

REPORT OF THE CABINET

The Cabinet met on 2 March 2021. Attendances:-

Councillor Glazier (Chair)

Councillors Bennett, Bentley, Claire Dowling, Maynard, Simmons, Standley and Tidy

1. Council Monitoring - Quarter 3 2020/21

1.1 The Cabinet has considered a report on performance against the Council Plan, Revenue Budget, Capital Programme, Savings Plan and risks for quarter 3 2020/21. Broad progress against the Council's four strategic priority outcomes is summarised below and an overview of finance and performance data is provided in the Corporate Summary at Appendix 1. Strategic risks are reported at Appendix 7.

Council Plan 2020/21 amendments and variations

1.2 The Cabinet has agreed to the amendment of seven Adult Social Care and Health performance measures:

- Number of hospital bed days lost due to delayed transfers from hospital care (Daily average)
- Number of hospital bed days lost due to delayed transfers from hospital care due to Council social services (Daily average)
- Number of hospital bed days lost due to delayed transfers from hospital care due to local NHS (Daily average)

Targets to be amended from 39.8, 11.5, and 24.4 respectively to 'Cannot be implemented due to COVID' because NHS England has paused the collection and publication of the data (see Appendix 2, refs i, ii, iii).

- The number of health and social care staff and voluntary sector organisations trained to deliver brief interventions and advice to promote, encourage and help people make healthier choices as part of the Making Every Contact Count (MECC) initiative

Target to be amended from 600 to 150 due to disruption in delivering the initiative (see Appendix 2, ref vi).

- Number of new service user interventions started through One You East Sussex as part of the Integrated Lifestyle Service

Target to be amended from 7,000 to 4,500 due to disruption in delivering the interventions (see Appendix 2, ref vii).

- Cumulative percentage of the eligible population who have received an NHS health check since 2015/16 (five-year period)

Target to be amended from 50% to 40% due to disruption to the programme (see Appendix 2, ref viii).

- The proportion of people who use services who say that those services have made them feel safe and secure (Adult Social Care Survey)

Target to be amended from >83.8% to 'Cannot be implemented due to COVID' because of concerns about the practicality and response rate of completing the survey during the pandemic (see Appendix 2, ref ix).

1.3 The Corporate Summary (Appendix 1) contains a forecast of performance against targets. There are several new performance target exceptions now rated amber or red due to the impact and uncertainty caused by COVID-19, these are highlighted in the relevant appendices.

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1.4 Given current circumstances, and as per quarter 1 and quarter 2, finance reporting has been split into Planned Budgets/Business as Usual (non-COVID-19) and COVID-19 related items. Details of non-COVID-19 related over and underspends in each department are set out in the relevant appendices. The total service forecast overspend is £1.7m; this compares to £2.2m at quarter 2.

1.5 The main headlines are:

- The Adult Social Care (ASC) budget is currently forecast to overspend by £0.441m excluding the financial impact of COVID-19 on ASC costs. This comprises an overspend of £0.572m in the Independent Sector, offset by an underspend of £0.131m in Directly Provided Services. The Independent Sector overspend reflects ongoing demand-led pressure on ASC services and the likely future impact of the Hospital Discharge Programme (HDP) as approximately 1,000 clients discharged under Scheme 1 of the HDP transition back to ASC during the second half of the year. The underspends in Directly Provided Services relate mainly to lower demand in Day Services, temporary reductions in social worker training and increased staffing vacancies while recruitment activity remains lower.
- The Business Services (BSD) overspend equals £0.550m and mainly consists of £0.406m of budgeted savings, originally planned to be delivered through Orbis efficiencies, which are no longer deemed achievable in-year as some services have been removed from the Orbis partnership, therefore limiting the ability to make savings through shared working arrangements. Furthermore, the impact of COVID-19 has limited the ability to mitigate these savings elsewhere. Additionally, there are some overspends within Property; due to delays in implementing the proposed property restructure, as well as an increase in rent following a rent review. However, there are underspends within Information, Technology & Digital (IT&D), reducing the overall overspend position.
- Of the non COVID-19 related pressures for Children's Services (CSD), there is an increase of £0.255m to £0.900m from the quarter 2 forecast overspend position. An increase in forecast spend is due to removal of unrequired travel budgets (£0.468m); this transfer has been completed across all departments after the decision at quarter 2, following an assessment of the impact of home working, the funding being moved to a reserve to meet future workstyle expenditure across the council. Additionally, there are ongoing pressures on the Social work staffing budgets in Locality as reported previously. Reductions in forecast Home to School Transport costs (in Communications, Planning and Performance) arising from school closures have offset some of the pressures by £0.300m. A range of strategies is being pursued to reduce the pressures.

