

# FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

## AGENDA FOR THE EXECUTIVE

**Date:** Monday, 18 September 2023

**Time:** 5.30 pm

**Venue:** Collingwood Room - Civic Offices

***Executive Members:***

Councillor S D T Woodward, Policy and Resources (Executive Leader)

Councillor I Bastable, Streetscene

Councillor Miss J Burton, Health & Public Protection

Councillor D G Foot, Housing

Councillor S D Martin, Planning and Development

Councillor Mrs S M Walker, Leisure and Community

**1. Apologies for Absence**

**2. Minutes (Pages 5 - 8)**

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 26 July 2023.

**3. Executive Leader's Announcements**

**4. Declarations of Interest**

To receive any declarations of interest from members in accordance with Standing Orders and the Council's Code of Conduct.

**5. Petitions**

**6. Deputations**

To receive any deputations, of which notice has been lodged.

**7. References from Other Committees**

To receive any references from the committees or panels held.

**Matters for Decision in Public**

*Note: Where an urgent item of business is raised in accordance with Part 3 of the Constitution, it will be considered with the relevant service decisions as appropriate.*

**8. Policy and Resources**

**Key Decision**

**(1) Osborn Road Multi Storey car park (Pages 9 - 14)**

A report by the Director of Planning and Regeneration.

**Non-Key Decision**

**(2) Opportunities Plan Development Update (Pages 15 - 42)**

A report by the Assistant Chief Executive Officer.

**9. Exclusion of Public and Press**

To consider whether it is in the public interest to exclude the public and representatives of the Press from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that the matters to be dealt with involve the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

## Exempt Matters for Decision

*Note: Where urgent items of business are raised in accordance with Part 3 of the Constitution, they will be considered with the relevant service decisions as appropriate.*

### 10. Policy and Resources

#### Non-Key Decision

(1) **Irrecoverable Debts** (Pages 43 - 48)

A report by the Assistant Chief Executive Officer.



A WANNELL  
Chief Executive Officer

[www.fareham.gov.uk](http://www.fareham.gov.uk)

07 September 2023

**For further information please contact:**  
**Democratic Services, Civic Offices, Fareham, PO16 7AZ**  
**Tel: 01329 236100**  
[democraticservices@fareham.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@fareham.gov.uk)



# FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Executive

**(to be confirmed at the next meeting)**

**Date:** Wednesday, 26 July 2023

**Venue:** Collingwood Room - Civic Offices

**Present:**

S D T Woodward, Policy and Resources (Executive Leader)  
I Bastable, Streetscene  
Miss J Burton, Health & Public Protection  
D G Foot, Housing  
S D Martin, Planning and Development  
Mrs S M Walker, Leisure and Community

**Also in attendance:**

Mrs K K Trott, for item 9(1)



**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies given for this meeting.

**2. MINUTES**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on Monday 03 July 2023 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

**3. EXECUTIVE LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no Executive Leader announcements.

**4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

**5. PETITIONS**

There were no petitions submitted at this meeting.

**6. DEPUTATIONS**

There were no deputations made at this meeting.

**7. REFERENCES FROM OTHER COMMITTEES**

There were no references from other Committees.

**8. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

RESOLVED that it is in the public interest to exclude the public and representatives of the Press from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that the matters to be dealt with involve the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

**9. POLICY AND RESOURCES**

- (1) Consideration of commercial opportunities related to wider regeneration of Fareham Town Centre

At the invitation of the Executive Leader, Councillor Mrs K K Trott addressed the Executive on this item.

RESOLVED that the Executive agrees the recommendations (a) to (g) as set out in the confidential report.

(The meeting started at 6.00 pm  
and ended at 6.20 pm).







# FAREHAM

## BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Report to the Executive for Decision 18 September 2023

<b>Portfolio:</b>	Policy and Resources
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Osborn Road Multi Storey Car park</b>
<b>Report of:</b>	Director of Planning and Regeneration
<b>Corporate Priorities:</b>	Maintain and extend prosperity

**Purpose:**

To provide details on a revised scheme for the demolition of the existing multi storey car park and construction of a new surface car park and seek approval for an increased project budget.

**Executive summary:**

The detailed design process has resulted in necessary revisions to the original scheme, notably in relation to drainage and highways. Electric vehicle charging provision is to be included with the scheme, but the opportunity to install solar photovoltaic canopies has been reviewed but discounted at this time. Additionally, it is advised that construction costs have risen significantly over the last 18 months.

Given the detailed design revisions and based on the tenders received, the scheme is not achievable within the previously approved budget and therefore an increased project budget is required for the final scheme to proceed.

**Recommendation:**

It is recommended that the Executive approves an increased budget of £2.5 million.

**Reason:**

To support the regeneration of Fareham town centre and to be a key driver of further development and investment.

**Cost of proposals:**

The cost of the revised scheme is £2.5 million. This includes the demolition of the existing multi storey car park and the provision of a smaller surface car park.

**Appendices:** None

**Background papers:** Report to the Executive 16 May 2022 – Regeneration of Fareham town centre, including Fareham Live and Osborn Road multi-storey car park.

Report to the Executive 3 July 2023 – Osborn Road multi-storey car park.

**Reference papers:** None

# FAREHAM

## BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Executive Briefing Paper

<b>Date:</b>	18 September 2023
<b>Subject:</b>	Osborn Road Multi Storey car park
<b>Briefing by:</b>	Director of Planning and Regeneration
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Policy and Resources

#### BACKGROUND

1. On the 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023 the Executive considered a report on the regeneration of Fareham town centre including Fareham Live and Osborn Road multi storey car park.
2. A further report on the Osborn Road Multi Storey was considered at the Executive meeting on the 3 July 2023. Details of progress to date was noted and approval given for a delegated authority to award contracts for these works was provided for the Director of Planning and Regeneration, following consultation with the Executive Member for Policy and Resources.
3. This report further provides details of a revised scheme and budget for the demolition of the existing multi storey car park with the construction of a new surface car park on the site.

