

## **2022-23 Budget – Addendum 8 February 2022**

### **By the Cabinet Member for Finance**

The Chancellor announced national measures last week to help with rising energy costs, recognising that the growing cost of living pressures was the “number one issue on people’s minds”, with the packages predominately aimed at supporting hard working families.

We have also recognised this locally. Working alongside West Sussex County Council in the last few days, we are proposing that working age residents claiming Council Tax Reduction support will again benefit from a discretionary Council tax support relief scheme and have their Council Tax bill reduced by up to £150. This means that they will benefit from the discretionary scheme for a second year running, in addition to the Government mandatory scheme in 2020/21.

Additional recommendations are therefore proposed to the ones set out on pages 21 and 22 of the Council papers. The recommendations are to put in place the budget and delegations to enable officers to make the payments and use up to £120,000 from the budgeted surplus, alongside County’s contribution, to replicate the discretionary relief scheme for a further year.

#### **RECOMMENDATION THAT COUNCIL:**

- i) Approve an additional Council tax support discretionary discount of up to £150.00 per household for working age claimants in 2022/23.
- ii) To set up a budget for 2022/23 comprising the County Council’s share of payments and up to £120,000 from the Council, reducing the budgeted surplus.
- iii) Delegate to the Director of Corporate Resources, the finalisation of the exact sums involved during 2022/23 provided they do not exceed the amount of £120,000.

#### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- i) County’s offer to part fund this support will help our most vulnerable working age families in a year when their income is likely to be adversely affected.
- ii) A budget is needed to allow these transactions to take place.
- iii) The full cost of this scheme is not yet known because vulnerable customers in this group are likely to move in and out of work during the year. This delegation will allow the Director to ensure customers get the help agreed against a varying budget level.