

# CHESWARDINE

## PARISH COUNCIL

### Attendance

**Chairman:** Cllr A Thomson

**Councillors:** Cllr N Stallard, Cllr J Hislop, Cllr S Lewis, Cllr B Maskell, Cllr M Pound, Cllr Jacobson

**Also Present:** Cllr Bentley - attending in his capacity as both a member of the Parish Council and as the Unitary Authority Ward Councillor.

**Apologies:** Cllr N Partridge

**Clerk:** Mr Wayne Salisbury

**Other:** None

**Public:** None

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### Minutes of the Meeting of Cheswardine Parish Council held at the Parish Hall on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2026

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Meeting started at 7:00 p.m.

#### 1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the February meeting of Cheswardine Parish Council. The Chair shared that they had not attended any external meetings since the last meeting of the Parish Council.

Cllr Stallard updated that they had attended a meeting hosted by a neighbouring Parish Council on devolved services and shared that Shropshire Council had not been forthcoming with further information. Further meetings are scheduled.

#### 2. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr N Partridge.

#### 3. Declarations of Interest and Dispensation Considerations

a) None declared.

b) Cllr Thomson declared an interest in item 11, authorisation of payments.

Cllr Pound declared an interest in item 8B, request from the Parish Hall and item 10A, Parish Hall planning application and item 14, grant request.

Cllr Hislop declared an interest in item 8B, request from the Parish Hall and item 10A, Parish Hall planning application and item 14, grant request.

c) Cllr Bentley declared an interest relating to his role as a Unitary Councillor for Shropshire Council.

d) No dispensations were requested or granted.

#### 4. Minutes of the previous meeting

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> January 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### 5. Policing Matters

Representatives from the Police were not in attendance.

The Clerk advised members that the latest newsletter from the Safer Neighbourhood Team had been recently shared.

Cllr Pound shared that the Police had been involved in anti-social parking on Glebe Close outside the school.

**6. Public Participation**

No members of the public were in attendance.

**7. Shropshire Unitary Councillor's report**

Cllr Bentley shared a report with members ahead of the meeting, which is included in the appendix to these minutes on pages 891 - 894.

Additional updates included:

- Continuing to pursue the speeding issue in Soudley.
- Regarding the 'artificial lake' on Haywood Lane, Shropshire Council has written to the landowner to request that they resolve the issue. The landowner has not yet responded, but Cllr Bentley believes they are trying to find a solution.
- The government has granted permission for Shropshire Council to raise council tax by 8.99% without a referendum.

Cllr Thomson asked about the further funds requested to bridge the funding gap and when that decision will be made. Cllr Bentley advised that it would be by June.

Cllr Stallard enquired about adult and children's social care and the pressure this puts on the budget, and the concern over the profits being made by care providers.

Cllr Pound asked about the 'artificial lake' and what happens if it breaches the road, as that will cause a greater issue.

Cllr Bentley responded that the landowner has been advised that they will be liable and that if there is a breach, then the issue would be escalated.

**8. Playing Field, Playground and Car Park**

a) To receive any updates, discuss any matters relating to and make any required decisions.

The Chair shared with members that the anticipated sign for the Wildflower Garden had now been received and that this had been provided free of charge by Venables Oak Timber Merchants. It was agreed that this would be installed by the odd jobs contractor so that it is sufficiently secured in place. A letter of thanks will be sent to Venables Oak Timber Merchants.

Cllr Pound updated that they have arranged meetings in the coming weeks with playground contractors.

Cllr Jacobson shared that they have been researching potential options for SEND playground equipment, and that there is a contractor who has equipment installed in playgrounds in the Market Drayton area.

Cllr Bentley added that we have room in the playground to add further equipment rather than replace existing, which will enhance the playability value of the playground.

b) To consider a request from Cheswardine Parish Hall to host a Classic Car Gathering on Sunday 26th April 2026.

The Chair summarised the request received from the Parish Hall and added that the event was held successfully in 2025 with over 120 cars in attendance, and events taking place in the parish hall. It was also confirmed that the event was well marshalled by volunteers.

**RESOLVED:** to accept and approve the request for the Parish Hall to host a Classic Car Gathering on Sunday, 26th April 2026.