#### TENDER PROCESS

4. The previous approved budget £1.96 million was provided early in 2022 and based on information from similar schemes and details from our consultant team.
5. In the period between estimate costs being prepared and tenders being received it should be noted that construction costs have risen in excess of 12%.
6. Development of the scheme has included improved drainage which wasn't originally included, in addition to extra highway requirements.
7. A further development of the design outside the original costings was the addition of solar photovoltaic (PV) canopies with associated battery storage with initial projections showing a short pay-back period.
8. Four tenders were received for this project from local and regional contractors. All provided costs that were above our projected costs for the demolition and construction works.

9. It was noted that the costs for the solar PV canopies were significantly above our expectations with the pay-back period being more than double the initial evaluation.

### **REVISED SCHEME**

10. A review of the design for the new car park has been carried out. This retained most of the features required for the operation of a modern car park that supports the regeneration of the town centre and to serve Fareham Live.
11. One key omission is the solar PV canopies with associated CCTV and battery storage. With the key reason being their high initial cost and longer than projected pay-back period.
12. The revised scheme will provide an estimated 129 standard car parking spaces including a number with electric vehicle (EV) charging facilities. In addition, 7 accessible car parking spaces will be provided.
13. The plan remains for the Council's car park control room to be relocated to the Civic Offices.

### **BUDGET**

14. The cost for the revised scheme is £2.5 million as against the original approved scheme at £1.96 million.
15. The revised cost for the demolition of the Osborn Road Multi-Storey and the provision of a smaller surface car park will be funded from future CIL receipts. Whilst CIL receipts accumulate, borrowing will be used with loan interest serviced using coastal car parking revenues. Currently it is expected that it would take 3-4 years before sufficient CIL receipts are received.

### **CLIMATE CHANGE**

16. These proposals see no changes to the Carbon Impact Assessment presented to the Executive meeting on the 3 July 2023.

### **PROGRAMME**

17. Previously it was programmed that the car park would close in October 2023 to allow preparation for demolition. We are now likely to encounter a short delay whilst this approval process on the budget is concluded and based on a favourable outcome this is now likely to be during November 2023.
18. With most of the works taking place over the winter period it is likely that the new car park will be opened in Spring 2024.

### **CONCLUSION**

19. These proposals provide a new car park that will support the regeneration of Fareham town centre, alongside the development and opening of Fareham Live.

**Enquiries:**

For further information on this report please contact Ian Cousins, Property Manager  
(01329) 824835.



# FAREHAM

## BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Report to the Executive for Decision 18 September 2023

<b>Portfolio:</b>	Policy and Resources
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Opportunities Plan Development Update</b>
<b>Report of:</b>	Assistant Chief Executive Officer
<b>Corporate Priorities:</b>	A Dynamic, Prudent and Progressive Council

**Purpose:**

To provide an update on the development of the Council's Opportunities Plan and confirm the projects to be undertaken during 2023/24, whilst seeking approval for a revenue budget, funded from general fund reserves where necessary, to support implementation of the plan.

**Executive summary:**

The Council has a long history of prudent financial management and of responding to fiscal challenges whilst continuing to provide a wide range of customer focused services.

The latest Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) was presented at the 9 January 2023 Executive meeting. This predicted a funding shortfall of around £401,000 in 2023/24 rising to £2,400,000 by 2026/27.

The Executive report identified the need for a further Opportunities Plan to address the budget shortfalls and build in capacity for future pressures and uncertainties, with the aim of ensuring continued service provision across the Council.

A holistic cross Council approach that balances the use of the levers available to us has been used in developing a proposed Opportunities Plan for 2023/24. This process has involved project ideas from staff at all levels alongside feedback from Members.

This report presents the proposed Opportunities Plan for 2023/24. The projects contained in the Plan have the estimated potential to positively impact on the Council's budget by £556,024 in 2023/24, increasing to £950,743 in 2024/25.

To support the delivery of some projects a revenue budget of £100,000 is proposed, which will be funded from general fund reserves where necessary.

Members will have continued oversight of the progress of the plan through updates to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Panel every 6-months, as well as annual updates to the remaining Scrutiny and Committee meetings.

**Recommendation/Recommended Option:**

It is recommended that the Executive approves:

- (a) the draft Opportunities Plan for 2023/24, as set out in Appendix A to this report;
- (b) a revenue budget of £100,000 to be allocated from general fund reserves to support the delivery of the plan; and
- (c) the proposed governance arrangements for the plan.

**Reason:**

To ensure that the Council remains financially sustainable, has a balanced budget for 2023/24 and can continue to provide services across the organisation.

**Cost of proposals:**

The projects contained in the Plan have the estimated potential to positively impact on the Council's budget by £556,024 in 2023/24, increasing to £950,743 in 2024/25. To support the delivery of some projects a revenue budget of £100,000 is proposed, which will be funded through general fund reserves where necessary.

**Appendices:**                    **A: Draft Opportunities Plan for 2023/24**

**Background papers:**   **Opportunities Plan Evidence \* partially exempt**

**Reference papers:**        **7 January 2019 Executive Report: Financial Forecasts and Budgets**

**9 January 2023 Executive Report: Finance Strategy, Revenue Budget & Council Tax 2023/24**



# FAREHAM

## BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Executive Briefing Paper

<b>Date:</b>	18 September 2023
<b>Subject:</b>	Opportunities Plan Development Update
<b>Briefing by:</b>	Assistant Chief Executive Officer
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Policy and Resources

#### INTRODUCTION

1. This report presents an update on the development of the Council's Opportunities Plan and confirms the projects to be undertaken during 2023/24. It also seeks approval for a dedicated revenue budget to support the delivery of the proposed plan, where necessary funded from general fund reserves.

