circumstances. The existence and management of adequate reserves is a fundamental aspect of any sound financial strategy. The financial strategy and the associated reserves position is subject to scrutiny by the Council's external auditors.
- 5.3 A Corporate Financial Risk Register has again been used as the basis for setting reserve levels in 2022/23 and future years. This approach seeks to quantify the risks facing the Council's finances, including underlying inflation, over optimistic savings assumptions, over optimistic assumptions regarding future Government grant funding, delays in delivery of transformation plans, unconfirmed future pay and pension cost increases, the failure by managers to enact effective budgetary control, severe weather events, the impact of COVID-19 on the wider economy, potential legal and contractual claims and unplanned emergencies in approving an appropriate level of unallocated balances.

5.4 A review of the major risks facing the Council has been undertaken by senior finance officers and these are shown in the risk register in appendix 1. The level of unallocated general fund balances is directly informed by an assessment of the risks facing the Council. This approach, despite being subject to an element of informed judgement, fundamentally reflects the risks inherent in setting the revenue budget, the reasons why reserves are held in the first place, the scale and complexity of the organisation and also provides an appropriate transparent rationale for the level of balances held.

5.5 **Unallocated balances**

Given the issues identified in the risk register and risks inherent in setting the revenue budget, members are recommended to maintain an unallocated general fund equivalent to £8.421m in 2022/23. The unallocated balance projected at the 31st March 2022 equates to 2.6% of net revenue expenditure and is sufficient to cover 61% of the risks identified in the finance risk register should they be realised.

6 THE AEF SETTLEMENT 2022/23

6.1 Mainstream support for Local Government from the Scottish Government is collectively known as Aggregate External Finance (AEF) and comprises:-

- (a) General Revenue Funding to support expenditure on the complete range of Council Services;
- (b) A distribution of funding from the National Non-Domestic Rates Pool;
- (c) Ring-fenced grants which must be used for specified purposes

6.2 The Local Government Finance Settlement, received on the 20th December 2021 confirmed revenue resources of £12.474.3 billion nationally in 2022/23, the implications for the Council budget are set out in section 7 below.

6.3 Subsequently on the 27th January 2022, Kate Forbes, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Economy, announced her intention to amend the Scottish Government's Budget Bill at Stage 2 to allocate a further £120 million of resource to Local Government in 2022/23. Councils may allocate this funding as they see fit on a one-off basis in 2022/23 within their budget plans.

7 REVENUE RESOURCES

7.1 The Settlement for 2022/23 confirmed the following resources would be provided by the Scottish Government to the Scottish Borders:

- (a) Revenue Support Grant of £192.672m, including £323.4m nationally to support Social Work budgets. Taken together with Non Domestic Rates distributions of £35.294m, this provides providing total grant support of £242.983m to the Council;
- (b) Total specific grant has been confirmed to fund Early Learning & Childcare (£11.497m) plus funding for the Council's inclusion in an Early Learning and Childcare deferral pilot (£0.500m), the Pupil Equity Fund (£1.763m), Community Justice Social Work (£1.256m) and Gaelic (£0.001m);
- (c) Funding over and above the Settlement is still awaited to fund the following Scottish Government priorities (national funding figures

provided). Teachers Induction Scheme (£37.6m), Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) (£80.2m), Gaelic (£0.103m), Pupil Equity Fund (£10m), Customer First top-up (£1.41m), Bridging Payments (£68.2m), new Health & Social Care funding (£200m), removal of Curriculum charging (£8m), removal of Music Tuition charging (£12m), Free School Meals expansion including holiday provision (£63.95m) and Educational Psychology trainees (£0.45m). All these budgets will be created during 2022/23 when funding is confirmed;

(d) The development of the 2022/23 budget has seen close cooperation and joint financial planning between the Council, NHS Borders and the IJB. Key aspects of the budget in this area include a Health and Social Care fund of £7.888m that is once again to be transferred from the NHS to Council via the Integration Joint Board (IJB). This funding has previously been delegated on a permanent recurrent basis to the Council's Social Care function by the IJB. A further adjustment has been made to the local government settlement to directly provide Councils with a further £323.4m nationally in 2022/23 to fund:

- A further £15m for Free Personal & Nursing Care (£0.524m for SBC);
- £164.4m to continue to support payment of the Living Wage (£144m) and the Carer's Act (£20.4m) (£4.541m for SBC);
- £124m to support care at home (£2.924m for SBC); and
- £20m interim care funding one-off in 2022/23 (£0.473m for SBC).

