

Dear Members

Cabinet

A meeting of the Cabinet will be held on **Thursday 11 July at 6.30pm** in the **Sheridan Room, Civic Centre, Riverside, Stafford** to deal with the business as set out on the agenda.

Please note that this meeting will be recorded.

Members are reminded that contact officers are shown at the top of each report and members are welcome to raise questions etc in advance of the meeting with the appropriate officer.



Head of Law and Governance

CABINET - 11 JULY 2024

Chair - Councillor A T A Godfrey

AGENDA

- 1 Minutes of 6 June 2024 as circulated and published on 7 June 2024
- 2 Apologies
- 3 Councillors' Question Time (if any)
- 4 Proposals of the Cabinet Members (as follows):-

	Page Nos
(a) RESOURCES PORTFOLIO	
(i) Finance Performance Update	3 - 24
(ii) Waterfront and Riverside Car Park Payment Systems - Permission to Spend	25 - 30
(b) LEISURE PORTFOLIO	
(i) Planning Obligations Haywood and Hixon	31 - 39
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Membership

Chair - Councillor A T A Godfrey

A T A Godfrey	- Leader
R Kenney	- Deputy Leader (Town Centres Regeneration Portfolio)
R P Cooke	- Resources Portfolio
I D Fordham	- Environment Portfolio
J Hood	- Community Portfolio
G P K Pardesi	- Leisure Portfolio
A N Pearce	- Climate Action and Nature Recovery Portfolio
A F Reid	- Economic Development and Planning Portfolio

Agenda Item 4(a)i**Finance Performance Update**

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	11 July 2024
Report of:	S151 Officer and Deputy Chief Executive (Resources)
Portfolio:	Resources Portfolio

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide Members with an update on the budget monitoring position for 2023/24 at 31 December 2023 and progress against budgeted savings.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the revenue position against budget for financial year 2023/24 to 31 December be noted;
- 2.2 That the update of progress against budgeted savings be noted.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.3 The budget monitoring information allows Cabinet to monitor spend against the agreed budget.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 The Council agreed a Net Portfolio Spend for 2023/24 of £16.172 million in January 2023 when the Council Tax was set for the year.
- 3.2 The monitoring position at the 31 December shows an adverse variance against budget of approximately £1.1 million pounds.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 The budgets covers all of the Council's priorities.

5 Report Detail

Budget monitoring to 31 December 2023

5.1 The table below sets out the revenue position against budget at 31 December 2023. The approved budgets show a slight variation within the portfolios reflecting the transfer of some functions between the portfolios as part of a portfolio review.

Table 1 - Budget monitoring to 31 December 2023

Portfolio	Original Budget £000	Approved Budget £000	Profiled Budget £000	Actual to 31 Dec £000	Variance £000
Community	919	1,043	818	911	(93)
Economic Development and Planning	1,101	1,695	1,379	2,205	(826)
Environment	4,586	3,617	2,109	2,294	(185)
Leisure	2,071	2,054	1,530	1,502	28
Resources	7,495	7,763	10,631	10,677	(46)
Total	16,172	16,172	16,467	17,589	(1,122)

5.2 The signage on the table above is that an underspend is a debit figure and any figures in brackets represent an overspend.

5.3 The table therefore shows against the profiled budget of £16,467,000 to the end of December an actual of £17,589,000, giving an adverse variance of £1,122,000.

5.4 The key issues identified in the table above are set out below by portfolio:-

Community Portfolio

There is a unfavourable variance of approximately (£93,000) on this portfolio. This is primarily due to:-

- Homelessness increased temporary accommodation unit spend (£24,000)
- Homelessness bed and breakfast costs (£225,000)
- Increased electricity charges (£14,000)
- CCTV camera repairs (£12,000) and budget saving not realised (£31,000)

Offset by

- Staffing variations £84,000
- Car allowances £3,000
- Increased housing benefit recovered on temporary accommodation £113,000
- Increased licence fee income £6,000

Environment Portfolio

There is an unfavourable variance of approximately (£185,000) on this portfolio. This is primarily due to:-

- Waste reduced recycling credits reflecting tonnage and transfer of green waste disposal to Staffordshire County Council (£130,000)
- Waste reduced income from recyclate (£34,000)
- Increased electricity costs (£68,000)
- Crematorium additional rates (£17,000), maintenance of cremators (£23,000)
- Streetscene reduced contract income (£80,000)
- Streetscene additional net expenditure (£111,000), comprising additional vehicle hire costs, supplies and services, partly offset by lower staff costs
- Pest control reduced income (£16,000)
- Off street parking supplies and services (£66,000)
- Markets reduced income (£40,000)

Offset by

- Staffing variations £124,000
- Increased bereavement income £65,000
- Off street parking reduced rates £47,000
- Off street parking income £140,000
- Markets reduced supplies and services £11,000

Leisure Portfolio

There is a favourable variance of £28,000 on this portfolio. This is primarily due to:-

- Parks additional HLF income £15,000
- Reduced premises costs £9,000
- Staffing variations £14,000

Offset by

- Parks additional supplies and services (£15,000)

Planning and Regeneration

There is an unfavourable variance of approximately (£826,000) on this portfolio. This is primarily due to:

- Development Management additional staff costs (£605,000) and planning enquiry costs above budget (£52,000)
- Reduced planning fee income (£66,000)
- Land charges reduced income (£35,000)
- Land and properties additional legal costs (£47,000) and reduced rental income (£14,000)
- Future high street revenue costs (£71,000)

Offset by

- Reduced Staffordshire County Council search fees £33,000
- Staffing variations £31,000
- Car allowances £9,000

Resources

There is an unfavourable variance of approximately (£46,000) on this portfolio. This is primarily due to:-

- Public buildings reduced rental income (£155,000) part budget saving not realised
- Revenues and benefits reduced income (£55,000)
- Technology additional supplies and services (£125,000)

Offset by

- Staffing variations £84,000
- Car allowances £22,000
- Civic centre reduced premises costs £42,000
- Additional saltings commission income £40,000
- Lower supplies and services spend £101,000

- 5.5 Annex 1 sets out the revenue budget monitoring position to 31 December including explanations for individual variances.

Addressing the main budget variance

- 5.6 The variance in planning and regeneration was undertaken against a backdrop of clearing the historic backlog of planning applications. This overriding priority led to the use of large amounts of external consultancy and agency staff.
- 5.7 It should be noted that there was no approved budget in place for this large overspend. It will be financed from reserves held to ensure that the council maintains a balanced position. This will have a negative impact on future transformation work in the department as those monies will no longer be available to invest in service change.
- 5.8 The budget manager has been spoken to about this overspend position to ensure that it will not happen again and that if any issues arise they will be raised earlier so that it can be managed more effectively. The restarting of budget monitoring will also ensure greater transparency for the council so issues like this are identified as early as possible. The finance team will also be working more closely with the team to help them manage their budgets.
- 5.9 In addition, more regular reporting will be prepared on the specific area of overspend in planning and regeneration. These reports will be presented to leadership team and members so that there can be greater oversight of this area while spend is brought under control.
- 5.10 A training programme has been developed for budget managers and this will be rolled out shortly. Its aims are to help budget managers understand their role and responsibility with regards to their budget management duties, help them access and use the system in place and budget disciplines and behaviours.
- 5.11 Whilst the finance system challenges have been well documented, there is functionality within the system which allows budget holders to log on to their budget areas. This will allow them to see in real time how their budget is performing and make informed decisions around spend. The budgets have been uploaded by the finance team in readiness for this financial year.

Budget savings

- 5.12 In 2023/24 the council undertook a review of all the savings which had been approved in previous budgets. This allowed the council to determine which had been achieved, which needed to be updated/revised and which were no longer achievable. Of the originally approved savings for 2023/24 of £876k, £437k were achieved in year. The budgeted for savings for 2024/25 were £1,711k and have been reprofiled/amended as below. The main change for 24/25 has been the slipping of the shared service saving of £400k into future years.