1.6 Within Treasury Management (TM) and other centrally held budgets including the general contingency there is an underspend of £6.1m before the impact of COVID-19:

- There is currently an estimated £1.4m underspend on TM, reflecting that no additional borrowing has been required to support the delivery of the capital programme and revenue balances remain healthy due to the receipt of COVID-19 funding. The underspend on TM will be used to offset future borrowing requirements in the Targeted Capital Programme as per the Capital Strategy, in order to minimise the revenue impact of borrowing in future years.
- The pension estimates when the budget was set in February 2020 were based on preliminary figures for the outcome of the triannual actuarial review. Now that the outcome is known, there is an in-year forecast underspend of £1.1m due to a lower secondary pensions contribution required by the actuary. Less other minor variation of £0.2m the net underspend on centrally held budgets of £0.9m.
- With a reduction in Business Rate income of £0.2m. This leaves £0.7m underspend on centrally held budgets, that will in the first instance, be used to offset service pressures. Followed by the general contingency of £3.8m. The remaining balance of the general contingency of £2.8m will, per normal practice, be transferred to reserves for use in future years.

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1.7 Capital Programme expenditure for the year is projected to be £75.3m against a budget of £78.7m, a net variation of £3.4m. Of the variation position, net £3.3m relates to planned programme activity, and £0.1m are COVID-19 related (£1.5m of slippage offset by an estimated £1.4m overspend).

1.8 Of the net £3.3m planned programme variation (non-COVID-19 related); there is £0.3m net underspend, £3.6m of slippage to future years, partly offset by £0.6m of spend in advance. The main variances include:

- Broadband – Delivery is behind schedule due to difficulties encountered in rural areas with complex traffic management and other build technicalities. This has resulted in anticipated slippage of £2.1m. The timing of expenditure, delivery and flow of information regarding the project is largely outside of the Council's control as they are provided by the third party supplier.
- Westfield Lane – Slippage of £0.3m anticipated due to the ongoing legal process to confirm a change of use before the contract can be awarded.
- Queensway Depot Development- Slippage of £0.2m due to early site preparations resulting in the need for unforeseeable environmental surveys ahead of any main construction works commencing.
- Libraries - Slippage of £0.2m due to delays in the procurement of self-service machines. Installation will now be in early 2021/22.
- Other programme slippage of £0.8m across various schemes for reasons such as procurement delays, unforeseeable additional surveys being required and uncertainty around the timing of settlement claims.
- Emergency Access Travel Fund (Tranche 1) – Underspend of £0.3m against the tranche 1 grant allocation; as several schemes included in the original funding bid for are not going ahead following consultation.
- Special Provision in Secondary Schools – Spend in advance of £0.3m following earlier than anticipated commencement of Phase 2 at Robertsbridge Community College.
- IT & Digital Strategy Implementation – Spend in advance of £0.3m where the opportunity has been taken to refresh elements of essential back office equipment earlier than planned.

COVID-19 Related Monitoring

1.9 There have been four tranches to the end of December 2020 of general COVID-19 related funding allocated by the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government for use by the Council (specific grants are dealt with at service level and appropriate accounting treatments and payback applied), plus the first claim against Income Guarantee for loss of Sales, Fees and Charges (SFC) income has been paid:

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	£m
Tranche 1	16.297
Tranche 2	9.810
Tranche 3	3.553
Tranche 4	3.069
SFC Round 1	1.606
Total	34.335

1.10 The details of COVID-19 related revenue pressures in each department are set out in the relevant appendices, and show a total forecast overspend of £24.6m. The main headlines are:

- ASC is currently forecasting the net financial impact of COVID-19 to be £7.484m in 2020/21. This is split, with £3.692m in the Independent Sector, £3.774m in Directly Provided Services and £0.018m in Community Safety. The main areas of expenditure include relief payments to providers; spend on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and the support to shielded groups via the Community Hubs (the latter of which is funded in part by the Food and Emergency Supplies Grant). Hospital discharge costs will be funded by the HDP funding, which includes a contribution from ASC's core budget equal to our normal spend meeting the needs of people discharged from hospital, in line with national guidance. The projected COVID-19 related spend has fallen since quarter 2 as projected one-off payments to social care providers will be replaced by funding from the Rapid Testing Grant and Tranche 2 of the Infection Control Fund.
- The BSD estimate of £0.703m is directly related to additional costs, lost revenue or savings not being achieved due to COVID-19. Additional Information Technology (IT) expenditure has been incurred to allow for remote working, as well as the loss of income streams within Human Resources & Organisational Development (HR&OD) and Property due to closure of various premises. There is also a savings target within ESCC's contribution to Orbis, which is now unlikely to be made this year due to COVID-19.
- CSD's pressures have increased by £0.832m to £11.075m since quarter 2 and continue to be primarily within Early Help and Social Care (£8.804m). Within this, Looked After Children (LAC) budgets continue to be impacted by COVID-19, with the increase arising from further placements during quarter 3, where a mixture of new residential and foster placements and semi-independent accommodation placements continue to be required.
- There is a pressure of £5.330m in Communities, Environment & Transport (CET); the most significant of which are in Transport and Operations where car parking income is down £2.265m. Increased collection volumes and the cost of reopening household waste sites with social distancing, have resulted in an overspend of £1.029m in the Waste service. The overspend in Customer, Libraries and Registration is mostly due to lost income from marriages and other ceremonies (£617k) along with reduced Road Safety training income. The Council's share of the pan Sussex cost of excess deaths as a result of COVID-19 is expected to be £555k although this may rise. Income is also down across other services.

1.11 Within Centrally Held Budgets and Corporate Funding there are further COVID-19 related pressures of £5.7m, the key areas being:

- Estimated risk of reduced investment income within TM £0.7m;
- Estimated provision for capital overspending in 2020/21 and 2021/22 of £2.8m;
- Levies, Grants & Other includes a £0.5m increase in bad debt provision;
- Estimated risk of reduced proceeds from the Business Rates Pool with Districts and Boroughs of £0.5m. Complexities in formulae and COVID-19 funding mean clarity of outturn remains work in progress with Districts and Boroughs; and

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- A provision has been made by setting aside estimated collection fund carry forward of £1.2m from 2019/20. This is to allow for the ongoing uncertainty pertaining to final District and Borough calculations of the fund as a result of COVID-19 funding complexities.

1.12 The COVID-19 related pressures and slippage in the Targeted Capital Programme comprise a net £0.1m; of which there is a net £1.4m overspend adding to the funding shortfall (this could reduce to £1.0m but is subject to £0.4m being funded from project specific funding that is currently unconfirmed), and £1.5m slippage. The main variances include:

- IT&D Strategy Implementation – Cost increases of £0.3m anticipated to enable the purchase of IT&D equipment to enable non-Agile teams and ensure compliance with Display Screen Equipment (DSE) regulations for staff working from home. Slippage of £0.8m anticipated across several projects as resources have been reprioritised to deliver urgent remote working devices to support displaced staff. None of the delayed projects or programmes impacts on existing systems or security but does delay new capabilities being introduced.
- Other programme cost increases of £1.1m are anticipated across various schemes such as Special Provision in Secondary Schools, Schools Basic Need and Highways Structural Maintenance programme due to a combination of temporary site closures, social distancing requirements and difficulty of acquiring materials. Slippage of £0.7m is also anticipated due to various project delays.

1.13 The tables below summarise the net COVID-19 position and the estimated requirement to carry £4.0m as yet unapplied balance forward, as follows:

Net COVID-19 Costs	£m
Revenue and Capital	30.333
Funding Tranches 1-4	(32.729)
Funding SFC Round 1	(1.606)
Total Net COVID-19 funding unapplied	(4.002)

Summary of Variances	£m	
	Non-COVID-19	COVID-19
Service Budgets	(1.726)	(24.618)
Central Budgets	6.127	(3.935)
Central Resources	(0.200)	(1.780)
Subtotal Variances	4.201	(30.333)
less COVID-19 Grant - tranches 1 to 4		32.729
less SFC - round 1		1.606
Net COVID-19 funding unapplied		4.002
less Non-COVID-19 variance		4.201
Net total variance before transfers		8.203

1.14 The Strategic Risk Register, Appendix 7, was reviewed and updated to reflect the Council's risk profile. Risk 12 (Cyber Attack) and Risk 14 (Post European Union (EU) Transition) have updated risk definitions and controls. Risk 1 (Roads), Risk 4 (Health), Risk 6 (Local Economic Growth), Risk 8 (Capital Programme), Risk 9 (Workforce), Risk 15 (Climate) and Risk

16 (COVID-19) have updated risk controls. Risk 10 (Recruitment) was removed from the register as a stand-alone risk and incorporated into Risk 9 (Workforce).

