

Place Scrutiny Committee's Comments on savings and use of additional funding

The Place Scrutiny Committee RPPR Board discussed the comments it wished to make to Cabinet on the Portfolio Plans, MTFP Savings Plan and the priorities for the use of the one-off funding at its meeting on 17 December 2019.

The Board has some concerns about the impact of the savings planned for Trading Standards and the Library Service. For Trading Standards, the planned savings could reduce the capacity to work on Scams and to protect vulnerable people. If possible, this work should be protected as it contributes to keeping vulnerable people safe, particularly the elderly. For Libraries, the Board considered that it would be difficult to achieve the future savings of £0.528 million without having an impact on the provision of library services across the County.

Priorities for the Use of One-off funding

The Place RPPR Board acknowledges the pressures faced by Children's and Adult's social care services. However, in the light of the additional funding being made available by central Government for social care, the Board considers that it is important for some of the one-off funding to be spent on visible, universal services that are important to the wider community and meet the Council's objectives. The Board considered that some priority should be given to one-off investments that council tax payers will see as improving council services for them.

With the above factors in mind, the Place RPPR Board agreed to recommend to Cabinet the following one-off options as priorities:

Priority	Comment	Response
1	<p>Highways Works Programme Management (£2.000million in 2020/21) - The Place RPPR Board's first priority for the use of one-off funding is to spend £2 million on the Highways Works Programme Management. The Board recommends that the £2 million is spent on Highways infrastructure in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dropped Kerbs - £75,000 is spent on installing dropped kerbs to promote access for the whole community, particularly those with disabilities. The additional funding will enable the backlog of requests to be dealt with and has a wide social benefit.• Road markings – Additional funding for road markings (lining and signing) based on the initial findings of the Scrutiny Review, which will help promote road safety and road capacity across the County.• Maintenance of Pavements – Additional funding to repair pavements to reduce falls and promote walking as a sustainable way of getting around.	<p>Ref H - CET Highways Works Programme Management £1 million has been approved for spending in 2020/21 out of the £2million.</p> <p>This is a contribution towards the agreed basic need investment to be funded in the Capital Programme for Highways Works Programme Management in order to achieve agreed condition targets. This will fund works including dropped kerbs, lining and other areas of highways maintenance.</p> <p>Indications are that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• £75,000 will be spent on dropped kerbs thereby eliminating the backlog of requests;• £165,000 will be used to fund an additional road marking gang for a year; and• The remainder will be

Priority	Comment	Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potholes – Additional expenditure to enhance the existing work to repair potholes which has a wide community benefit for road transport across the County. 	spent on patching and other areas of highways maintenance.
2	Economic Development (£1.000 million in 2020/21) - The Board's second priority is the £1million expenditure on Economic Development. Additional investment in this area would have benefits for the wider community by increasing employment opportunities for residents and promoting sustainable economic growth in East Sussex.	Ref N - CET Economic Development - Not progressed. The ambition is that this funding will be self-sustaining. Loan repayments being held in reserve to fund expenditure in future years and agreed through the RPPR process. Expenditure on these loans and grants will be included for the first three years of the programme in line with the MTFP period; the capital programme provides for £4.537m in this area,
	In addition to the above, the Board asks Cabinet to consider the impact of the future savings in Trading Standards and Library Service budgets, as the Board has concerns about size of the savings where it affects the capacity of Trading Standards to undertake work on scams to protect vulnerable people and the provision of the County's Library Service.	Ref B - Libraries. Part of the Libraries savings £0.288m out of £0.528m will be reprofiled in 2021/22. This will still deliver £0.240m of planned savings in 2021/22, to allow for a comprehensive review of the strategic library commissioning strategy and allow a phased approach to the review of options in respect of the Ropemaker Park lease. Ref C - Trading Standards. The Trading Standards savings will be deferred by two years from 2020/21 to 2022/23. The agreement of the Brexit Withdrawal Bill and the negotiations of new trading arrangements will mean that businesses may need support in moving to a new regulatory framework and could mean additional responsibilities for council Trading Standards. It is therefore prudent to keep the small capacity we have until the implications of Brexit and new trading arrangements are clear.