Table 2: budget savings

Description	2024-25 £000
Efficiencies in telephone operating system	8
Reduced corporate support administration	27
More efficient CCTV monitoring aligned to night time economy	5
Leasing vacant areas of the Civic Centre	140
Shared Services savings	144
Reduce maintenance budgets	25
Remove concessionary parking	15
Reduced overtime	30
Streetscene efficiencies	40
Efficiencies in bedding flowers/cauldrons	45
Efficiencies in Bereavement	40
Efficiencies in cleaning at civic centre	40
Increase garden waste charges from 2024	187
New Planning fees	25
Reductions in underspending overhead budgets	98
Total	869

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

The financial implications have been referred to throughout the report.

6.2 Legal

The legal implications have been referred to throughout the report

6.3 Human Resources

There are no human resource implications arising from this report

6.4 Risk Management

Nil

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

Nil

6.6 Health

Nil

6.7 Climate Change

Nil

7 Appendices

Annex 1: Finance performance update to 31 December 2023

Previous Consideration

None

8 Background Papers

Available in Financial Services

Contact Officer: Emma Fullagar

Telephone Number: 01543 464720

Ward Interest: Nil

Report Track: Cabinet 11 July 2024 (Only)

Key Decision: N/A

PERFORMANCE UPDATE - COMMUNITY PORTFOLIO

Budget Monitoring 2023-2024 - Period 9 - December

	Latest Budget	Budget to Date	Total Spend to Date	Variance from Budget to Date		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	£	%	
Private Sector Housing (Stdrs)						
Expenditure	635,470	418,689	422,026	(3,337)	(0.8%)	
Income	(488,120)	(75,504)	(82,690)	7,186	(9.5%)	
Net	147,350	343,185	339,336	3,849		
Housing Act Sewerage Works						
Expenditure	2,170	-	-	-	n/a	
Net	2,170	-	-	-		
PSH (Loans & Mortgages)						
Expenditure	5,730	-	-	-	n/a	
Income	(11,490)	(9,438)	(5,885)	(3,553)	37.6%	
Net	(5,760)	(9,438)	(5,885)	(3,553)		
Partnerships						
Expenditure	157,620	132,848	132,844	4	0.0%	
Income	(132,330)	(129,437)	(129,437)	-	0.0%	
Net	25,290	3,411	3,407	4		
Homelessness & Housing Advice						
Expenditure	1,637,900	946,088	1,099,158	(153,070)	(16.2%)	Staffing variations £86k, increased temporary accommodation units (£24k), additional bed and breakfast spend (£225k) and minor variations
Income	(1,015,940)	(702,074)	(814,586)	112,512	(16.0%)	Additional housing benefit recovered
Net	621,960	244,014	284,573	(40,559)		

PERFORMANCE UPDATE - COMMUNITY PORTFOLIO

Budget Monitoring 2023-2024 - Period 9 - December

	Latest Budget	Budget to Date	Total Spend to Date	Variance from Budget to Date		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	£	%	
Glover Street						
Expenditure	20,270	13,178	27,976	(14,798)	(112.3%)	Reflects increased electricity charges (£14k) and minor variations
Income	(21,200)	(15,903)	(21,882)	5,979	(37.6%)	Additional utilities and pitch income reflecting occupancy and energy prices
Net	(930)	(2,725)	6,094	(8,819)		
Grants and Contributions						
Expenditure	128,960	116,244	116,250	(6)	0.0%	
Income	-	-	-	-	n/a	
Net	128,960	116,244	116,250	(6)		
CCTV						
Expenditure	123,690	123,690	167,159	(43,469)	(35.1%)	Camera repairs (£12k) and budget saving not realised (£31k)
Net	123,690	123,690	167,159	(43,469)		
Health Inequalities Funding						
Expenditure	193,830	-	-	-	n/a	
Income	(193,830)	-	-	-	n/a	
Net	-	-	-	-		
Portfolio Total	1,042,730	818,381	910,933	(92,552)	(11.3%)	

PERFORMANCE UPDATE - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING PORTFOLIO

Budget Monitoring 2023-2024 - Period 9 - December

	Latest Budget	Budget to Date	Total Spend to Date	Variance from Budget to Date		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	£	%	
Management and Support						
Expenditure	301,310	229,198	230,317	(1,119)	(0.5%)	
Income	(29,080)	(17,733)	(24,751)	7,018	(39.6%)	Additional street naming income £6k
Net	272,230	211,465	205,566	5,899		
Building Control						
Expenditure	183,270	137,471	136,813	658	0.5%	
Net	183,270	137,471	136,813	658		
Development Management						
Expenditure	1,293,890	1,040,159	1,686,695	(646,536)	(62.2%)	Additional staff costs (£605k), planning enquiry for former university halls (£52k) and minor variations
Income	(866,830)	(801,933)	(726,574)	(75,359)	9.4%	Budget saving not realised (£20k), reduced planning fee income (£66k) and HS2 rechargeable officer time £10k
Net	427,060	238,226	960,122	(721,896)		
Forward Planning						
Expenditure	573,540	240,206	221,413	18,793	7.8%	
Income	(224,460)	-	-	-	n/a	
Net	349,080	240,206	221,413	18,793		
Land Charges - Local Searches						
Expenditure	153,800	86,782	56,352	30,430	35.1%	Reduced Staffordshire County Council search fee costs £33k
Income	(146,840)	(97,283)	(62,425)	(34,858)	35.8%	Lower search fee income reflecting activity
Net	6,960	(10,501)	(6,073)	(4,428)		

PERFORMANCE UPDATE - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING PORTFOLIO

Budget Monitoring 2023-2024 - Period 9 - December

	Latest Budget	Budget to Date	Total Spend to Date	Variance from Budget to Date		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	£	%	
Land & Properties						
Expenditure	69,270	32,154	78,722	(46,568)	(144.8%)	Additional legal costs
Income	(51,690)	(45,508)	(31,283)	(14,225)	31.3%	Reflects one of the rental sites being unoccupied for part of the year
Net	17,580	(13,354)	47,438	(60,792)		
Economic Growth & Projects						
Expenditure	1,769,690	1,083,293	1,148,260	(64,967)	(6.0%)	Additional future high street revenue costs (£71k) and minor variations
Income	(1,347,320)	(508,760)	(508,672)	(88)	0.0%	
Net	422,370	574,533	639,588	(65,055)		
Borough Tourism						
Expenditure	16,640	1,230	-	1,230	100.0%	
Income	-	-	-	-	n/a	
Net	16,640	1,230	-	1,230		
Portfolio Total	1,695,190	1,379,276	2,204,868	(825,592)	(59.9%)	

PERFORMANCE UPDATE - ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

Budget Monitoring 2023-2024 - Period 9 - December

	Latest Budget	Budget to Date	Total Spend to Date	Variance from Budget to Date		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	£	%	
Management & Support						
Expenditure	283,200	218,132	164,259	53,873	24.7%	Staffing variations £54k and minor variations
Net	283,200	218,132	164,259	53,873		
Partnership Environmental Mgmt						
Expenditure	102,700	54,243	70,373	(16,130)	(29.7%)	Additional staff costs (funded by Biodiversity net Gain grant) (£5k), Supplies spend funded by HS2 grant (£5k) and minor variations
Income	(45,080)	(8,729)	(13,439)	4,710	(54.0%)	
Net	57,620	45,514	56,934	(11,420)		
Waste & Recycling						
Expenditure	5,048,790	3,002,204	2,965,276	36,928	1.2%	Reduced waste collection contract spend £35k
Income	(2,953,770)	(2,515,815)	(2,370,128)	(145,687)	5.8%	Reduced recycling credits reflecting tonnage and transfer of green waste disposal costs to SCC (£130k), reduced income from dry recycle (£34k) and minor variations
Net	2,095,020	486,389	595,148	(108,759)		
Cleansing Services						
Expenditure	65,160	43,526	42,048	1,478	3.4%	
Income	(360)	(270)	-	(270)	100.0%	
Net	64,800	43,256	42,048	1,208		