Progress against Council Priorities

Driving sustainable economic growth

1.15 Over 10,000 young people, parents and carer tuned in to a virtual Careers Hub event, 'What's Next Sussex', during quarter 3, to hear from employers, post-16 colleges and apprenticeship providers. 15 Industry Champions have signed up to film Open Doors videos, which will allow young people to visit their workplaces virtually (Appendix 5).

1.16 86 carriageway asset improvement schemes were completed in quarter 3, to maintain and improve the condition of the county's roads (Appendix 5).

1.17 Businesses were helped by business support programmes to create or safeguard 100 jobs in quarter 3. Locate East Sussex also helped 13 businesses to remain within, or relocate to, East Sussex (Appendix 5).

1.18 Trading Standards provided online business training activities to 13 delegates in quarter 3, with 304 businesses also advised on COVID-19 closures. Trading Standards also delivered an EU Exit Training session to 46 delegates at the Sussex Chamber of Commerce (Appendix 5).

1.19 At the end of quarter 3 the Department for Education published the performance tables showing how all public sector organisations are progressing towards the target of 2.3% of staff being apprentices. The Council was sixth nationally amongst all county councils, with 1.8% of staff, 200 individuals, currently undertaking an apprenticeship, including 46 apprentices who enrolled during quarter 3 (Appendix 3).

1.20 During quarter 3 eight contracts which qualified for the Social Value Measurement Charter were awarded with a total value of £9m. Over £1m of social value commitments were secured as part of the contracts, equating to an outturn of 11%. We also appointed a new social value lead in quarter 3 to drive a number of social value activities forward and support the delivery of the Economic Recovery Plan (Appendix 3).

Keeping vulnerable people safe

1.21 During quarter 3 we have coordinated and improved the Medically Ready for Discharge pathways and Home First/Discharge to Assess to help enable patient flow out of hospitals and support the NHS. We have also continued to work with the NHS to support the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (Appendix 2).

1.22 The Safer East Sussex Team (SEST), working with Sussex Police, delivered Against Exploitation workshops to Uckfield Community College students in quarter 3. The workshops aim to help young people learn about the consequences of gang membership and County Lines drug-dealing. The SEST have also created and distributed guidance around knives and exploitation to school student and their parents, including support for parents on how to spot signs of exploitation and where to seek help if their children are at risk (Appendix 2).

1.23 The Council agreed to use a significant portion of the funding received from the COVID-19 Winter Grant scheme to provide food vouchers, to pupils eligible for free school meals, during the Christmas and February half term holidays. Vouchers were also provided to eligible pupils aged 16 – 19, and 2, 3 and 4-year olds attending early years provision who were eligible for pupil premium. By the end of the scheme we will have provided food vouchers to approximately 16,500 pupils at a cost of £750,000 (Appendix 4).

1.24 The multi-agency Vulnerable Children Risk Assessment Group (VCRAAG) concentrated on getting vulnerable children back into school, once schools reopened in quarter 3, as many pupils have been out of school since March 2020. This work saw East Sussex have one of the highest rates of attendance for pupils with an Education Health and Care Plan in the south east. The Education Support Behaviour and Attendance Service (ESBAS) Attendance Recovery Offer saw every school offered free support to encourage their pupils back, with non-returners dropping from 865 at the start of September, to 68 at the end of quarter 3 (Appendix 4).

1.25 The number of children subject to a Child Protection (CP) plan has reduced from 637 in quarter 2, to 548 in quarter 3. This is the result of targeted work to reduce numbers safely, however we anticipate the number may rise again during the current lockdown. There has been an increase in the number of Looked after Children, from 606 in quarter 2, to 610 in quarter 3. Some families have felt unable to continue to care for their challenging teenagers in this quarter, and we have also seen an increase in the number of children involved in criminal exploitation (Appendix 4).