# CHESWARDINE

## PARISH COUNCIL

### 9. Clerk's Report

The Clerk's report was received by members, which detailed updates on actions since the last meeting, including:

#### Actions since the last meeting

- Precept request submitted to Shropshire Council
- Preparation of the February meeting agenda and supporting documents
- Charity annual return completed and VAT reclaim for quarter 3 submitted, £313.30

#### Upcoming actions

- Preparation for the March meeting, final meeting of the 2025 to 2026 year
- Year-end preparation, including internal audit actions, website updates, Assertion 10 actions and required policy reviews

#### Planning decisions noted

- New House Farm, Westcott Lane, Cheswardine, reserved matters for two dwellings and garage, granted permission on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2026
- Sunset Bungalow, Soudley, dormer window and porch extension, granted permission on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2026
- 5 Copelea, Cheswardine, refurbishment and extensions, granted permission on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2026
- 1 Moss Lane, Chipnall, refurbishment, extension and new access, granted permission on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2026

#### Correspondence

- Email from St Swithun's Parochial Parish Council regarding allotment hedge requiring cutting, contractor requested to undertake works

### 10. Planning (Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Sched 1, para 8)

a) To consider the following planning applications.

Reference	26/00464/TCA
Address	Parish Hall Podmore Road Cheswardine Market Drayton Shropshire TF9 2FA
Proposal	Reduce in size by approx. 25% (See schedule for details) 1no Cedar within Cheswardine Conservation Area
Deadline for Comments	19th February 2026
<a href="#">26/00464/TCA   Reduce in size by approx. 25% (See schedule for details) 1no Cedar within Cheswardine Conservation Area   Parish Hall Podmore Road Cheswardine Market Drayton Shropshire TF9 2FA</a>	

**RESOLVED:** that the following comment is submitted to the local planning authority.

- *Cheswardine Parish Council supports this application.*

a) To consider any planning applications which have been received since the publication of this agenda. No further applications were received.

### 11. Authorisation of payments

**RESOLVED:** the schedule of payments for February 2026 correctly states the invoices presented and that **£901.82** is approved to be paid. **£39.54** has been paid under 6.6 and **£246.00** has been paid under 6.9 iii. (as detailed on page 890)

### 12. Grounds Maintenance

Members reviewed the quote received from the grounds maintenance contractor for services for 2026- 2027.

Cllr Hislop raised that the contract does not include the wildflower garden, but that they were happy to look after that area this year, and that if it does need any further maintenance, the odd jobs contractor could be requested to undertake any required work.

**RESOLVED:** to accept the quote received from Shropshire Grounds Maintenance for a total contract value of £3,338.00. This resolution extends the contract of the incumbent contractor until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2027.

**13. National Lottery Funding Application**

To consider the submission of an application for funding for playground improvements to the National Lottery.

Cllr Pound shared that there will be a further update once he has met with the playground contractors and has a fuller idea of the most suitable options.

**14. Grant Request**

Members reviewed the grant application received from the parish hall for required tree works to the cedar tree located outside the parish hall.

**RESOLVED:** to award the requested grant of £350.00 for the works as detailed in the application.

**15. Risk Assessment**

Members reviewed the Council's risk assessment document, and the Clerk advised that, following the significant update last year, this year's amendment included a small number of changes.

Cllr Bentley quired the loss of clerk process, and how the detailed measure would work.

Cllr Pound raised that the cyber security aspects do require further process and checks to be fully effective.

Members discussed password requirements to ensure that access is secured to relevant systems.

**RESOLVED:** to accept and approve the updated risk assessment document.

**16. Waste Bin Provision**

To consider the purchase of a dog waste bin to be located on Lawn Lane.

Cllr Hislop shared their reasoning for requesting that this item be considered and that they had witnessed many issues at that end of the village. Cllr Hislop advised on where they believe to be an appropriate location for a dog waste bin.

Cllr Jacobson asked who would empty a new bin. The Clerk advised that it would be emptied by either Shropshire Council Street Scene or the Parish Council's odd jobs contractor.

Cllr Jacobson also suggested that signage may be required to direct users to the new bin.

Cllr Bentley advised that it would be very unlikely that Shropshire Council would take on the emptying of a new bin.