PERFORMANCE UPDATE - ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

Budget Monitoring 2023-2024 - Period 9 - December

	Latest Budget	Budget to Date	Total Spend to Date	Variance from Budget to Date		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	£	%	
Bereavement Services						
Expenditure	776,200	633,586	742,917	(109,331)	(17.3%)	Staffing variations £14k, crematorium additional rates (£17k), electricity (£7k), goods for resale (£54k), memorials testing (£10k), maintenance of cremators (£23k) and minor variations
Income	(1,840,110)	(1,287,374)	(1,352,853)	65,479	(5.1%)	Additional income reflecting burials and cremations including resale of goods
Net	(1,063,910)	(653,788)	(609,936)	(43,852)		
Drainage Services						
Expenditure	114,650	113,513	117,557	(4,044)	(3.6%)	
Net	114,650	113,513	117,557	(4,044)		
Misc Highways Functions						
Expenditure	44,620	11,584	12,586	(1,001)	(8.6%)	
Income	(5,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)	-	0.0%	
Net	39,620	6,584	7,585	(1,001)		
Street Scene						
Expenditure	2,866,350	2,237,964	2,349,238	(111,274)	(5.0%)	
Income	(768,210)	(556,532)	(476,596)	(79,936)	14.4%	Reduced contract income (£71k)
Net	2,098,140	1,681,432	1,872,642	(191,210)		

PERFORMANCE UPDATE - ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

Budget Monitoring 2023-2024 - Period 9 - December

	Latest Budget	Budget to Date	Total Spend to Date	Variance from Budget to Date		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	£	%	
Regulatory Services						
Expenditure	790,530	585,447	644,143	(58,696)	(10.0%)	Staff costs (funded from reserves) (£91k), partly offset by staff vacancies £31k
Income	(263,360)	(209,552)	(290,226)	80,674	(38.5%)	Reserve funded for additional costs £91k, partly offset by reduced licencing income (£8k) and minor variations
Net	527,170	375,895	353,917	21,978		
Strategic Health Delivery						
Expenditure	62,320	46,659	30,965	15,694	33.6%	Staffing variations £12k and minor variations
Net	62,320	46,659	30,965	15,694		
Dog Warden Service						
Expenditure	11,530	8,380	6,905	1,475	17.6%	
Income	(11,640)	(8,731)	(6,750)	(1,981)	22.7%	
Net	(110)	(351)	155	(506)		
Pest Control						
Expenditure	252,770	193,692	164,091	29,601	15.3%	Staff vacancy £28k, additional transport costs (£6k) and reduced chemical costs £6k
Income	(177,480)	(147,202)	(131,489)	(15,713)	10.7%	Reduced income from services
Net	75,290	46,490	32,602	13,888		

PERFORMANCE UPDATE - ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

Budget Monitoring 2023-2024 - Period 9 - December

	Latest Budget	Budget to Date	Total Spend to Date	Variance from Budget to Date		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	£	%	
Off street Parking						
Expenditure	1,528,950	1,353,266	1,417,848	(64,582)	(4.8%)	Utility costs (£55k), rates £47k, reduced premises maintenance £15k, bank charges (£26k), equipment (£40k) and minor variations
Income	(2,423,560)	(1,777,447)	(1,917,094)	139,647	(7.9%)	Reflects car park usage
Net	(894,610)	(424,181)	(499,246)	75,065		
Borough Markets						
Expenditure	358,910	275,038	240,982	34,056	12.4%	Staffing (£4k), reduced rates £28k, electricity (£6k), reduced supplies £11k and minor variations
Income	(200,880)	(151,452)	(111,942)	(39,510)	26.1%	Reduced income reflecting market occupancy (£19k), reduced income hire of areas market square (£16k) and farmers market income (£5k)
Net	158,030	123,586	129,040	(5,454)		
Portfolio Total	3,617,230	2,109,130	2,293,671	(184,541)	(8.7%)	

PERFORMANCE UPDATE - LEISURE AND CULTURE PORTFOLIO

Budget Monitoring 2023-2024 - Period 9 - December

	Latest Budget	Budget to Date	Total Spend to Date	Variance from Budget to Date		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	£	%	
Leisure Section						
Expenditure	117,480	88,387	90,406	(2,019)	(2.3%)	
Income	(31,560)	-	-	-	n/a	
Net	85,920	88,387	90,406	(2,019)		
Parks & Open Spaces						
Expenditure	926,900	584,376	575,346	9,030	1.5%	
Income	(246,600)	(88,706)	(103,973)	15,267	(17.2%)	Additional HLF income
Net	680,300	495,670	471,372	24,298		
Allotments						
Expenditure	18,910	15,390	18,059	(2,669)	(17.3%)	
Income	(1,200)	(900)	(4,153)	3,253	(361.4%)	
Net	17,710	14,490	13,907	583		
Ancient High House						
Expenditure	10,330	-	-	-	n/a	
Income	-	-	-	-	n/a	
Net	10,330	-	-	-		
Broadeye Windmill						
Expenditure	5,900	5,314	2,312	3,002	56.5%	
Income	-	-	(1)	1	n/a	
Net	5,900	5,314	2,311	3,003		
Izaak Walton Cottage						
Expenditure	8,310	-	-	-	n/a	
Income	-	-	-	-	n/a	
Net	8,310	-	-	-		

PERFORMANCE UPDATE - LEISURE AND CULTURE PORTFOLIO

Budget Monitoring 2023-2024 - Period 9 - December

	Latest Budget	Budget to Date	Total Spend to Date	Variance from Budget to Date		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	£	%	
Stafford Castle						
Expenditure	12,690	-	1,002	(1,002)	n/a	
Income	-	-	-	-	n/a	
Net	12,690	-	1,002	(1,002)		
Leisure Management Contract						
Expenditure	959,180	681,550	681,609	(59)	0.0%	
Income	(145,170)	-	-	-	n/a	
Net	814,010	681,550	681,609	(59)		
Leisure Strategy						
Expenditure	418,940	244,656	241,410	3,246	1.3%	
Net	418,940	244,656	241,410	3,246		
Portfolio Total	2,054,110	1,530,067	1,502,017	28,050	1.8%	

PERFORMANCE UPDATE - RESOURCES PORTFOLIO

Budget Monitoring 2023-2024 - Period 9 - December

	Latest Budget	Budget to Date	Total Spend to Date	Variance from Budget to Date		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	£	%	
Public Buildings						
Expenditure	1,545,590	1,383,985	1,336,405	47,580	3.4%	
Income	(720,130)	(609,871)	(454,619)	(155,252)	25.5%	Reduced rental income £155k (part budget saving not realised)
Net	825,460	774,114	881,786	(107,672)		
Executive Management						
Expenditure	990,300	748,340	700,020	48,320	6.5%	Staffing variations re reduced hours
Income	(266,160)	-	-	-	n/a	
Net	724,140	748,340	700,020	48,320		
Law and Administration						
Expenditure	1,447,610	1,094,137	1,021,469	72,668	6.6%	Staffing variations £46k and lower supplies and services £23k
Income	(435,660)	(329,875)	(360,349)	30,474	(9.2%)	Commission on sale of plots £40k, partly offset by reduced legal income
Net	1,011,950	764,262	661,120	103,142		
Finance						
Expenditure	725,830	544,785	551,292	(6,507)	(1.2%)	
Income	-	-	-	-	n/a	
Net	725,830	544,785	551,292	(6,507)		
Human Resources Services						
Expenditure	669,210	484,147	487,050	(2,903)	(0.6%)	
Income	(292,460)	(215,168)	(215,077)	(91)	0.0%	
Net	376,750	268,979	271,973	(2,994)		

PERFORMANCE UPDATE - RESOURCES PORTFOLIO

Budget Monitoring 2023-2024 - Period 9 - December

	Latest Budget	Budget to Date	Total Spend to Date	Variance from Budget to Date		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	£	%	
Technology						
Expenditure	1,948,790	1,502,592	1,594,239	(91,647)	(6.1%)	Additional technology supplies (£73k), abavus and netcall costs (£41k) partly offset by staffing variations £23k
Income	(1,051,820)	(682,005)	(679,670)	(2,335)	0.3%	
Net	896,970	820,587	914,569	(93,982)		
Revenues & Benefits						
Expenditure	1,655,020	1,231,312	1,187,764	43,548	3.5%	LCTS grant no longer separate grant (£95k) partly offset by additional penalty charge income
Income	(802,150)	(511,855)	(455,903)	(55,952)	10.9%	
Net	852,870	719,457	731,861	(12,404)		
Housing Benefit Payments						
Expenditure	15,097,700	13,567,261	13,566,981	280	0.0%	
Income	(15,297,700)	(9,813,474)	(9,813,405)	(69)	0.0%	
Net	(200,000)	3,753,787	3,753,576	211		
Parish Councils						
Expenditure	51,000	51,000	51,129	(129)	(0.3%)	
Net	51,000	51,000	51,129	(129)		
Corporate and Democratic Core						
Expenditure	287,070	74,621	63,013	11,608	15.6%	Reduced bank charges
Income	-	-	-	-	n/a	
Net	287,070	74,621	63,013	11,608		
Non-Distributed Costs						
Expenditure	277,710	267,102	256,830	10,272	3.8%	
Income	-	-	-	-	n/a	
Net	277,710	267,102	256,830	10,272		