Helping people help themselves

1.26 Public Health have been working with the NHS and West Sussex County Council (WSCC) to support COVID-19 testing. The Public Health teams in East Sussex County Council (ESCC) and WSCC developed a local COVID-19 tracing partnership agreement in quarter 3, which will support the national test and trace systems. ESCC Public Health have also helped to set up three local testing sites, in Bexhill, Eastbourne and Hastings; numerous locations for Mobile Testing Units; and a Regional Testing Site at Plumpton racecourse (Appendix 2).

1.27 We have received positive results from a number of Road Safety behaviour change trials and also the Speed Management Programme. These include the final results from the Notice of Intended Prosecution (NiP) Trial, which have shown that receiving the redesigned NiP and leaflet significantly reduced speeding reoffending by 23% within six months. This would translate to 560 fewer reoffences over the six months if everyone in the trial had received the new leaflet and NiP. The results of the Anniversary Trial have been analysed and showed that 8% of the participants were less likely to reoffend after engagement with the trial, which meant 80 fewer reoffences than business-as-usual. Preliminary results from eight road infrastructure schemes that were part of the Speed Management Programme have indicated over a 50% reduction in the average number of crashes and over a 60% reduction in the average number of casualties per annum (Appendix 5).

1.28 Work has continued in quarter 3 on further health and social care integration to support people during COVID-19, including out of hospital support and discharge hubs to ensure timely discharge to appropriate care. Our integration transformation priorities have been updated to reflect the learning and ways of working emerging from the pandemic response. The original integration objectives will now be reviewed to ensure the correct emphasis for 2021/22 (Appendix 2).

Making best use of resources

1.29 The Council has continued lobbying in quarter 3, alongside local partners and MPs. We contributed to the County Council Network's budget survey highlighting the particular pressures facing county councils in advance of the Spending Review. Council Group Leaders also wrote jointly to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government to reflect that without additional resources the Council would soon not be able to maintain its Core Offer. As a result of ongoing lobbying, the Spending Review, published in November 2020, included several provisions that assist our financial position for 2021/22. However, the Spending Review was for one year only, meaning there remains considerable financial uncertainty from 2022/23 onwards (Appendix 6).

1.30 An advertising campaign to highlight teaching opportunities in the county saw over 1,000 people visit the website in December. 50 people also booked places at an event to find out more about Joint Community Rehabilitation work after a campaign that included targeted emails, social media advertising and publicity to all residents (Appendix 6).

2. Conservators of Ashdown Forest Budget

2.1 The Cabinet has considered a report setting out the financial position of the Conservators of the Ashdown Forest (COAF) for 2020/21, against the approved balanced budget agreed by the Board of Conservators at their meeting on 25 November 2019 and presented to Cabinet in January 2020. A challenging year, due to COVID-19 and staffing changes, has led to a projected deficit of £69,792, including lost income of circa £53,000 due to the pandemic. There is a surplus

on the Countryside Stewardship Fund of £20,294, which is restricted under the agreement and not offset against the core budget deficit.

2.2 The report sets out the draft budget for 2021/22 approved by the Board of Conservators on 1 February 2021. Due to the challenges face by the COAF this draft budget is considered an interim budget, with the COAF committing to presenting a revised budget in September 2021, alongside a medium-term strategy and financial plan.

2.3 As part of the Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources process in setting a balanced budget, the Council approved the total removal of the £61,000 Ashdown Forest budget from the authority's revenue budget, in two phases, 2019/20 £31,000 and 2020/21 £30,000.

Current Financial Year 2020/21

2.4 As a result of the administrative changes in the organisation, there have been changes in officers, together with a new Chief Executive who joined in January 2021. Officers from the Council's Human Resources, Legal Service and Finance Teams have been working closely with the COAF over recent months in support of these changes and continue to engage regularly.

2.5 Over the last quarter, it has become clear that Covid-19 has had a detrimental impact on the operation, particularly on the income received, resulting in a forecast deficit of £69,792 in the Core budget for 2020/21 (see Appendix 8).

2.6 The Countryside Stewardship (CS) budget is forecast to underspend by £20,294, this is restricted under the agreement and has not been set off against the deficit on the core budget.

2.7 The COAF Board have provided a briefing note in support of the forecast deficit, Appendix 9, which attributes the unachieved income to factors outside of their control and arising from the impact of Covid-19. The two items of material impact are the loss of £23,000 income from the Ice Cream vendor and £30,000 unachieved income from the planned Memorial wall on the golf course. The briefing note includes reference to the Ashdown Forest Act which stipulates that any deficit is the liability of the Council.