The Chair raised that there are two responses to the issue: prevention with the introduction of signage or a solution with the addition of a bin.

Cllr Pound added that a bin placed in that location may impede hedge cutting.

Cllr Stallard added that if a vehicle was damaged due to hitting a bin in that location, who would be liable. Cllr Stallard also raised if a temporary sign could assist.

The Clerk provided some further experience that the behaviours of individuals who allow fouling do not typically change because of providing new bins, and that the bin would likely be used by those who currently take their waste home or to another bin.

The debate on the item was concluded, and no motions were proposed.

**17. Community Hub**

To consider a request from local volunteers to reintroduce a time-limited community reuse hub within the community hub.

The Chair provided members with background information on the community hub and the issues experienced with the leaving of items.

Members reviewed the proposal, which had been received from a resident.

Cllr Bentley raised that it would be difficult to operate on a time-limited basis and that it would need to be consistently available for use all the time or not at all.

Cllr Pound raised the safeguarding risks that having items left presents, and that there would be a need for regular checks to be made before and after the school day.

Cllr Bentley suggested that if the hub was to be reintroduced, then regular feedback to the Parish Council would be needed.

Cllr Jacobson raised that they felt it would be too much work for the Parish Council.

Cllr Pound added that if it was to go ahead, then it should be on a 3-month trial basis.

Cllr Maskell commented that they believe it is not worth the liability and risk it brings to the Parish Council.

Cllr Lewis suggested that the items which would be allowed would need to be stipulated.

The Chair raised that a more suitable solution may be that an appropriate space such as the Parish Hall could be used, as it could be directly monitored. The Chair shared a concern that items being left at an unattended hub would be open to abuse.

Cllr Bentley shared that they do not believe the time-bound aspect would work.

Cllr Hislop added that the school may be able to offer a swap facility.

**RESOLVED:** that the request to introduce a time-limited reuse facility at the community hub would be rejected based on the liability concerns it presents to the Parish Council, that the time-bound aspect would not be respected and that there are numerous other channels to freecycle unwanted items.



**Meeting concluded at 8:34 pm.**

Chairman..... Date.....

# CHESWARDINE PARISH COUNCIL

## Schedule of Payments - As resolved under Item 12.

### Cheswardine Parish Council Schedule of Payments

17th February 2026

Date of Debit or Cheque Raised	Recipient	Purpose	£	£	Payment Method	Power of expenditure	Scribe
1 18/02/2026	AJT Carpentry	Odd Jobs - Litter Bins / Noticeboard Install	50.00		BT - Unity Trust	LGA 1972 S 111	Yes
2 18/02/2026	PG SKIPS	Rubbish Removal - Skip Emptied 02/01/26 & 30/01/26	66.26		BT - Unity Trust	Litter Act 1983 ss.5	Yes
3 18/02/2026	Cllr A Thomson	Ryman - Noticeboard Magnets	5.59	25.59	BT - Unity Trust	LGA 1972 S 111	Yes
4 18/02/2026	Cllr A Thomson	EE - Bus Service Phone Top Up	20.00		BT - Unity Trust	LGA 1972 S 111	Yes
5 18/02/2026	North Salop Wheelers	3 x annual passenger subscriptions £60 / January Fares £18.00	78.00		BT - Unity Trust	LG Rating Act 1997 s26-29	Yes
6 18/02/2026	W Salisbury (Clerk)	Giff Gaff - Phone Monthly Payment - February	6.00		BT - Unity Trust	LGA 1972 S 111	Yes
7 18/02/2026	W Salisbury (Clerk)	Mileage (20th January - 38 miles x 0.45)	17.10	32.90	BT - Unity Trust	LGA 1972 S 111	Yes
8 18/02/2026	W Salisbury (Clerk)	Tesco - Printer Paper	9.80		BT - Unity Trust	LGA 1972 S 111	Yes
9 18/02/2026	W Salisbury (Clerk)	Clerk Salary - February	495.00		BT - Unity Trust	LGA 1972 S 112	Yes
10 18/02/2026	HMRC	Tax & Contributions on Clerks salary - February	123.80	154.07	BT - Unity Trust	LGA 1972 S 112	Yes
11 18/02/2026	HMRC	Employer NIC - Month 11	30.27		BT - Unity Trust	LGA 1972 S 112	Yes
<b>Total</b>			<b>901.82</b>				