PERFORMANCE UPDATE - RESOURCES PORTFOLIO

Budget Monitoring 2023-2024 - Period 9 - December

	Latest Budget	Budget to Date	Total Spend to Date	Variance from Budget to Date		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	£	%	
Asset Mgmt Energy Conservation						
Expenditure	41,940	37,147	39,419	(2,272)	(6.1%)	
Income	-	-	-	-	n/a	
Net	41,940	37,147	39,419	(2,272)		
Electoral Registration						
Expenditure	43,200	40,302	35,808	4,494	11.2%	
Income	-	-	(3,659)	3,659	n/a	
Net	43,200	40,302	32,149	8,153		
Elections						
Expenditure	245,920	245,889	302,512	(56,623)	(23.0%)	Additional cost of borough and parish elections Voter identification grant £65k and minor variations
Income	(206,420)	(206,420)	(262,937)	56,517	(27.4%)	
Net	39,500	39,469	39,575	(106)		
Members Services						
Expenditure	310,800	232,414	237,357	(4,943)	(2.1%)	
Income	-	-	-	-	n/a	
Net	310,800	232,414	237,357	(4,943)		
Out of Hours Service						
Expenditure	6,980	6,980	8,318	(1,338)	(19.2%)	
Income	-	-	-	-	n/a	
Net	6,980	6,980	8,318	(1,338)		
Facilities Management						
Expenditure	248,600	186,464	181,072	5,392	2.9%	
Income	-	-	-	-	n/a	
Net	248,600	186,464	181,072	5,392		

PERFORMANCE UPDATE - RESOURCES PORTFOLIO

Budget Monitoring 2023-2024 - Period 9 - December

	Latest Budget	Budget to Date	Total Spend to Date	Variance from Budget to Date		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	£	%	
Corporate Business & Partners						
Expenditure	422,110	292,449	211,236	81,213	27.8%	Staffing vacancies and reduced hours £81k
Income	(50,000)	-	(2,130)	2,130	n/a	
Net	372,110	292,449	209,106	83,343		
Communications						
Expenditure	174,480	128,349	116,574	11,775	9.2%	
Income	-	-	-	-	n/a	
Net	174,480	128,349	116,574	11,775		
Customer Services						
Expenditure	363,340	269,804	266,654	3,150	1.2%	
Income	-	-	-	-	n/a	
Net	363,340	269,804	266,654	3,150		
Items to be Allocated						
Expenditure	(113,880)	(82,472)	17,886	(100,358)	121.7%	Corporate provision for staff turnover (£100k)
Income	-	-	-	-	n/a	
Net	(113,880)	(82,472)	17,886	(100,358)		
Audit Risk Resilience Procure						
Expenditure	259,450	194,617	194,470	147	0.1%	
Income	-	-	-	-	n/a	
Net	259,450	194,617	194,470	147		
Insurance Premiums						
Expenditure	186,670	140,022	139,990	32	0.0%	
Income	-	-	-	-	n/a	
Net	186,670	140,022	139,990	32		

PERFORMANCE UPDATE - RESOURCES PORTFOLIO

Budget Monitoring 2023-2024 - Period 9 - December

	Latest Budget	Budget to Date	Total Spend to Date	Variance from Budget to Date		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	£	%	
Property Maintenance						
Expenditure	485,510	382,793	382,210	583	0.2%	
Income	(485,510)	(24,664)	(24,643)	(21)	0.1%	
Net	-	358,129	357,568	561		
Portfolio Total	7,762,940	10,630,708	10,677,306	(46,598)	(0.4%)	

Agenda Item 4(a)ii**Waterfront and Riverside Car Park Payment Systems - Permission to Spend**

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	11 July 2024
Report of:	Head of Operations
Portfolio:	Resources Portfolio

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek Council approval for the allocation of capital, from unallocated capital resources, into the capital programme, and to grant permission-to-spend that allocation on upgrading the current parking system and payment machines at the Council's Waterfront and Riverside car parks.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet recommends to Council the allocation of a £275,000 fund from unallocated capital resources into the capital programme, and grants permission to spend those funds on the replacement of the parking system, payment machines, and associated equipment at the Council's Waterfront and Riverside car parks.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.2 The Council has been put on notice by the supplier of its Waterfront and Riverside car parking software and hardware systems, that those systems will no longer be supported by them, and parts will no longer be manufactured from end of financial year 2024/25. These systems are key to the day-to-day operation of the car parks and are absolutely crucial to the generation of a significant level of their income. Should they fail after their manufacturers support has ended, the Council could face significant financial losses within its parking services, along with a significant detrimental impact upon its business economy and visitor /car park user experience.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 The current car parking system and payment machines at Waterfront and Riverside car parks will no longer be supported by the manufacturer from the end of the financial year 2024/25.
- 3.2 This presents a significant financial risk and a number of other significant risks to the Council should they fail after that point.
- 3.3 At present their replacement is not included within the capital programme nor has it been budgeted for. It is recommended that the capital requirement should be taken from within the Council's unallocated capital resources, placed within the capital programme, and permission to spend granted by Council.
- 3.4 In allowing for the timely procurement and replacement of the parking system, payment machines, and associated equipment, it ensures that the Council's parking provision offered by both of the car parks remains uninterrupted, as well as allowing them to continue to operate their pay-on-foot parking services in a modern and efficient way.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 The recommendation contained within this report supports the Council's following corporate priorities:

Corporate Business Objective 2 - To improve the quality of life of local people by providing a safe, clean, attractive place to live and work and encouraging people to be engaged in developing strong communities that promote health and wellbeing.

The provision of high quality and efficient car parking is seen as key to businesses, residents, and visitors, and is expected by most people that use it. Income generated from within the car parking service is used to support other service areas that benefit local residents, businesses, visitors and the environment.

Corporate Business Objective 4 - To be a well-run, financially sustainable, and ambitious organisation, responsive to the needs of our customers and communities and focussed on delivering our objectives.

Ensuring the car parking systems, payment machines and associated equipment, remain in good order is seen as key to maximising income and customer satisfaction and likelihood of regular return, thus increasing economic and growth opportunities to the borough.

5 Report Detail

- 5.1 The Council has been notified by the supplier of its parking control and payment system (Scheidt & Bachmann (S&B)) that the current parking system operated by SBC at both Waterfront and Riverside car parks will become obsolete by the end of the financial year (2024/25).
- 5.2 The parking system is used to control access on and off the car parks, ensure correct payments are requested and collected, and provides real time monitoring of car park usage for both the Council and its parking management contractor.
- 5.3 The current system relies upon the use of a microchipped coin (chip-coin), which are expensive to replace, and are often lost by car park users. Each year 600 amount of chip coins have to be replaced, at an approximate cost of £3200.
- 5.4 The system manufacturer has informed the Council that the soft and firmware within the payment and barrier control machines will no longer be supported after approximately March 2026. Some spare parts for the machines are already becoming more difficult to resource as their manufacture comes towards its end.
- 5.5 Waterfront and Riverside car parks have approximately 1205 parking spaces and bring in approximately £964,589 of income each year to the Council (based on an average over from 2021/22 to 2023/24), with the vast majority of that income being from card and cash payments made at the parking control and payment system machines that require replacement.
- 5.6 Given the above potential loss of income should the parking system fail after its manufacturer and software/firmware support has ended; it is not considered appropriate not to procure a new system in goodtime.
- 5.7 It is proposed to replace the current system with the latest Automated Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) system, which will no longer require the use of a chip coin. The ANPR system takes a vehicles registration mark (VRM) when it enters the car park and stores it. Before leaving the car park, the driver goes to one of the payment machines and inputs their VRM into it. The payment machine then calculates the parking fee. Once the correct fee has been paid the driver is able to leave the car park in their vehicle, as ANPR cameras on the barrier at the exit gate recognise the VRM as it approaches and automatically opens the barrier.
- 5.8 The current system was installed as part of the design and build process by the construction contractor when the car parks were constructed in 2016.