#### Background

2. The Council has a long history of prudent financial management and of responding to fiscal challenges whilst continuing to provide a wide range of customer focused services. This has been achieved by taking a strategic, organisational wide approach to tackling predicted financial pressures.
3. The Council's original Opportunities Plan was approved at the 7 January 2019 Executive meeting, in response to a predicted funding shortfall by 2020/21. The Plan contained a range of projects designed to generate additional revenue, reduce costs, work in more efficient ways, as well as respond to service pressures and opportunities.
4. The Plan ran until the end of 2022/23 and contained a number of successful projects. For example, our Garden Waste Subscription Service generated £1.6m in additional income during its first year, helping to fund the delivery of Streetscene services across the Borough.
5. Charging in our coastal car parks began in August 2021. In its first year, the scheme generated around £440,000 in additional revenue. This contributed to the continued management of our 44 car parks and funded a more responsive approach to environmental enforcement, which is an important priority for many residents.
6. These projects and the many smaller schemes implemented as part of the original Opportunities Plan helped ensure the Council continued to provide a range of high performing customer-focused services.
7. Whilst the original Opportunities Plan was a success, wider societal and economic conditions have placed further pressure on the Council's finances. For example, some

service areas such as town centre car parking continue to see a reduction in income.

8. We have also experienced large increases in our costs due to high inflation figures, including rising fuel and energy prices, as well as increases to pay for employees and contractors. The cost-of-living crises has also impacted on many of our residents increasing demand for services such as benefits and housing.

### **Medium Term Financial Strategy**

9. The latest Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) was presented at the 9 January 2023 Executive meeting, preceded by an All-Member Briefing. The MTFS contained a 5-year financial forecast based on the best estimates available at the time. This predicted a funding shortfall of around £401,000 in 2023/24 rising to £1,500,000 in 2025/26.
10. All of the Council's useable reserves would need to be used alongside an annual 3% increase in Council Tax to balance the budget in 2023/24 and 2025/26. The shortfall was predicted to grow to around £2,300,000 in 2025/26 and £2,400,000 in 2026/7, but with no available reserves left to balance the budget. This would pose an unacceptable risk to service provision.
11. The Executive report identified the need for a new Opportunities Plan to address the budget shortfalls and build in capacity for future pressures and uncertainties. The next part of the report outlines the Council's approach to developing this plan.

### **Opportunities Plan Approach**

12. In order to close the funding gap, an holistic cross-Council approach is required which balances the use of the levers available to us:
  - *Increase charges to service users:* The majority of our fees and charges are reviewed annually by the Executive, but there may be opportunities for further reviews that can balance income generation to cover the cost of provision whilst still providing value to our customers.
  - *Introducing new charges for discretionary services:* There are a number of discretionary services that the Council is not legally required to provide that are currently offered to residents and businesses free of charge.
  - *Introduce new chargeable services:* The Council has a wide range of skill sets which could be marketed. Any proposal would have to consider the resources available and the potential impact on current service provision.
  - *More efficient ways of working:* We have a good track record in designing services that meet our customers' demands in efficient ways. However, there may be opportunities to find new ways to work even more efficiently.
  - *Change the level of service we provide:* There may be opportunities to reduce the level of service we provide, particularly if we are providing more than we are contracted or required to do.
  - *Lobbying government:* Some of our services carry statutory charges that we have no control over. We could lobby Government to ensure that statutory charges adequately cover costs, particularly for those fees that have not been updated for a long period of time e.g. alcohol licenses.

- *Treasury Management:* Review our approach to ensure that we continue to manage our borrowing and investments in the most prudent way.
  - *Council Tax increases:* The budget calculations in the Medium Term Financial Strategy are based on the assumption that Fareham's element of Council Tax is increased by 3% each year.
13. There is potential for an annual increase greater than 3% but this would require a public referendum. This would be a costly exercise and not guaranteed to return a favourable result. As of January 2023, only one referendum on a higher than threshold increase to Council Tax had ever taken place in England. In 2015/16, 70% of voters opposed the 15.8% increase proposed by the Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner.
  14. When considering the use of any of the levers above, the potential impact on our customers, service provision and the wider Council will need to be taken into account.
  15. In addition to opportunities we can influence, there is potential for additional income to be generated from 'Business as Usual' developments that are outside of our direct control. For example, the Government's recent consultation on increasing planning application fees by 25-35% will have a positive impact on revenue when implemented in April 2024.

### **Developing the Opportunities Plan**

16. A briefing note outlining the approach to developing the Council's new Opportunities Plan was shared with Members and Managers in February 2023. Following this, members of the Finance and Opportunities Teams met with Directors, then Heads of Service and other Service leads to generate and record ideas for potential projects. Staff were also regularly encouraged via the Chief Executive Officer's 'Our News' bulletin to put forward their ideas, with a number of quality proposals coming forward.

### **Developing the plan**

17. Since February, work to develop a cross-Council plan that balances the use of the levers identified above has focused on the following key areas:
18. *Ongoing workstreams:* A significant number of projects were either carried over from the previous Opportunities Plan such as Garden Waste subscriptions or had already started e.g. charging monitoring fees for Section 106 obligations.
19. *Procurement Review:* This is a regular and ongoing piece of work where supplier contracts up for renewal are assessed to ensure they still meet service's needs, whether we need to continue with the contract, explore alternative methods of provision e.g. in-house, and to test the market to ensure that we are getting good value for money.
20. *Establishment Review:* This is an ongoing piece of work that is part of our normal working practices to ensure that our establishment i.e. the number of staff we have matches service requirements across the Council.
21. *County Council and Discretionary Services Review:* Understanding our obligations as part of agreements with Hampshire County Council alongside our level of discretionary service provision have helped inform the service reviews below.
22. *Service reviews:* Every service in the Council was asked to provide opportunities for

income generation, cost savings and ideas for working in more efficient ways. These were also influenced more broadly by Member and staff ideas.