Payments made as resolved under the approved payments list 5.5b							Scribe
12 09/02/2026	BT	Parish Hall Broadband - 1st to 31st January	39.54		DD - Unity Trust	LGA 1972 S 133	Yes
<b>Total</b>			<b>39.54</b>				

Payments made under Financial Regulations 5.5a to avoid late payment							
Date of	Recipient	Purpose	£	£	Cheque	Power of expenditure	Scribe
13 21/01/2026	J A Hoole	Playing Field Hedge Cutting	240.00		BT - Unity Trust	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss9 & 10	Yes
31/01/2026	Unity Trust Bank	Bank Charges	6.00		Bank Charge	LGA 1972 S 111	Yes
<b>Total</b>			<b>246.00</b>				

Invoices checked and verified at the meeting held on 17th February 2026

Cllr N Bentley 17/02/26

**Cllr - Proposer - Sign & Date**

Cllr B Maskell 17/02/26

**Cllr - Seconder - Sign & Date**

DEPOSITS RECEIVED		
Jan	2026	
Date	Total	From
<b>Total</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	

Report from Shropshire Council Unitary Councillor (Feb)- As received under Item 7.

**Cllr Neil Bentley Unitary Councillor Report | Cheswardine Division**

# February 2026

## OVERVIEW

January has been an extraordinarily busy (and long) month. Storm Goretti started the year off with a bang, the education and transport teams worked closely to ensure as little impact on children as possible during the expected closures. Over 1,000 additional potholes were registered via FixMyStreet.com following the storm.

Issues raised locally this month include speeding and traffic management, flooding, dog nuisance and grit bin provision. I will continue to update individual councils with parish specific items.

As part of Shropshire Council's improvement plan, there have been senior leadership changes within the finance function. James Walton will be leaving his roles as Executive Finance Director and Section 151 Officer at the end of January. Duncan Whitfield has been appointed as Interim Director of Finance Improvement to support financial recovery and strengthen financial governance arrangements. I have included a longer explanation on the council's finances at the end of this report.

(21/01/26) Cabinet meeting | [Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday, 21st January, 2026, 10.30 am – Shropshire Council](#)

I am pleased to announce that I have been appointed chair of the SYA Board of Trustees following the resignation of the previous chair from the board. If you would like to find out more about the SYA or are interested in joining the charity trustee board, then please visit: [www.sya.org.uk](http://www.sya.org.uk). SYA supports many of the youth clubs and youth provision across our parishes.

### Summary of my meetings during January:

(05/01/26) Meeting with Highways engineers regarding speeding issues | Soudley

(07/01/26) Portfolio Meeting | Microsoft Teams

(07/01/26) Liberal Democrat Executive Meeting | Microsoft Teams

(12/01/26) SYA meeting | The New Lodge, Shrewsbury

(21/01/26) Portfolio Meeting | Microsoft Teams

(22/01/26) Schools Forum | Microsoft Teams

(25/01/26) Extraordinary SYA Trustee Meeting | Location not specified

## CASEWORK

Casework	Issue Raised / Portfolio	Actions
Ollerton Business Park, Childs Ercall	PLANNING: Various planning applications have been passed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Resident communication shared with planning portfolio holder.</li></ul>