- 5.9 The new system / machines will have an approximate working life of 8-10 years, which will mean they should not need to be replaced until approximately 2034.
- 5.10 At present there is no capital provision in the budget for the replacement of the parking system or machines at either car park. It is requested that a sum of approximately £275,000 be allocated from the unallocated capital resources into the capital programme and permission to spend that amount is granted by Council.
- 5.11 The current maintenance contract costs approximately £22,000 per annum, excluding 24/7 remote support. The new system will come with a minimum 12-month warranty period, thus saving circa £22,000 in the first year of operation.
- 5.12 It is estimated that the costs of an equivalent maintenance contract from Year 2 for the new system will be in the region of £19,000, giving an approximate £3,000 saving per year after Year 1.
- 5.13 Due to the cost involved in the purchase of the new parking system and its installation, a full procurement exercise will be required to be undertaken by the Council, with assistance from the Council's legal services and the County Council's procurement team.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

At present there is no capital provision in the budget for the replacement of the parking system or machines at either car park. It is requested that a sum of £275,000 be allocated from the unallocated capital resources into the capital programme and permission to spend that amount is granted by Council.

Allowing the system and machines to operate unsupported is not considered appropriate as they are so key to the generation of much of the Council's parking income. Should they fail completely after the support has ended the Council would be left with only a very limited number of options that would require a decision to be made in quick-time, and that would no doubt have a significant impact upon revenue.

The project changeover plan does not envisage any impact on the car park income as it will be managed to cause minimum disruption.

The unallocated capital resources as reported in the budget report to Council were £714,000, of this amount £349,000 is ringfenced for affordable housing leaving £365,000 available for allocation. Following this allocation only £90,000 unallocated capital resources will remain.

6.2 Legal

The procurement will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's current financial and procurement regulations.

The new system and machines will be required to offer full GDPR compliance.

6.3 Human Resources

None

6.4 Risk Management

Should the Council choose not to replace the machines as part of a planned replacement programme it enters into a significant risk of the loss of income should they fail after their support has ended. This will also likely result in the Council having to carry out a rapid procurement and installation process which would also no doubt have a significant impact upon the car parks operation, increase complaints, damage the Councils reputation and offer reduced best value.

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

None

6.6 Health

None

6.7 Climate Change

Climate change considerations will be looked at during the specification and procurement process, with a view to the overall carbon impact of the manufactured machines and their installation being kept to a minimum.

7 Appendices

None

8 Previous Consideration

None

9 Background Papers

None

Contact Officer: Paul Foster
Telephone Number: 01785 619247
Ward Interest: Nil
Report Track: Cabinet 11 July 2024
Council 30 July 2024
Key Decision: Yes

Agenda Item 4(b)i**Planning Obligations Haywood and Hixon**

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	11 July 2024
Report of:	Head of Economic Development and Planning and Head of Operations
Portfolio:	Leisure Portfolio

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider the allocation of Section 106 funding towards the provision and enhancement of open spaces serving the communities of Colwich, Little Haywood and Great Haywood and to be given permission to spend subject to the successful completion of the procurement process.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the allocation of existing off-site contributions under the terms of S106 agreements for the amount of £419,073 as laid out in section 3 be approved for the enhancement of open space in Haywood and Hixon Ward;
- 2.2 That permission be given to progress to the procurement and spend stages of the project delivery process, based on the proposals described in paragraph 5 of the report;
- 2.3 That delegated authority be granted to the Head of Economic Development and Planning and Head of Operations (in conjunction with the Leisure Portfolio Holder and relevant Local Councillors) to approve the final plans and any further revisions to enable the projects to be delivered.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.4 The Borough wide Assessment of Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation Facilities 2009 and the subsequent update in 2013 highlighted the need for better quality play provision for children of all ages. In addition the www.staffordbc.gov.uk/open-space-and-green-and-blue-infrastructure-topic-paper illustrates a need to improve the quality of existing play areas in the borough.

- 2.5 In order to progress with the works through procurement and delivery, without any further delays, this report is requesting that delegated authority be granted.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 The sum of £332,779 has been received relating to Section 106 funding as outlined in table 1 below (items 1 - 5) and is targeted at the “provision and/or maintenance and/or enhancement of open space within the catchment area.
- 3.2 In addition a further £86,294 has been received relating to Section 106 funding as outlined in the table 1 below (items 6 - 8) and is targeted at the “provision and/or maintenance and/or enhancement of the off-site open space at Jubilee Playing Fields.

S106 Funding Breakdown Table 1

No	Planning Application	Detail	Amount	Spend Deadline
1	14/21135/OUT	Land off Little Tixall Lane, Gt Haywood	£41,732	Sept 2026
2	13/19534/OUT	Land adj Jubilee Playing Fields, Gt Haywood	£61,879	May 2026
3	13/19534/OUT	Land adj Jubilee Playing Fields, Gt Haywood	£67,187	Aug 2027
4	13/18382/OUT	Land adj Greenacres, Gt Haywood	£142,868	Nov 2032
5	15/23140/FUL	Land adj Mill Lane, Gt Haywood	£19,113	Jun 2028
SUB TOTAL for OSOS in catchment area			£332,779	
6	16/24235/OUT	Land west of Coley Lane, Lt Haywood	£10,569	Jul 2028
7	14/20886/OUT	Land off Little Tixall Lane, Gt Haywood	£37,159	Oct 2027
8	14/20886/OUT	Land off Little Tixall Lane, Gt Haywood	£38,566	Dec 2027
SUB TOTAL for OSOS at Jubilee Playing Fields			£86,294	
TOTAL S106 Contribution available			£419,073	

- 3.3 As part of the Council's normal process of delivering S106 funding, Officers have consulted with the Elected Members for the Ward who are fully supportive of the proposals. Officers are working closely with Colwich Parish Council to determine the priority projects in the Area. The Local Councillors continue to be consulted on the S106 projects that are funded through joint working with Colwich Parish Council.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 This project should help to deliver the Council's Corporate Business Plan 2021-2024 key objectives set out below:
- "To improve the quality of life of local people by providing a safe, clean, attractive place to live and work and encouraging people to be engaged in developing strong communities that promote health and well-being."
 - "To be a well-run, financially sustainable and ambitious organisation, responsive to the needs of our customers and communities and focussed on delivering our objectives"

5 Report Detail

- 5.1 In December 2017 a Cabinet report was approved to allocate £103,611 as shown in section 3 as items 1 and 2 of the S106 Funding Breakdown Table 1.
- 5.2 Due to a number of housing developments in the area a further 5 section 106 agreements have become available and Officers have been working with Colwich Parish Council to determine the priority projects.
- 5.3 The priority projects were identified from Colwich Neighbourhood Plan and the results of a resident's survey undertaken in July 2021.
- 5.4 It is proposed to pool the sums together and submit a new Cabinet Report to allocate the funding to the priorities identified:
- (a) St Mary's Open Space – replacement of existing play facilities (£100k)
 - (b) Jubilee Playing Fields Car Park and Drainage (£120k)
 - (c) Jubilee Playing Fields Toilets and Changing Room (120k)
 - (d) Jubilee Playing Fields Football Pitch and Track (£80k)
- 5.5 The St Mary's Open Space project relates to the play area at St Mary's which was last refurbished in 2002. The area is worn and in need of a complete refurbishment as items of equipment have been removed over the last few years and not replaced.