23. The above pieces of work fed into the development of a long list of potential projects. In addition to the above a *Capital/Treasury Funding Review* will take place shortly. This piece of work will consider opportunities to restructure debt and investments, and capital funding arrangements, to identify possible opportunities to reduce the associated revenue costs.

### **Member involvement**

24. Alongside staff, Members have had an important role in developing the proposed Opportunities Plan. Executive Members helped shape early proposals that were then presented to relevant Scrutiny Panels and Committees for comment, questions and ideas during June and July. As a result of the feedback, some projects were removed from the proposed Plan.
25. A number of Members were particularly keen to explore the long-term futures of both the Civic Offices and the Depot. Asset Management Plans are in place for both buildings for the next 5 and 3 years respectively. The feasibility of remaining in situ versus alternative provision beyond these timeframes involves significant investigations. They will be completed ahead of the expiry of the Asset Management Plans. However, due to the timescales involved, they are not included in the draft Opportunities Plan for 2023/24.
26. More generally, there was a recognition among all Members of the need to find savings and/or additional income to ensure continued service provision. However, they were keen that we should try to balance the potential for additional income or cost reductions against continuing to offer high quality and good value services to our customers. This approach is reflected in the draft plan for 2023/24.

### **The Opportunities Plan 2023/24**

27. All service areas have contributed projects to the proposed Opportunities Plan 2023/24, which can be found in Appendix A. To aid future monitoring the projects are presented according to the Executive/Scrutiny Panel and Committee areas services sit within. Whilst the scale of opportunities associated with each portfolio or committee varies, they each make an important contribution to ensuring we cover the growing costs of service provision.
28. The Plan is a living document and will evolve. For example, new projects may be added, or brought forward depending on resources and priorities. Estimates of savings for each project have been provided where possible and will be regularly updated. The following provides an overview of the main categories in the plan.
29. *3 projects carried over from the previous Opportunities Plan:* These include projects such as Garden Waste renewals for Year 2 and the extension of the coastal car parks to include Wicor.
30. *38 projects that have already been approved or started:* These include projects that are already underway, such as reducing the turnaround time for void properties and the Fareham Live Wave of Thanks. Some of these projects have now been completed, including the Solent Airport Revenue Strategy and the introduction of S.106 monitoring fees.

31. *21 new projects that will be undertaken during 2023/24 but could deliver savings in 2024/25 or beyond:* These are projects that have either not yet started or require significant work to progress and would therefore deliver positive outcomes in 2024/25 or later.
32. Some projects may result in income or savings beyond next year and are marked accordingly in Appendix A. A good example of this is the detailed Hook Tip Solar Farm business case. If the project is deemed viable it would take a number of years before becoming operational and generating income.
33. *91 'Year 2' projects have been identified which could be undertaken from 2024/25 onwards:* These include a range of feasibility studies for future projects, as well as reviewing our approach to the Local Plan review in line with prospective updated Government guidance. Appendix A includes 23 Year 2 projects which have already been planned. Depending on the resources available some of these projects may be brought forward to 2023/24.
34. *11 Business as Usual projects:* There are a number of revenue streams that will likely increase as a result of external factors. For example, works on the first phase of Welborne housebuilding and the Village Centre will result in significant one-off planning fees being paid to the Council.
35. A number of projects will require additional support to deliver results with the Opportunities Team providing help where resources and skills allow. A number of projects, such as the Hook Tip Solar Business Case and the Council Tax Support Banding Review, will require external expert support. Therefore a revenue budget of £100,000 is proposed, which will be funded from general fund reserves where necessary.

### **Financial Considerations**

36. The January 2023 MTFS identified a budget gap of £401,000 in 2023/24 and £1,500,000 in 2025/26. The budget modelling has recently been updated to reflect developments such as the proposed pay award for staff which is set and agreed nationally. This has resulted in a revised budget gap of £416,000 in 2023/24 and £1,568,000 in 2024/25.
37. Where possible, the financial impact for each project in the Opportunities Plan has been estimated and included in Appendix A. These projections consider the additional savings or income they could generate against any costs they would incur.
38. Finance Business Partners have worked closely with their services to refine their estimates and will continue to do so as the projects progress. However, there are a number of proposed projects where the projections are still being developed and have been marked as TBC in Appendix A.
39. Some projects in the plan, e.g. the collection of future S106 contributions, will primarily contribute to ring-fenced projects and not our general revenue budget gap and are therefore excluded from the financial estimates below. Other non-cashable benefits such as officer time savings are also excluded.
40. Table 1 below presents the Plan's current overall annual revenue income and savings projections for this financial year and next. Figures have been adjusted for part year income in 2023/24 where appropriate.

41. Some current projects are not expected to deliver savings until 2024/25 or later. Not all projects listed in Appendix A have been costed, and some projects deliver an efficiency or best practice outcome rather than financial.
42. The table does not take into account the establishment review, sale of land or the potential revenue generated by the acquisition of town centre assets as part of the Council's comprehensive programme of town centre regeneration.