# CHESWARDINE

## PARISH COUNCIL

### Report from Shropshire Council Unitary Councillor (Feb) - As received under Item 7. (Cont.)

	yet conditions not met (esp highways)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(03/06/25) Emma Green (<i>Planning Enforcement Leader</i>) has replied directly to a resident concern outlining the stages for legal involvement.</li> <li>I will continue to chase. <a href="mailto:planningenforcement@shropshire.gov.uk">planningenforcement@shropshire.gov.uk</a> can be used to report any breaches of planning.</li> <li>(05/01/26) I am still chasing updates on this one.</li> <li>(29/01/26) Emailed Emma Green for any updates.</li> </ul>
Speed Testing / Signage   Childs Ercall	PCC John Champion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(21/01/26) Email sent to PCC to confirm details and to check if financial assistance was still available.</li> <li>(21/01/26) PCC confirmed this and said that his deputy would be in touch.</li> <li>(29/01/26) No contact received.</li> </ul>
23/03138/FUL Mixed 28 Residential Dwellings   Childs Ercall	PLANNING: This has gone to 'recommendations/committee'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(09/06/25) I have contacted the case officer regarding the general position of this application having been made aware of community concerns.</li> <li>(17/07/25) No communication received, concerns raised by the Lib Dem administration over the lack of response from officers.</li> <li>(01/09/25) Email received from case officer to confirm the current position of this application (updates available on the planning portal).</li> <li>(21/09/25) Request for this to be called-in to the Northern Planning Committee.</li> <li>(29/01/26) No update.</li> </ul>
25/03608/FUL Chicken Egg Production   Caynton	PLANNING: This is still at 'recommendations/committee'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(29/01/26) This is likely to go to committee but I am waiting confirmation. I have spoken to the local action group.</li> </ul>
Flooding in Hopshort	Main Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Liaised with Severn Trent and Shropshire Highways over a number of months.</li> <li>The issue is on private land and owner aware.</li> <li>Severn Trent are likely to provide assistance.</li> </ul>
Artificial 'Lake' Cheswardine	Off Westcott Lane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communication with residents.</li> <li>Severn Trent confirmed this is not caused by their asset.</li> <li>Shropshire Council confirmed that this is private land.</li> <li>(28/01/26) I have requested that SC Legal write to the landowner for a response.</li> </ul>
Dog & Waste Bins	Market Drayton Golf Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communication received from the golf club.</li> <li>SC Response: StreetScene (who are the only service that deals with public waste bins) will not supply or service a bin [here] and that the Outdoor Partnerships Service do not have any bins on the public rights of way network.</li> </ul>

#### PARISH COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS

Here are questions posed by parish councillors across the division and updates/answers at present.

Question	Answer / Outcomes
Traffic Mirror Asset in Soudley	I have raised this with officers but still waiting confirmation.

# CHESWARDINE

## PARISH COUNCIL

### Report from Shropshire Council Unitary Councillor (Feb) - As received under Item 7. (Cont.)

Grit Bins not filled as requested.	Internal enquiry raised.
How much do we pay for Fix My Street?	Still awaiting a response from the council but the administration have raised concerns with this service so it is on our radar for improvement.
How many grit Bins in Childs Ercall.	Internal enquiry raised.
How many enforcement officers are employed at Shropshire Council?	4

#### SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL FINANCES | WHERE WE ARE AND WHY

Shropshire Council is facing ongoing and significant financial pressure due to long-term reductions in central government funding, rising demand for statutory services, and historic decisions that reduced financial resilience. While the Government has now confirmed a three-year funding settlement, this provides certainty rather than relief: Shropshire is projected to receive less funding over time, particularly compared to urban authorities, and a number of rural-specific grants have been removed.

At the same time, demand-led services – especially adult and children’s social care – continue to grow and now account for the vast majority of the Council’s revenue spending. Reserves have been substantially depleted in recent years, leaving limited flexibility to absorb shocks. As a result, the Council has had to apply for Exceptional Financial Support (EFS), which allows borrowing to meet day-to-day costs in the short term while longer-term recovery plans are put in place.

The in-year EFS (£71.4m) will be used to secure the current balance sheet as well as provide money for investment in staff & services that have been reduced over a number of years. For example, our legal and collection teams are considerably understaffed which in turn makes it impossible to chase money that is owed to the council.

The current administration is focusing on stabilising the Council’s finances by setting realistic budgets, improving income collection, reviewing capital projects to reduce pressure on the revenue budget, and ensuring that limited resources are targeted where they are most effective. While the financial outlook remains challenging, clearer planning assumptions and tighter financial management are intended to put the Council on a more sustainable footing over time.

Unfortunately due to a funding gap in the upcoming year 2026/27, the administration has been forced to apply for additional EFS of £130m which will allow full council the ability to approve the overall budget. It is worth noting that last year about 25 Councils requested EFS. This year around 100 Councils are having to borrow emergency money.