- 5.6 St Mary's Road Open Space and play facilities are currently managed and operated by the Council's Streetscene team who have been involved in developing the project outlines. Colwich Parish Council intend to take over a 30 year lease of this land once the development is completed. If this lease does not materialise Streetscene will continue to manage the site within existing budgets.
- 5.7 Public consultation Surveys were distributed to residents by Colwich Parish Council in January 2024 and made available online on Stafford Borough Council's website. 88 responses were received with detailed feedback from residents outlining the issues most important to them. Based on these results plans will be drawn up for an improved play provision for a mix of toddler and juniors. The project will be delivered by Council Officers later this year. The Full results of the consultation are available at:
- www.staffordbc.gov.uk/little-haywood-play-area-consultation
- 5.8 The St Mary's Road Play Area upgrade project will be procured and managed by Council Officers.
- 5.9 The objective of the Car Park and Drainage Project is to provide a suitable drainage system and surface to meet current needs and the increased usage from the upgraded football pitch. The project will also look at providing an electrical power distribution cabinet and floodlighting to support community events and electric vehicle charging point(s).
- 5.10 The current car park is an open space with no defined parking spaces, has a rough compacted stone finish and a large area that regularly floods when it rains taking several days to drain and rendering that area of the car park unusable. Colwich Parish Council has conducted several investigations into the ground conditions under and adjacent to the car park, which has identified the poor porosity of the area confirming why it takes a significant time for the collected surface water to drain away. Colwich Parish Council are engaging a consultant, at their own cost to prepare an option study and subsequently develop plans for the car park including its drainage.
- 5.11 Jubilee Playing Fields Toilets and Changing Room project objective is to develop the existing changing facilities to support the usage of the football pitch, to provide suitable and secure toilet facilities and to provide other supporting facilities for community events at the site.
- 5.12 The Toilet and Changing Rooms comprises of public toilets, two changing rooms and plantrooms. The toilet areas are functional, however the changing rooms were not fully completed when the original building was built and although the dedicated toilet and shower areas are provided the toilets and shower facilities within were not.

- 5.13 The project is anticipated to include: the repurposing of the toilet facilities to retain the dedicated disabled toilet, modification of the two large separate toilet areas to provide separate secure toilet facilities and supporting services to ease maintenance and reduce the potential for vandalism; completing the changing rooms to include dedicated toilets to support the use of the football pitch; the provision of an operations/ maintenance support room; and supporting sustainable building services. Colwich Parish Council are engaging a consultant, at their own cost, to prepare an option study and subsequently develop plans for the building.
- 5.14 Jubilee Playing Field Football Pitch and Track project will provide one or more football pitches for use by multiple age groups on the field and extend the existing access track to nearer the field to aid unhindered vehicular access for ambulances.
- 5.15 Colwich Parish Council has engaged with the Football Association and an Initial Report was prepared to provide an outline of the feasibility of providing one or more football pitches on the field area. The Report indicated that the field has significant undulations and is currently not safe to play football. It recommended releveling across the field, scarify, aerate, top dress, reseed, and provide pitch/pitches.
- 5.16 Colwich Parish Council has identified a number of other small projects in the area that they intend to fund from their own resource including the design elements of the works at Jubilee Playing Fields. The Parish Council hope this will enable works on the projects to progress to completion in 2025.
- 5.17 Jubilee Playing Fields is owned and managed by Colwich Parish Council who will maintain operational responsibility after the improvements have been completed. All the project at Jubilee Playing Fields will be procured and managed by Colwich Parish Council.
- 5.18 Officers have undertaken soft market testing which indicates that the budget for the works is sufficient to cover the estimated costs of the priority projects.
- 5.19 In all cases, should the final cost of these works fall below the available sums, then further minor improvement/enhancement works will be carried out at Jubilee Playing Fields. If the final costs exceed the available budget then elements of the projects will be excluded.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

The OSOS S106 as identified in section 3 S106 Funding Breakdown Table provides details of the 8 agreements available in Haywood and Hixon Ward totalling £419,073. This sum is currently unallocated and is therefore available to use for projects within the wards of Haywood and Hixon and specifically at Jubilee Playing Fields for 3 items.

The outline projects have been soft market tested and it is believed the funding allocations will be sufficient to cover the costs of the proposed works. This working assumption will be confirmed once a full procurement process has been undertaken.

Officers will ensure that the procurement exercise complies with relevant regulations thereby achieving the necessary balance between value for money and quality.

One of the sites is currently managed and operated by the Council's Streetscene team who have been involved in developing the project outlines. Colwich Parish Council intend to take over a 30 year lease of this land once the development is completed. There is no maintenance payment envisaged to Colwich Parish Council as part of this lease.

Colwich Parish Council own and manage the land at Jubilee Playing Fields and will be delivering the associated projects including procurement and will be responsible for the ongoing management and maintenance of the site.

The Council will be responsible for procuring and delivering the St Marys play facilities.

6.2 Legal

The main legal implication is the need to ensure compliance with the requirements of the funding allocations and terms of the S106. If the S106 funding is not spent within the stated deadlines it will need to be returned to the paying party.

6.3 Human Resources

None

6.4 Risk Management

Future risks will be formally assessed as a part of the overall Project Management.

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

The Borough Council has considered the effect of its actions on all sections of our communities and has addressed all and believes there to be no impact on any of the Equality Strands in the production of this report.

In following the recommendations of this report there will be no impact on age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation within the community.

6.6 Health

The delivery of these projects will help maintain and improve the health and wellbeing of the residents by allowing them the opportunity to partake in social and leisure activities.

6.7 Climate Change

No significant implications.

7 Appendices

Appendix 1: St Mary's Road Play Area Location Plan

Appendix 2: Jubilee Playing Fields Location Plan

8 Previous Consideration

Cabinet 7 December 2017

9 Background Papers

The Borough wide Assessment of Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation Facilities 2009 and the subsequent update in 2013 -

www.staffordbc.gov.uk/open-space-and-green-and-blue-infrastructure-topic-paper

Contact Officer:

Telephone Number: Sally McDonald

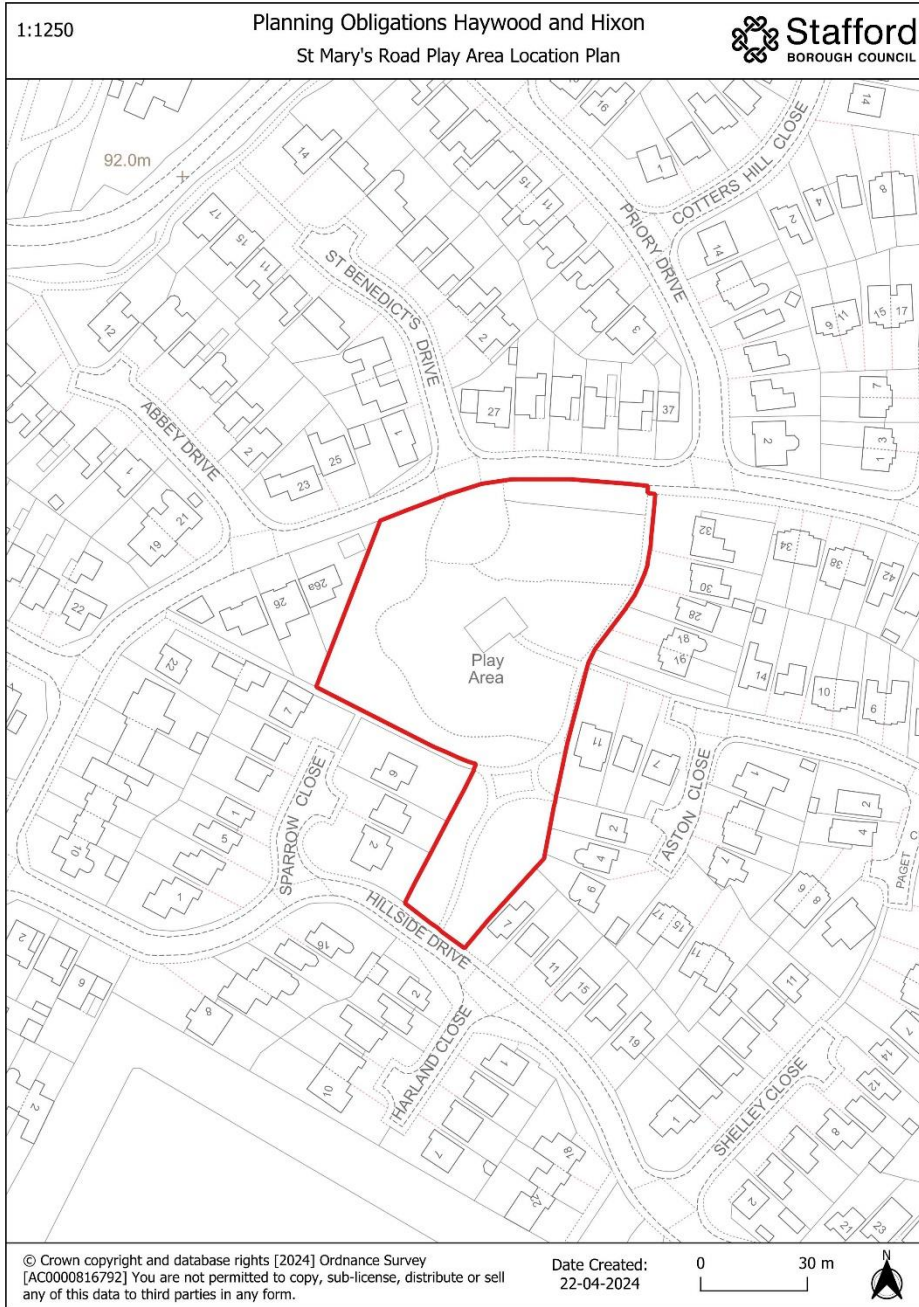
Ward Interest: Haywood and Hixon

Report Track: Cabinet 11 July 2024 (Only)