<b>Table 1: 2023/24 Opportunities Plan Income and Savings Projections</b>				
	<b>23/24</b>		<b>24/25</b>	
<b>Project type</b>	<b>Revenue income/ savings</b>	<b>One-off income/ savings</b>	<b>Revenue income/ savings</b>	<b>One-off income/ savings</b>
Previous Opportunities Plan	£65,607	-	£75,011	-
Already approved or started projects	£364,491	£125,926	£468,541	£15,000
2023/24 projects with outcomes in 2024/25 or later	-	-	£257,211	£135,000
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>£429,978</b>	<b>£125,926</b>	<b>£800,763</b>	<b>£150,000</b>
<b>Total Opportunities Plan income and savings</b>	<b>£556,024</b>		<b>£950,743</b>	
<b>Latest Budget Gap estimate</b>	<b>£-416,000</b>		<b>£-1,568,000</b>	
<b>Outcome</b>	<b>£140,024</b>		<b>£-617,257</b>	

43. Table 1 shows the Opportunities Plan is currently projected to deliver additional income or savings of £556,024 in 2023/24 increasing to £950,743 in 2024/25. This would result in a budget surplus of £140,024 in 2023/24, meaning that our limited General Fund reserves would not be depleted but potentially added to. The ongoing revenue savings and increased income generation would also significantly reduce the projected funding gap in 2026/7 from an estimated £1,568,000 to £617,257.
44. Alongside the Opportunities Plan projects included in Table 1, Business As Usual activity continues to generate improved income opportunities. These include ongoing rent and service charge reviews, as well as one off and annualised fee increases across services.
45. The start of work on site at Welborne will impact on Planning and Building Control in particular, with £175,000 in planning fees and £32,000 in building control fees expected in 2023/24. Nationally, an increase in planning application fees will be implemented in April 2024.
46. Overall, the Business As Usual activity when combined with the other potential income

and savings opportunities not yet accounted for in Table 1. e.g. land sales, will ensure that the Council continues to be financially secure.

47. However, there remain uncertainties. In particular, the long-term impact of persistently high inflation and interest rates, which may result in further cost pressures for the Council whilst driving up demand for services such as housing and benefits. With this in mind, the Plan will need to be updated regularly and have suitably robust governance.

### **Proposed Monitoring and Governance**

48. In order to ensure sufficient oversight of the progress of the proposed plan, a new Opportunities Plan Officer Board would be set up involving the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), the Head of Finance and Audit and the Policy, Research and Engagement Manager.
49. The board would receive quarterly updates on the progress of each project and their financial projections. Further ad-hoc meetings would take place at significant decision points for larger projects or if there are concerns regarding the progress of a project.
50. Members would have a vital role to play in overseeing and scrutinising the delivery of the plan. It is proposed that an update report be presented to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Panel twice a year. The other Scrutiny Panels and Committees would receive annual updates on the progress of the projects within their meetings' responsibility.

### **Next Steps**

51. If the 2023/24 Opportunities Plan is approved the first-year projects not already started will commence during the remainder of the financial year. The financial projections in the Plan will inform the next review of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to be reported to the 8 January Executive.

### **Conclusion**

52. The projects included in the proposed Opportunities Plan for 2023/24 will ensure that the Council continues to be financially secure, covering our service costs and supporting the continued provision of a wide range of high-quality services.

### **Enquiries:**

For further information on this report please contact Roy Brown extension 01329 824489





**Appendix A**

**Draft Opportunities Plan for 2023/24**

**Summary of Projected Income (where costed) by Project Type:**

<b>Project Type</b>	<b>Annual Savings / Income</b>	<b>One-Off Savings / Income</b>	<b>Non-Cashable Savings</b>
<b>Previous Opportunities Plan</b>	£75,011		
<b>Projects Already Approved or Started</b>	£422,491	£125,926	£23,962
<b>Y1 Projects with Outcomes in 2024/25 or Later</b>	£354,335	£150,000	
<b>Business as Usual</b>	£174,180	£184,700	
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>£1,026,017</b>	<b>£325,626</b>	<b>£23,962</b>

### Previous Opportunities Plan Projects:

Project	Latest Projected Savings	Savings to build into 2023/24 Budgets	Details / Comment
<b>Health &amp; Public Protection Scrutiny Panel</b>			
<b>8: Environmental Health Out of Hours Claims</b>	£16,800	£16,800	Project complete April 2023. Budget monitoring required to confirm reduced overspend.
<b>14: Coastal Parking Charges at Wicor</b>	£28,211	£18,807	Charging in place 1 August 2023. 8 months charging estimated income of £18,807 in 2023/24.
<b>StreetScene Scrutiny Panel</b>			
<b>10: Garden Waste renewals and marketing campaign</b>	£30,000	£30,000	Subscriptions following year 1 early bird renewals were down by around 1,300. Some lost to expected churn e.g. moving out of Borough. Marketing campaign during spring/summer to attract old and potential new subscribers to recover to year 1 level + 200
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>£75,011</b>	<b>£65,607</b>	

## Projects Already Approved or Started

No:	Description, Wider Impact and Progress Update	Led By:	Annual Savings	One-Off Savings	Non-Cashable Savings	RAG
<b>Policy &amp; Resources Scrutiny Panel</b>						
15	<b>Mobile device contract renewal:</b> Review contract at renewal to ensure best value. Need to ensure we continue with a provider that has good coverage and take into account staff time taken to transfer to ensure real value achieved. Savings likely in 2024/25.	Opps/ IT	£15,000			
21	<b>Segensworth Business Improvement District (BID):</b> This has now been closed, charge levied at time of closure to cover admin costs.	Finance		£16,593		Complete
27	<b>Empty property review:</b> Contract awarded to external company on a no-win-no-fee basis to identify those on our 800 list of long-term empty properties that are actually occupied. Unlikely to generate additional Council Tax but may generate the New Homes Bonus.	Local Tax and Debt	£15,900			
47	<b>Community Centre Business Rates:</b> Previously paying business rates on one centre, when the lease said tenant liable. As a charity, the tenant gets 100% rate relief. Complete March 2023.	Local Tax and Debt	£3,200			Complete
69 / 149	<b>Civic Offices rental income:</b> Review Civic Office tenants leases and space.	Asset Management	£18,700			Complete
235	<b>Working papers for External Audit:</b> Improve production of upfront papers that we know external audit will need. Potential savings on core cost, variations, and officer time.	Audit	£2,500		£900	

