

## **Hadlow Down Report - October 2024**

I have raised in previous reports the challenges to the finances by the increasing demand for social services both Adult (50% of Budget) and Children's (26%). This pressure is not diminishing and the Council Monitoring report that went to Cabinet last week shows that despite extra funds being allocated for 24/25 the budget will still be exceeded by (£9m). The in year overspend on these statutory services will mean further calls on the limited reserves.

Without further revenue, a change in regulations of what we are obliged to supply the budget process is more challenging than ever.

### **RPPR Process (Reconciling Policy Performance and Revenue)**

This process has been the method of setting the budget for many years but the difference this year is that external part of process is starting earlier.

### **Background Council Monitoring Qtr1**

Despite allocating additional funds for 24/25 both Adult Social Care and Children's Services are overspent on this demand led services.

Children's Services are projected to be £12.5m over budget – Adult Social Care by 9.8m. Together with other departments (some under and some over budget) the net overspend forecast will be £9.4m so further calls on the reserves will be needed. £14.3m was already being utilised to balance the 24/25 budget.

The council Monitoring report that was approved by Cabinet on Thursday gives more detail of the QTR 1 outcomes and predictions for the rest of the financial year.

### **RPPR**

Setting a balanced budget for 25/26 will be a challenge and with little in the way of reserves savings will need to be made.

Cabinet approved proposals to make changes on ASC of which 11 need to go out to consultation and that will be launched in October. The consultation is being launched now, rather than after the national budget announcement on Oct 30th, to avoid a consultation over Christmas but still leave time for evaluation of the results and decisions to be considered for the Council's February budget.

The papers also contain other proposals that don't need to go to consultation.

### **National Budget October**

How this will affect the above is of course unknown but is awaited with either expectation or trepidation. Without extra funding – either direct or through council tax cap changes- the budget process will have increased challenges.

### **Career Finder Tool**

ESCC has launched a new career finder tool on the Careers East Sussex website. ([careerseastsuse.co.uk/careerfinder](http://careerseastsuse.co.uk/careerfinder)). Going through the site will link to training or vacancies that align with the applicants' skills and experience.

**Cllr Standley  
October 2024**