Key Decision: Yes

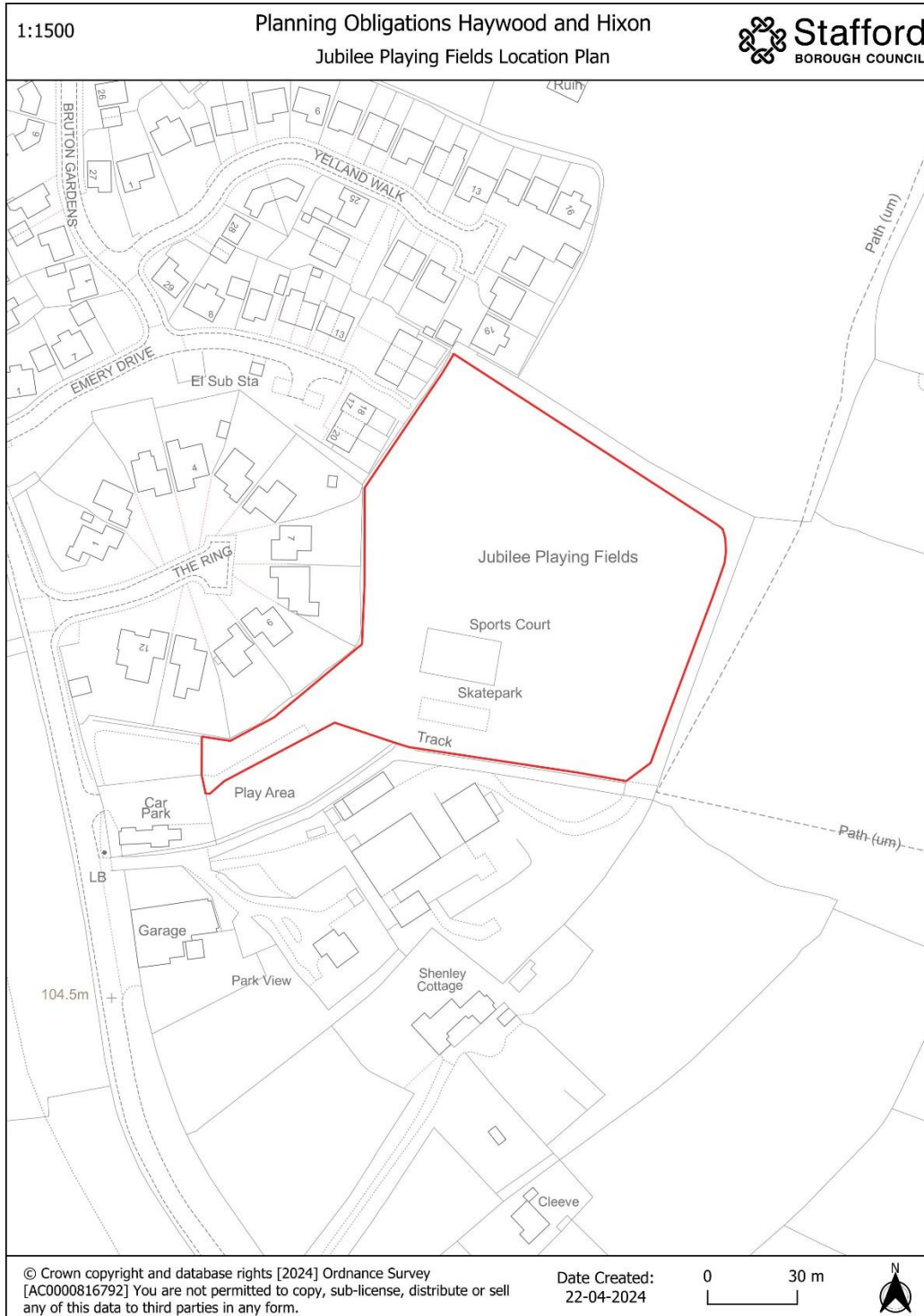
Appendix 1

Planning Obligations Haywood and Hixon - St Mary's Road Play Area Location Plan



Appendix 2

Planning Obligations Haywood and Hixon - Jubilee Playing Fields Location Plan



Agenda Item 4(b)ii

Permission to Spend Swimming Pool Support Fund

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	11 July 2024
Report of:	Head of Wellbeing
Portfolio:	Leisure Portfolio

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To request approval to spend £214,616 installing Photo Voltaic Panels and Shower Flow Restrictors at Stafford Leisure Centre.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet recommends that Council include £214,616 in its capital programme for the installation of Photo Voltaic Panels and Shower Flow Restrictors at Stafford Leisure Centre and, subject to Council approval, grants permission to spend.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.2 Funding has been awarded to Stafford Borough Council for energy efficiency measures at Stafford Leisure Centre. To proceed with the interventions, permission to spend is required.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 Funding has been awarded to Stafford Leisure Centre from the Swimming Pool Support Fund to install solar PV and shower flow restrictors to reduce energy consumption and therefore running costs of the facility. In turn this will reduce carbon emissions.
- 3.2 Permission to spend the funding is required, to enable this project to be delivered.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 Installing measures to improve the energy efficiency of Stafford Leisure Centre directly supports corporate business objectives 2, 3 and 4.
- 4.2 “To improve the quality of life of local people by providing a safe, clean attractive place to live and work and encouraging people to be engaged in developing strong communities that promote health and wellbeing”.
- 4.3 “To tackle climate change by implementing our Climate Change and Green Recovery Objectives” and
- 4.4 “To be a well-run, financially sustainable and ambitious organisation, responsive to the needs of our customers and communities and focussed on delivering our objectives.”

5 Report Detail

- 5.1 The Swimming Pool Support Fund is a £80million government funding programme administered by Sport England to ensure the viability of swimming pools across the country. Phase 2 was for capital interventions to improve the energy efficiency of public facilities over the medium to long term.
- 5.2 Requests for funding were more than the funding available, however Stafford Borough Council have been successful in receiving a total of £214,616 for Photo Voltaic Panels and Shower Flow Restrictors at Stafford Leisure Centre.
- 5.3 Funding has to be spent by the end of March 2025 and this report is asking for permission to spend the grant allocation. In accepting this grant funding, the local authority agrees to continue to operate the swimming pool for a period of 10 years.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

The Council was awarded a capital grant from Sport England in respect of the swimming pool support funded on the 24 October 2023. This amounted to £214,615 for the installation of Photo Voltaic (PV) panels and Shower flow restrictors. The Council has had to enter into a grant agreement with Sport England and has reporting requirements to comply with.

As set out in paragraph 5.3 funding needs to be spent by 31 March 2025 and the Council is required to operate the swimming pool for a period of 10 years.

6.2 Legal

Procurement of goods, services or works will need to comply with the requirements set out in the Council’s Procurement Regulations.

6.3 Human Resources

6.4 Risk Management

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

Stafford Leisure Centre ensures it's provision, including swimming is fully accessible and open to everyone.

6.6 Health

Provision of swimming pools has a positive impact on health and wellbeing, this funding is designed to secure that provision. As well as swimming for the public, Stafford Leisure Centre has extensive provision for school swimming.