237	<b>Fraud Tool costs:</b> Transunion contract cancelled, will utilise IDIS product more at reduced price. Utilise investigation team to do some of the checks for housing so don't incur licence checks. Also saving on audit support time monitoring costs.	Audit	£1,300			Complete Dec 2023
<b>Daedalus Scrutiny Panel</b>						
211	<b>Solent Airport Revenue Strategy:</b> Strategy agreed and flexible approach being used on different elements e.g. fuel pricing.	Strategic Sites	£70,000			Complete
270	<b>Solent Airport Cost Strategy:</b> Work ongoing to minimise costs of site operation where possible. Increasing costs likely to use up much of the additional revenue generated by project 211 over short to medium term.	Strategic Sites	Good practice			
212	<b>Daedalus Café contract:</b> New lease.	Strategic Sites	£5,000			Complete
215	<b>Daedalus Events:</b> Not enough officer resource to run D-day 80 in 2024. Community Interest Company to run event on a trial basis with future approach being decided after that.	Leisure	Good practice		TBC	
210	<b>RCA staff to directly input into Council finance system:</b> Will free up officer resource within the Asset Management Team.	Asset Management	Good practice		£6,625	
<b>Housing Scrutiny Panel</b>						
103	<b>Homelessness funding:</b> Reduction in grant funding paid to HCC. Savings will be ring-fenced for provision of alternate Homelessness Services.	Housing		£78,000		

134	<b>Reduce housing void turnaround times:</b> Reduce time families spend in B&B accommodation, minimise rent loss, Council Tax and utility costs to the Council. Current average is 110 days and want to reduce it to 60. Reviewing processes e.g. introducing a hand back procedure for residents. May require additional assistant surveyor post. Potential administrative officer time savings.	Housing	£67,000		£9,200	
225	<b>Council Tax on housing voids:</b> Reduced housing void turnaround times will lower the Council Tax we have to pay on voids. Also need to ensure that we claim exemption on any voids that are supporting new social/affordable housing provision.	Housing	£33,000			
<b>Health &amp; Public Protection Scrutiny Panel</b>						
29	<b>Bringing car park security in house:</b> Termination of contract with security company to monitor 2 multi-storey car parks. Use in house staff instead.	Parking	£38,000			Complete
86	<b>CCTV Maintenance Budget:</b> £20,000 allocated in budget for cloud storage and maintenance following CCTV review in 2019. Maintenance and storage included in current contracts with suppliers, so should be able to reduce budget by £15,000.	Comm. Safety	£15,000			Complete
92	<b>Increase Building Control fees annually:</b> The Partnership agreed to increase fees by 18% in April 2023 to cover increased costs due to inflation. Likely to move to an annual increase in charges going forward.	BCP	£5,000			Agreed April 2023
98	<b>Reduce late payments:</b> Review outstanding late payments list to identify typical issues and undertake relationship management work. Potential to charge interest on certain late payments.	BCP	£2,000			

99	<b>Building Control road naming and numbering charges:</b> Agreed a 20% uplift in charges for naming and numbering for new developments.	BCP	£2,000			Complete
94	<b>Building Control – FBC Internal Recharges:</b> Review the level recharges to the Building Control Partnership to ensure that they appropriately reflect the amount of HR work carried out by FBC.	BCP / Finance	TBC			
<b>Leisure &amp; Community Scrutiny Panel</b>						
57	<b>Community Grants:</b> Grant requests have reduced during last few years as many local charitable organisations are self-sufficient and can make use of other funding streams. Opportunity to match budget to level of demand.	Leisure	£42,766			
63	<b>Voluntary sector support review:</b> April Executive agreed new approach to supporting voluntary sector. Need to ensure that £20,000 saving is reflected in the updated 2023/24 budget.	Leisure	£20,000			
66	<b>Events Sponsorship:</b> Budget split £15,000 for x-mas light switch on and £10,000 for other events. Brochure has been produced and circulated to local businesses offering a range of sponsorship options. Follow up meetings now taking place.	Leisure/ Econ. Dev.	£4,000			
70	<b>Access all areas administration:</b> Using Eventbrite ticketing system to reduce staff time. Nearly all tickets sold at £10, which should cover cost of £1,625 of holding the events.	Leisure	£1,625		£7,237	
73	<b>Fareham Live Wave of Thanks:</b> Donor wall in shape of a soundwave in new venue. A number of donation levels for residents and businesses. Currently selling well.	Comms. /Leisure		£31,333		
76	<b>Community Centre car park:</b> Community Centre to take on lease of car park.	Leisure / Asset Mngt	£2,500			