(e) Additional one-off resources of £120m provided nationally for 2022/23 with a Council allocation of £2.581m.

7.2 The revenue resources available to the Council based on an increase in Council tax of 1%, 2%, 3% and 4% in each financial year are shown below in table 2. The following table 3 provides the total revenue resources available to the Council based on an increase in Council tax of 3% for 2022/23 at £324.871m.

Table 2

Council Tax Income Financial Plan 2022/2023	% Increase	2022/23 (Provisional) £000's	2023/24 (Provisional) £000's	2024/25 (Provisional) £000's	2025/26 (Provisional) £000's	2026/27 (Provisional) £000's
Forecast Council Tax Income at Increase	4%	£69,734	£73,132	£76,649	£80,316	£84,132
Impact of 4% pa increase		£2,679	£5,506	£8,485	£11,619	£14,919
Incremental increase			£2,827	£2,979	£3,134	£3,300
Forecast Council Tax Income at Increase	3%	£69,066	£71,743	£74,484	£77,317	£80,236
Impact of 3% pa increase		£2,011	£4,117	£6,320	£8,620	£11,023
Incremental increase			£2,106	£2,203	£2,300	£2,403
Forecast Council Tax Income at Increase	2%	£68,395	£70,357	£72,336	£74,360	£76,418
Impact of 2% pa increase		£1,340	£2,731	£4,172	£5,663	£7,205
Incremental increase			£1,391	£1,441	£1,491	£1,542
Forecast Council Tax Income at Increase	1%	£67,725	£68,984	£70,229	£71,485	£72,743
Impact of 1% pa increase		£670	£1,358	£2,065	£2,788	£3,530
Incremental increase			£688	£707	£723	£742
Forecast Council Tax Income at Increase	0%	£67,055	£67,626	£68,164	£68,697	£69,213

Table 3

	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 (Provisional) £'000	2024/25 (Provisional) £'000	2025/26 (Provisional) £'000	2026/27 (Provisional) £'000	Total £'000
Aggregate External Finance						
General Revenue Support	192,672	194,780	194,875	197,249	199,695	979,271
Additional one-off Revenue Support Grant (share of £120m)	2,581	(2,581)	0	0	0	0
Ring fenced grants	15,017	15,017	15,017	15,017	15,017	75,085
Assumed additional funding for Health & Social Care for demographics		2,676	2,374	2,446	1,816	9,312
Health & Social Care Partnership	7,888	7,967	8,047	8,127	8,209	40,238
Non-domestic Rates	35,294	35,294	35,294	35,294	35,294	176,470
	253,452	253,153	255,607	258,133	260,031	1,280,376
Earmarked Balance	1,353	0	0	0	0	1,353
Earmarked COVID-19 Reserve to Culture & Sports Trusts	1,000	0	0	0	0	1,000
Council Tax (Band D £1,291.53 in 2022/23 - 3% increase)	67,948	71,289	74,022	76,847	80,544	370,650
Second Homes Council Tax	1,118	1,151	1,186	1,221	1,258	5,934
Total	324,871	325,593	330,815	336,201	341,833	1,659,313