Interim Budget 2021/22

2.8 The Conservators' budget is formed of the Core Budget (General Fund) and the Countryside Stewardship (CS) budget. The Conservators balanced Core Budget for 2021/22 is summarised at Appendix 11, with supporting narrative in a briefing note, Appendix 10. This was approved by the Board of Conservators at their meeting on 1 February 2021.

2.9 The draft Countryside Stewardship (CS) budget is shown at Appendix 13. (The draft CS budget is shown for information only.)

2.10 The Conservators Core Budget receives a grant from the Ashdown Forest Trust for which ESCC is the trustee. The balance of the Trust Fund is estimated to be £161,499 at 1 April 2021. (The Ashdown Forest Trust position is shown at Appendix 12.) The Conservators' draft Core Budget assumes the level of grant from the Trust Fund will continue at £65,100. The lease to the Ashdown Forest Golf Club was reviewed in early 2020 and remains unchanged so this assumption is reasonable.

2.11 The interim balanced budget for 2021/22 has been approved by the Board of Conservators. In doing so, the Board has provided assurance that the balanced budget is deliverable and there is no requirement for the County Council to provide additional funding in 2021/22. The Board has committed to providing quarterly update reports and work to deliver a Medium Term Financial Plan by September 2021, that will support the strategic objectives of the COAF. The 2021/22 interim budget does include an income contribution of £150,000 from the recently formed charitable body, The Ashdown Forest Foundation (TAFF) which will be generated by private donations, fund raising initiatives and the recovery of gift aid. Many of these proposed

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income streams are new and will have an element of uncertainty, there is risk that they will not be achieved.

2.12 The expenditure budget includes the additional cost of essential building and equipment maintenance which have been neglected in recent years and are in critical condition. The Conservators are aware that the organisation needs to review expenditure on its core operations and secure sustainable income streams to achieve financial stability.

2.13 COAF Board members and the Chief Executive are currently working with officers of the Council to explore options for sustainable income generation and these will be reported to Cabinet as part of the revised budget and medium-term plan scheduled for September 2021. The September budget proposal is an opportunity for the performance and robustness of these initiatives to be clarified.

2.14 An investigation by the Rural Payment Agency (RPA) in 2019/20 raised questions regarding some of the areas that the Conservators have been claiming for under the Countryside Stewardship (CS) Natural England grant terms. This has resulted in a £36,000 p.a. reduction in grant funding, which was withheld in 2020 (for the calendar year 2019), with three years' backdated payment to be recouped by the RPA (£108,000), the timing of which is currently unknown. An appeal is in process, along with a request to phase any resulting repayments, rather than one lump sum which will drastically affect the COAF reserves.

2.15 With the Countryside Stewardship (CS) Natural England grant funding to the value of c. £500,000 being paid at least one year in arrears by the RPA, this is having a significant impact on the Conservators' cash flow. At the financial year ending 31 March 2020, the Conservators reported £600,000 owing from the RPA. Supporting this programme year on year has impacted on the ability of the Conservators to access its Core reserves which are forecast to be £307,005 for the year ending March 2022.

Agreed Funding

2.16 The Cabinet has agreed that the Council makes a financial contribution to the COAF of £69,792 in this financial year 2020/21. This is in recognition that the organisation has been severely impacted by the lockdown and social distancing regulations imposed by the government during the pandemic. In providing the one-off funding, it should also be recognised that during the course of 2020/21 a significant amount of officer time and professional support, from the County Council, was provided, for which no charge was raised.

2.17 Annual income to the Trust Fund, from a long-term lease with the Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Club, amounts to £70,000 with the addition of bank interest. The contribution to the Conservators from the Trust Fund can therefore be maintained at £65,100 in 2021/22.

2.18 The award of the grant from the Trust Fund would support the Conservators to manage the operation within the proposed balanced budget for 2021/22.

2.19 The interim budget for 2021/22 has been approved by the Board of Conservators. In doing so, the Board has provided assurance that the balanced budget is deliverable and there is no requirement for the County Council to provide additional funding in 2021/22. The Board has committed to providing quarterly update reports and work to deliver a Medium Term Financial Plan by September 2021, that will support the strategic objectives of the COAF.