80	<b>Community Centre Lease:</b> Nature of lease changed to transfer the repairs and maintenance responsibilities to the tenant which will reduce our costs. Expected to be signed in September 2023.	Leisure/Asset Mgmt.	£5,000			
<b>Planning &amp; Development Scrutiny Panel</b>						
1 / 2 / 4 / 5	<b>S106 and CIL:</b> Several projects in place to ensure that S106 and CIL agreements are managed efficiently, with income used appropriately. These include maximising the use of past S106 monies, reviewing the process for monitoring and managing agreements, the introduction of the S106 Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and reviewing the level of CIL agreements. Any income is likely to be for specific projects but may be an opportunity to support service provision in short term.	Audit/Finance  Planning Strategy	Good practice			
201	<b>5-year programme for small coastal works:</b> Delays in decision making can result in additional project costs e.g. inflation. Creating a capital programme based on high-risk areas with earmarked capital funds approved will help ensure that projects can move forward quickly.	Coastal Partners	Good practice			
<b>Climate Change Scrutiny Panel</b>						
146	<b>Utilities cost review:</b> First element is to minimise costs through procurement e.g, exploring aggregated buying. The second is to reduce consumption where we can e.g. through better management of boilers.	Opportunities /Property	TBC			
20	<b>Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging in car parks:</b> Approve EV charging provision in a phased approach starting with the new Osborn Road surface car park. Income potential likely to be limited initially but will help reduce EV infrastructure requirements at depot in the medium term.	Opportunities /Property	TBC			



<b>Planning Committee</b>						
<b>6</b>	<b>Charge a S106 monitoring fee:</b> Executive approved the charging of a £500 monitoring fee for each financial and non-financial planning obligation, capped at £10,000 per agreement. This will be used to cover the costs of monitoring by officers. In place effective 1 August 2023.	Planning	£15,000			Complete
<b>Licencing &amp; Regulatory Committee</b>						
<b>33</b>	<b>Statutory Licencing Charges:</b> Based on the DCMS / LU statutory charges survey / report, potential additional income £38,000. This is not likely to be agreed until 2025.	Enforcement	£38,000			
<b>TOTAL:</b>			<b>£422,491</b>	<b>£125,926</b>	<b>£23,962</b>	

## Year 1 Projects with Outcomes in 2024/25 or Later

No:	Description, Wider Impact and Progress Update	Led By:	Annual Savings	One-Off Savings	Non-Cashable Savings	RAG
<b>Policy &amp; Resources Scrutiny Panel</b>						
28	<b>Business Rates property review:</b> external company to look for businesses avoiding or underpaying business rates on a no-win-no-fee basis.	Local Tax and Debt	£5,000			
49	<b>Agency staff contract margins:</b> Can achieve better charge per staff placement than currently achieved through our procurement framework by going into partnership for agency staff with Portsmouth City Council. Need to transition in a considered way to ensure supply of staff meet our requirements.	Personnel	£15,000			
72	<b>Fareham Live Business Rates:</b> Expected saving against 2023/24 budget.	Local Tax and Debt	£30,983			
38	<b>Review Council Tax support scheme:</b> Some Councils have moved to the use of income bands to manage their schemes. Assess potential for similar approach, whilst mitigating impact on customers where we can. Analyse the cost of recovering debt on the 20% Council Tax that support scheme customers need to pay for Band C properties versus income generated. External consultant needed. Outcomes unlikely to be realised until 2026/27	C. Tax and Debt / Consultant	TBC			Not Started
147	<b>Hire filming locations in Borough:</b> There are a number of scenic locations in Fareham that could be hired out for filming. Solent LEP proposing joint promotion of the sub-region to filming companies.	Comms. /Opps.	£10,000			
155	<b>Housing purchase Stamp Duty:</b> Working with external company to claim back stamp duty for last four years paid on property purchases to increase our housing stock.	Asset Mgmt. /Housing		£135,000		

157	<b>Debt Recovery Project:</b> Working Group set up to reduce the value of bad debtors and the write off value through improved invoicing, more justifiable debts, tracing, more timely chasing.	Finance	£35,550			
175	<b>Expert HR advice:</b> Ensure that we only subscribe to the HR advice services that are needed to meet our requirements.	Personnel	£5,000			
245	<b>Joint procurement of insurance charge:</b> We have led on joint procurement of insurance cover for a group of Councils. Tender process will begin in January 2024. Propose that we charge other Councils for the procurement work to recover our costs.	Finance		£15,000		
<b>Daedalus Scrutiny Panel</b>						
51	<b>Project Falcon:</b> Sale of land development land – requirement for planning and agreement from RCA	Asset Mgmt				
<b>Housing Scrutiny Panel</b>						
23	<b>Market Council's Careline service:</b> Sheltered Housing tenants can sign up to Care Line and we do have private households signed up. A targeted marketing campaign may help increase subscribers. Need to be aware of impact on staff resources from increased subscribers.	Opportunities/ Neighbourhood	£11,250			Not Started
229	<b>Review void rubbish collection process:</b> Currently outsource rubbish collection at voids if no capacity in Streetscene. Impact on rubbish collection and costs will be analysed during trial of new void turnaround process starting in October 2023.	Housing Delivery/ Opportunities	TBC			Not Started
233	<b>Rationalise responsive repairs framework:</b> Current framework ends November 2024. Tend to use for specialist work or if no capacity internally. Could rotate suppliers to get better prices or get quotes each time or bring some work in house but would need to consider impact on internal resources. Balance competitiveness with delivery.	Housing Delivery/ Opportunities	TBC			Not Started