8 RESOURCING ESTIMATES 2022/23 AND BEYOND

- 8.1 At present the Scottish Government has only confirmed a one year Revenue Settlement and therefore has only published draft AEF figures for 2022/23. In planning resources over the next 5 years through the revenue plan and 10 years through the Long Term Financial Strategy, the Council has made assumptions about the levels of funding likely to be available and the level of savings which will be required to balance to these estimates. The assumption for planning purposes is that AEF resources will be provided on a flat cash basis in each future year of the 5 year plan. These estimates exclude any transfers for new statutory burdens.
- 8.2 Any movement from these assumptions in future finance settlements will require adjustments to be made to the overall level of savings made in the Financial Plan. Despite the absence of firm future revenue figures, the scale of the challenge facing the Council is unlikely to diminish in the foreseeable future and longer term planning for the delivery of savings, which may have significant lead in times and require large scale organisational change, remains an essential discipline.
- 8.3 The Council approved a revised approach to organisational change under the banner of 'Fit for 2024' when the budget was set for 2019/20 in February 2019. The Fit for 2024 programme has been a strong driver in developing financial plan proposals for the 5 year period of the plan.
- 8.4 The benefits of longer term financial planning have previously been promoted by Audit Scotland in the overview report for Local Government in Scotland. Audit Scotland have highlighted the good practise previously adopted by the Council in adopting medium term 5 year financial planning. They recommend that this approach be extended to encompass greater use of scenario planning over a longer period. In response Council officers have developed the Long Term Financial Strategy provided elsewhere on this agenda.

9 COUNCIL TAX

9.1 The settlement gives Councils full flexibility to set the Council Tax rate that is appropriate for their local authority area for 2022/23. The Table below shows the impact of various increases in the Council Tax. The Council is required under legislation to approve its Council Tax for the following financial year commencing 1 April by the 11 March in the preceding financial year.

2% Increase	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
Charge 21/22	835.94	975.26	1,114.58	1,253.91	1,647.49	2,037.60	2,455.77	3,072.07
22/23 prices (2% inc)	852.66	994.77	1,136.87	1,278.99	1,680.44	2,078.35	2,504.89	3,133.51
Annual Increase	16.72	19.51	22.29	25.08	32.95	40.75	49.12	61.44
Monthly Increase	1.39	1.63	1.86	2.09	2.75	3.40	4.09	5.12
Weekly Increase	0.32	0.38	0.43	0.48	0.63	0.78	0.94	1.18
3% Increase	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
Charge 21/22	835.94	975.26	1,114.58	1,253.91	1,647.49	2,037.60	2,455.77	3,072.07
22/23 prices (3% inc)	861.02	1,004.52	1,148.03	1,291.53	1,696.93	2,098.74	2,529.25	3,164.25
Annual Increase	25.08	29.26	33.45	37.62	49.44	61.14	73.48	92.18
Monthly Increase	2.09	2.44	2.79	3.13	4.12	5.09	6.12	7.68
Weekly Increase	0.48	0.56	0.64	0.72	0.95	1.18	1.41	1.77
4% Increase	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
Charge 21/22	835.94	975.26	1,114.58	1,253.91	1,647.49	2,037.60	2,455.77	3,072.07
22/23 prices (4% inc)	869.38	1,014.27	1,159.16	1,304.06	1,713.39	2,119.10	2,554.00	3,194.95
Annual Increase	33.44	39.01	44.58	50.16	65.90	81.50	98.23	122.88
Monthly Increase	2.79	3.25	3.72	4.18	5.49	6.79	8.19	10.24
Weekly Increase	0.64	0.75	0.86	0.96	1.27	1.57	1.89	2.36

9.2 The table above shows the impact of a 2%, 3% and 4% increase in the Council Tax alongside the annual, monthly and weekly increases that would be associated with these uplifts in Council Tax bills.

10 CAPITAL RESOURCES

10.1 In setting its Capital Plan, the Council must adhere to The Prudential Code of Capital Finance (the Code) in Local Authorities as published by CIPFA. The Code was established to both give Local Authorities an element of flexibility but also to ensure they do not over borrow beyond levels that are sustainable over the longer term.

10.2 The code requires the Council to set a Capital Annual Treasury Management Strategy (the Strategy) which includes how it will finance its Capital Plans in an affordable and sustainable way. The Strategy is approved each year along with the Revenue and Capital Plans.