#### KEY FACTS:

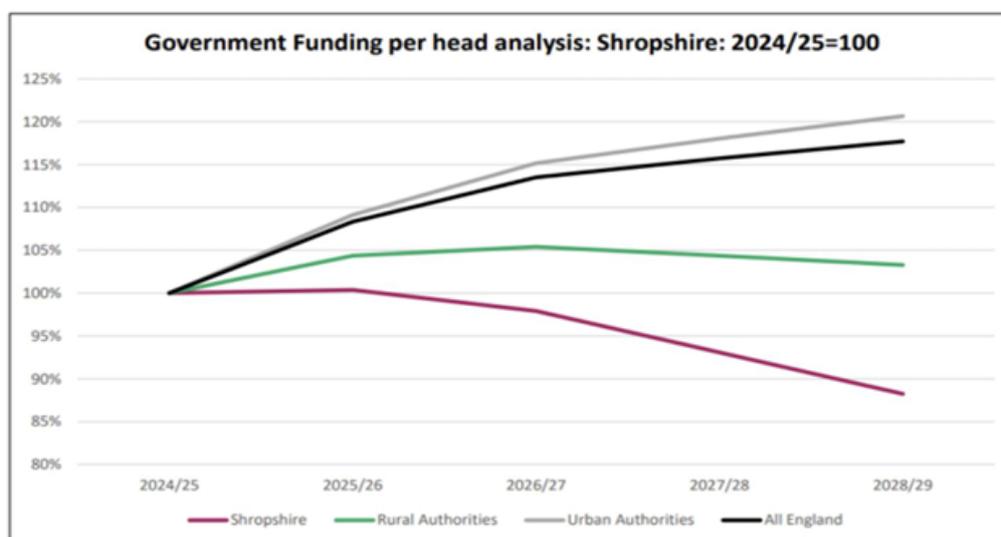
- The Government has confirmed a three-year funding settlement for local authorities. Shropshire’s funding is projected to be around 12% lower in three years’ time compared to current levels.
- Funding changes favour urban authorities, with reductions to grants recognising the higher costs of delivering services in rural areas.
- Shropshire Council has submitted representations to Government regarding the three-year funding settlement; the outcome is currently unknown.
- Around 80% of the Council’s revenue budget is spent on adult and children’s social care.

### Report from Shropshire Council Unitary Councillor (Feb) - As received under Item 7. (Cont.)

# CHESWARDINE

## PARISH COUNCIL

- The Council has applied for Exceptional Financial Support (EFS):
  - £71.4m for the current financial year
  - £130m for 2026/27  
(EFS is borrowing, not a grant, and must be repaid with interest.)
- A further 10% of revenue spending relates to the Veolia waste contract, leaving limited flexibility elsewhere.
- Council reserves have reduced significantly and are below the level recommended by auditors (around £25m). Currently predicted to run out in year 2025/26 if EFS is not secured. This would trigger a section 114 notice
- Several income-critical services (Council Tax, Legal, Planning, Procurement) have been under-resourced, impacting income collection and value for money; addressing this is a key part of the recovery approach.
- A review of capital projects is underway to reduce pressure on the revenue budget:
  - A number of projects have been paused (not cancelled) pending further review.
  - Priority is being given to safety, income-generating schemes, cost-reduction projects, and those supported by external grants.
- The financial position is expected to remain difficult for several years, but clearer planning, tighter controls, and a focus on sustainability are intended to stabilise the Council and protect essential services.
- Government appear to prefer that councils only increased council tax by 4.99%. For Shropshire Council, this increase would generate circa £10.5m.
  - EFS £130m is inclusive of 4.99% tax base increase (see table below).



### Appendix 7 MTEP Summary

	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Resources/ Income	774,741,515	796,803,285	805,022,347	822,778,769	841,550,485	1
Expenditure	903,927,619	930,342,200	964,840,350	1,003,975,710	1,036,733,944	2
<b>Remaining Gap/(Surplus) to be Funded</b>	<b>129,186,104</b>	<b>133,538,915</b>	<b>159,818,003</b>	<b>181,196,941</b>	<b>195,183,459</b>	

#### Notes

- 1 Inclusive of 4.99% Council tax increase plus taxbase growth
- 2 Inclusive of savings increasing from £5m in 26/27 to £45m by 2030/31. These must be ongoing in the base