Health & Public Protection Scrutiny Panel						
17 / 18 / 30	<b>Town Centre Car Park Review:</b> Consider tariff and enforcement at the new Osborn Road surface car park. Review parking charges and enforcement times across all town centre car parks	Opps/Park	£206,552			
Leisure & Community Scrutiny Panel						
81	<b>Padel Tennis:</b> Outdoor sport gaining popularity will require outdoor courts next to Fareham Leisure Centre. Need to ensure it compliments other aspirations for the site i.e. all weather football pitches. Project already started but potential income likely from 2025/6.	Leisure/Opps	£20,000			
Planning & Development Scrutiny Panel						
124	<b>Ensure best value from Partnerships:</b> Rationalise use of external consultants for work where partners have internal expertise and potential resource to conduct studies or provide project oversight.	Planning Strategy	£10,000			
Climate Change Scrutiny Panel						
54	<b>Hook Tip Solar Farm detailed business case:</b> Initial feasibility studies indicate revenue potential, however, there are significant capital costs. A detailed business case would identify all the possible risks and opportunities. Will require investment in external expert advice.	Asset Mgmt. /Opps.	TBC			
191	<b>Funding bid for Energy Saving Infrastructure in Leisure Centres:</b> Potential funding bids to either the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund or Phase 2 of the Swimming Pool Support Fund for energy saving measures at both Leisure Centres to reduce utilities costs and carbon footprint. This may require some matched funding.	Leisure	TBC			

StreetScene Scrutiny Panel						
12	<p><b>Transition more Garden Waste customers to online renewals:</b> High number of calls at early-bird renewals time requires additional temporary staff resource. Campaign to move more onto online automatic renewals + pro-actively communicating with customers about common issues they phoned in about in year 1 renewals. Should help reduce temporary staff needed in 2024/25.</p>	Streetscene/ Comms/Opps.	£5,000			
<b>TOTAL:</b>			<b>£354,335</b>	<b>£150,000</b>		

## Business as Usual Projects

No:	Description, Wider Impact and Progress Update	Led By:	Annual Savings	One-Off Savings	Non-Cashable Savings	RAG
<b>Policy &amp; Resources Scrutiny Panel</b>						
22	<b>Business rates on Council properties:</b> Rates of Commercial properties reviewed by rating agent on our behalf, may be opportunities to reduce rates.	Asset Mgmt. /Finance	£10,740			
182	<b>Commercial Estate rent reviews:</b> Annual rent reviews with opportunities for potential increases to cover costs identified.	Asset Mgmt.	TBC			
<b>Daedalus Scrutiny Panel</b>						
50	<b>Unlock and maximise Faraday Business Park opportunities:</b> Business case submitted for additional specialist surveyor resource to enable unlocking of sites to generate future capital receipts. Additional resource will be a cost but should accelerate capital receipts from land sales.	Asset Mgmt.	TBC			
206	<b>Review Daedalus Service Charges:</b> Improve ability to issue timely service charge estimates to tenants.	Asset Mgmt.	Good practice			
<b>Housing Scrutiny Panel</b>						
138	<b>Housing System Time Savings:</b> Utilise new modules on housing system to deliver efficiencies in staff time.	Housing	Good practice			
<b>Health &amp; Public Protection Scrutiny Panel</b>						
93	<b>Building Control Income from Welborne work:</b> Potential to work on the Village Centre. Need to consider the resource requirements for any work. Estimated start in the first quarter of 2024/25.	BCP	£13,440			

96	<b>Building Control work from High Rise Safety Assessment work:</b> Lack of clarity from Health and Safety Executive (HSE) on requirements placed on Local Authorities to deliver new regime, as they may set up independent regulator. HSE aiming for October 2023 start which may be ambitious.	BCP	TBC			
<b>Planning Committee</b>						
34	<b>Increase in Planning Application fees:</b> Government consultation on increasing fees by 25%-35%. Confirmed that increase will come into effect 1 April 2024.	Planning	£150,000			
262/ 263/ 114	<b>Planning advice and fees for Welborne:</b> Detailed pre-planning advice, Village Centre planning application and first phase of home applications.	Planning		£184,700		
<b>TOTAL:</b>			<b>£174,180</b>	<b>£184,700</b>		

## Potential Year 2+ Projects

Description	Led By
<b>Policy &amp; Resources Scrutiny Panel</b>	
37: Maximise income from Council assets and land	Asset Management
239: Employ specialist debt tracing agents	Local Tax and Debt
<b>Daedalus Scrutiny Panel</b>	
207: Airport contractor retender in 2025/26	Strategic Sites
<b>Housing Scrutiny Panel</b>	
136: Assess feasibility of changing rent type after voids	Housing Delivery
135: Sell space to housing providers on Council's Help to Buy online property finder	Housing Delivery/Options
270: Strategic review of housing stock to ensure we match changing demands	Housing Delivery
113: Identify opportunities for more self-contained homeless accommodation	Housing Delivery/Options
<b>Health &amp; Public Protection Scrutiny Panel</b>	
87: Feasibility study into commercialising Pest Control	Opps Team
95: Review hours charged by Building Control	BCP
43: Feasibility of parking and enforcement partnership	Parking
243: Assess feasibility of cashless car parks	Parking/Opps Team
<b>Leisure &amp; Community Scrutiny Panel</b>	
264: Fareham Leisure Centre car washing service	Leisure
42: Review Shopmobility Service Level Agreement (Year 3+)	Leisure
65: Review Citizens Advice Bureau to ensure it still meets needs (Year 3+)	Leisure
<b>Planning &amp; Development Scrutiny Panel</b>	
246: Bird Aware administration cost recovery	Planning Strategy
119: Local Authority Regeneration partnerships opportunities	Planning Strategy
125: Extend timeframe of the review of the Local Plan	Planning Strategy
123: Review use of Fareham Today for Local Plan consultation	Planning Strategy
<b>Climate Change Scrutiny Panel</b>	
187: Renewable energy generation and storage opportunities at Daedalus	Asset Management
199: Energy Saving Infrastructure in Community Centres	Property
<b>StreetScene Scrutiny Panel</b>	



24: Review Trade Waste charging model to cover costs	Streetscene/Opps
104: Review Highways Verge maintenance approach	Streetscene/Opps
109: Review Textile recycling contract	Streetscene



By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