10.3 The requirements of the Prudential Code were updated in December 2017 including the recommendation that Councils publish a Capital Investment Strategy from 2019/20. As such Scottish Borders Council's Capital Investment Strategy is included elsewhere on this agenda as part of the suite of financial planning papers.

- 10.4 The borrowing requirements associated with the proposals are anticipated to be fully financed by the Loans Charges revenue budget of:

	£m
2022/23	19.284
2023/24	21.063
2024/25	22.521
2025/26	23.321
2026/27	23.821

The significant increase in loans charges over the period in the early years is primarily driven by the construction of 3 new secondary schools, 2 new primary schools and two new care facilities.

11 CAPITAL FUNDING ASSUMPTIONS

11.1 Capital Settlement

A General Capital Grant is issued to each Local Authority in Scotland as part of the Settlement letter. The draft settlement confirms general capital grant of £11.038m will be provided to the Council in 2022/23.

11.2 Scottish Government – Capital Grants

The Council's Capital settlement for 2022/23 also includes £9.555m for the Hawick flood protection scheme. In addition the settlement confirms an allocation in the specific capital grant for cycling walking and safer streets of £0.504m for 2022/23 and all allocation of £0.071m for the Local Bridge Maintenance Fund. The proposed plan assumes total specific grants from Scottish Government of £35.639m over the 10 year period to 2031/32.

11.3 Other External Capital Grants & Contributions

Many projects and programs are successful in bringing in matched funding from a range of external sources such as Sports Scotland, Historic Scotland and Lottery and European funds. These funds each come with specific conditions and are usually time limited.

11.4 Development Contributions

- (a) Development Contributions are contributions made by private developers for specific items. Legal agreements in place detail the terms of both the location and type of asset. Due to the uncertainty of the timing on payment of these it is not prudent to include large sums of development contributions being received at the same time as the assets are being constructed. This means the Council is required to either use the General Capital Grant or Borrowing to up front fund the construction until the contributions are received.
- (b) The proposed Plan includes an assumed £1.2m of development contributions over the next 10 year period.

11.5 **Capital Receipts**

- (a) Capital Receipts are funds generated from the disposal of capital assets. These funds are held in the Capital Fund and used to either finance new capital expenditure or repay existing loan principal. The estimate is reviewed on a regular basis to determine assets available for disposal and their likely disposal value and timing.
- (b) The Plan assumes £0.400m of capital receipts being generated over first 3 years of the plan. The assumptions around the deliverability of these will be subject to ongoing review. Current low levels of capital receipts reflects market conditions and the low value of projected assets for sale.

11.6 **General Capital Grant future years**

The total estimated Capital Grant over the period of the Plan is estimated at £103.103m. Should resources vary from current projections in future years this may require the associated borrowing levels, phasing and prioritisation of projects within the Capital Plan to be revisited.

11.7 **Replacement Funds**

- (a) A fund was established by the Council in 2004 to ensure resources were in place for the continued replacement of its plant and vehicle fleet. The fund is used to purchase the vehicles and then reimbursed by the department's revenue budgets over the life of the vehicle. The Plan assumes purchases of £2m per annum over the period of the Plan which will be fully funded.
- (b) A Fund was established by the Council in 2016 to ensure resources were available to provide for the replacement of carpets on synthetic pitches. The plan is based on assumed replacement lives of 10 years for each facility.
- (c) A fund has been established by the Council to allow play facilities to be replaced at the end of their useful life. The replacement life is dependent upon the type of play facility.

11.8 **Borrowing**

- (a) The balance of the funds required for the Plan is secured by borrowing. Local Authorities are able to borrow to fund Capital expenditure, or if given specific consent by Scottish Government. When determining the borrowing requirements the Council must follow the Prudential Code which requires Councils to ensure they are acting prudentially and sustainably. The costs of borrowing are charged to revenue via the Loans Charges budgets.
- (b) The proposed revenue budget to support capital through loans charges is set out in paragraph 10.4. Decisions to increase future capital borrowing will require permanent increases, funded by savings elsewhere or the generation of additional income, in the loans charges budget in order to repay additional capital borrowing.

- (c) The proposed Plan includes a total borrowing over the 10 year period of £249m. It is estimated based on assumptions around cash flow and interest rates that this is deliverable within the estimated revenue resources. There is a risk however if interest rates rise above the assumed levels this may result in additional charges. This will require regular monitoring to ensure that the borrowing levels are sustainable and affordable.

11.9 The total capital funding available is £546.601m. The following table summarises the total resources for the proposed Capital Plan.

	3 year operational £000's	7 year strategic £000's	Total £000's	Est. External Funding £000's	Est. SBC Contribution £000's
Specific Grants from Scottish Government	32,733	2,906	35,639	35,639	0
Other External Grants & Contributions	80,716	44,738	125,454	125,454	0
Development Contributions	462	711	1,173	1,173	0
Capital Receipts	400	0	400	0	400
General Capital Grant	25,837	77,266	103,103	0	103,103
Plant & Vehicle Replacement - P&V Fund	6,000	14,000	20,000	20,000	0
Synthetic Pitch Replacement Fund	1,107	3,497	4,604	4,604	0
Funded From Revenue	7,000	0	7,000	7,000	0
Borrowing	173,674	75,554	249,228	0	249,228
Total	327,929	218,672	546,601	193,870	352,731

12 IMPLICATIONS

12.1 Financial

There are no additional financial implications associated with this report, its content referring specifically to the revenue and capital budgets.

12.2 Risk and Mitigations

Revenue Plan

- (a) The Council faces a number of risks in setting its Revenue Financial Plan for five years 2022/23 - 2026/27. The main identified risks are set out in the appendix 1. The Council faces significant financial challenges, not least the requirement to deliver ongoing savings to balance the revenue and capital plan each year, fund on going pressure from the demographic change facing the Borders population and address challenges from ongoing COVID-19 response and recovery. The maintenance of reserves to manage such risks is an essential element of any sound financial strategy and the recommended level of reserves, to act as a contingency is £8.421m in financial year 2022/23.
- (b) There is an ongoing requirement for robust management action to further continue to deliver Financial Plan savings. This is fundamental to ensure the delivery of the proposals set out in the five year Financial Plan on time and to the levels expected by the approved budget. The failure to deliver savings in line with the budget plan represents the most significant financial risk to the Council.

- (c) Within the Capital Plan overly optimistic project management resulting in unrealistic assumptions about time, costs and risks involved continues to pose a risk. This is being mitigated by more intense scrutiny at the initiation phase and reviewing lessons learned from previous projects.
- (d) The key risks associated with the Council's revenue and capital plans will be monitored on a regular basis within the regular monitoring reports submitted to the Council's Executive Committee.

12.3 **Integrated Impact Assessment**

An integrated impact assessment (IIA) has been undertaken with regard to individual budget proposals, where issues have been identified mitigating actions will be put in place. There are no further equalities impacts arising from this specific report.

12.4 **Sustainable Development Goals**

The revenue budget will affect the people and economy of the borders it has been designed to be as financially, socially and environmentally sustainable as possible.

12.5 **Climate Change**

There are no effects on carbon emissions.

12.6 **Rural Proofing**

This report contains no implications that will compromise the Council's rural proofing strategy.

12.7 **Data Protection Impact Statement**

There are no personal data implications arising from the proposals contained in this report.

12.8 **Changes to the Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

There are no changes required to either the scheme of administration or the scheme of delegation.

13 **CONSULTATION**

- 13.1 Strategic Leadership Team has fully supported the revenue and capital financial planning process.
- 13.2 The Monitoring Officer/Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Director People, Performance and Change, the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications have been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into this final report.

Approved by

David Robertson

Director Finance & Corporate Governance

Signature

Author(s)

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Suzy Douglas	Financial Services Manager Tel: 01835 824000 X5881

Background Papers:

Previous Minute Reference: [insert last Minute reference (if any)]

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Finance can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at Suzy Douglas, Council HQ, sdouglas@scotborders.gov.uk, 01835 824000 X5881.