6.7 Climate Change

These interventions will improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions.

7 Appendices

None

8 Previous Consideration

None

9 Background Papers

None

Contact Officer: Anna Nevin

Telephone Number: 01785 619176

Ward Interest: Nil

Report Track: Cabinet 6 July 2024

Council 30 July 2024

Key Decision: No

Agenda Item 4(c)i**Biodiversity Net Gain Monitoring Fees**

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	11 July 2024
Report of:	Councillor A F Reid
Portfolio:	Economic Development and Planning

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To set out a charging schedule for monitoring of Section 106 (S106) agreements for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) for all sites where such an obligation exists.
- 1.2 To demonstrate why a monitoring charge is considered necessary and activities that will be covered by the proposed charge.
- 1.3 To seek approval to authorise the charging structure for monitoring fees associated with off-site or on-site BNG.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the charging structure for monitoring fees be approved and the start date for implementing monitoring fees be delegated to the Head of Service and Cabinet Portfolio Holder.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.2 Mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) commenced on 12 February 2024 with individual developers required to provide the Local Planning Authority (LPA) with a copy of site-specific monitoring reports at agreed intervals throughout the 30-year period.
- 2.3 Monitoring activities by the LPA carry a significant cost, given that the burden of ongoing agreements will grow over time.
- 2.4 The monitoring of land in BNG agreements will require review of condition reports and site visits by the Council's Ecologist at regular intervals. There will also be a new burden on the Administration, Finance and Legal Services. This is a resource / capacity issue that requires further consideration.

- 2.5 This report presents a proposed charging structure for Stafford Borough Council based on a monitoring fees calculator. The intention is to make full recovery of costs associated with council officers monitoring the progress of BNG sites.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 Mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) commenced 12 February 2024 for major sites and 2 April for small sites. Developments must demonstrate a 10% biodiversity net gain through creation or enhancement of habitats on development sites or elsewhere (off-site BNG).
- 3.2 All off-site and significant on-site BNG **must** be managed and monitored for a minimum of 30 years. Mechanisms to secure the long-term management obligations, include Section 106 agreements and Conservation Covenants are necessary.
- 3.3 The developer will be required to provide the LPA with a copy of site monitoring reports at agreed intervals throughout the 30-year period.
- 3.4 The LPA will need to review and sign-off these ecological monitoring reports, which will require time and expertise.
- 3.5 It is estimated that by Year 10, all site monitoring visits could take, on average, up to 83 days officer time per year and the same for each subsequent year, equating to 17 weeks full-time work.
- 3.6 These activities will therefore result in significant cost to the LPA which will increase over time.
- 3.7 The authority is permitted to levy a fee for this purpose, to ensure that monitoring is cost-neutral to the Council.
- 3.8 This report presents a charging structure for monitoring fees, based on the size of the application, to recover costs associated with monitoring the agreements.
- 3.9 The Stafford Borough charging structure yields a one-off fee. This is dependent on the size of the area of land in question and the technical difficulty of the habitat proposed, ranging from low to moderate to high. Larger sites and higher difficulty are reflected in costs related to increased time allowance for site visits and for reviewing the reports. Any site over 30ha would need a bespoke fee. The charges are shown in the table below - taken from the front page of the Calculator.

Monitoring Fee Lookup table

Size:	Technical difficulty: Low	Technical difficulty: Moderate	Technical difficulty: High
Very Small (<1 ha)	£1,115.12	£1,653.38	£3,343.82
Small (1 to <5 ha)	£1,824.91	£2,820.05	£5,799.48
Medium (5 to <15ha)	£2,644.21	£3,863.39	£7,818.90
Large (15 to <30ha)	£4,863.83	£6,598.31	£11,272.71

- 3.10 By comparison with other LPA charging rates, shown in the report detail, the proposed charging rate is fair and appropriate, allowing the Council to carry out all necessary monitoring to ensure compliance with S.106 agreements.
- 3.11 A separate report, "Delivering Biodiversity Net Gain in Stafford Borough: Guidance Note", provides the background guidance on BNG - and is submitted as a separate report for approval.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

4.1 Corporately, the aims of Biodiversity Net Gain are supported by:

- Council's Corporate Business Plan 2021 - 2024 Objective 2 and 3:
 - "To improve the quality of life of local people by providing a safe, clean, attractive place to live and work and encouraging people to be engaged in developing strong communities that promote health and wellbeing."*
 - "To continue work towards our Climate Change and Green Recovery objectives, integrating them into our activities and strategic plans"*
- Climate Change and Green Recovery Strategy 2020 - 2024
- Climate Change Adaptation Strategy
- The Stafford Borough Nature Recovery Declaration

5 Report Detail

- 5.1 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is the mandatory requirement for developments needing planning permission to demonstrate a 10% biodiversity net gain. From 12 February 2024, all major developments will need to secure a 10% BNG. From April 2024 it becomes mandatory for minor developments.

- 5.2 BNG must be achieved through creation of habitats on the development site, or where a deficit remains, on sites elsewhere (known as off-site BNG). The habitat value is quantified in Biodiversity Units (BUs) using a statutory metric. All habitats created or enhanced off-site must be secured by a Planning Obligation for a minimum of 30 years. Any significant BNG habitat on-site must also be likewise secured.
- 5.3 Planning obligations are legal obligations entered into to mitigate the impacts of a proposed development. Planning obligations are normally secured through a legal agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and are a mechanism through which development proposals can be made acceptable in planning terms.
- 5.4 The Local Government Act 2003 (Section 93) provides the legislative basis for local authorities to charge for discretionary services such as the administration / monitoring of Section 106 Agreements. An amendment to the CIL Regulations in September 2019 clarified that monitoring contributions could be sought through a S106 agreement, and in this context it is considered appropriate to recover the cost of administration and monitoring Section 106 obligations.
- 5.5 The proper administration of Section 106 monitoring regime is resource intensive, and it is considered appropriate to ensure that monitoring is cost neutral to the Council.
- 5.6 Any Planning Obligation for BNG must encompass the initial habitat creation works, the ongoing habitat management regime over those 30 or more years, and the site monitoring surveys and reporting to the body with whom the legal agreement is signed.
- 5.7 The LPA will need to review and sign-off ecological monitoring reports which the developer will provide at the specified intervals. Ecology Officer time and expertise will be required to review these monitoring reports.
- 5.8 All off-site and significant on-site BNG will have to be secured by a legal agreement, specifying an agreed Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan. The developer or third parties (such as a Habitat Bank provider), acting on their behalf, will provide the LPA with monitoring reports at specified intervals.
- 5.9 Key monitoring points throughout the 30-year period, will be set out in the s106, for example in years 1, 3, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30 after the initial work to establish the habitats. (Total of eight monitoring years per site).
- 5.10 At some monitoring intervals an LPA ecologist may also need to conduct a site visit to verify the ecology report. They may need to discuss remedial management actions with the biodiversity gain site manager, for example, if the habitats are not on track to meet standards committed to in the agreement.

- 5.11 These activities by the LPA carry a significant cost, given that the burden of ongoing agreements will grow over time as new developments, tied to 30-year commitments, are granted planning permission.
- 5.12 The costs of staff time can be expected to grow year on year, so inflation effects should be considered. As an illustration, an assumed inflation rate of 3.5%, compounded yearly would make a cost approximately 2.8 times greater by year 30 compared to year one.
- 5.13 The Local Government Act 2003 (section 93) permits the authority to seek to recover the costs of administration / monitoring of s106 by levying a fee.
- 5.14 This report presents a proposed charging structure for Stafford Borough Council based on a monitoring fee calculator. The intention is to make full recovery of costs associated with council officers monitoring the progress of BNG sites.
- 5.15 The monitoring fees charging structure accords with the principle of making it cost neutral to the authority and in accordance with the Council's Financial Rules and Procedures.
- 5.16 The charging structure is based on estimated officer time at each monitoring event, related to both size (total habitat area to be monitored, in hectares) and complexity of the site (based on the highest technical difficulty category of the habitats, included using the Difficulty scores in the Statutory Metric). Allowances for corporate overheads and inflation are also needed.
- 5.17 The Council's Financial Rules and Procedures on Fees and Charges specify that fees be reviewed annually (for example to adjust for relevant inflation figure and staff pay awards). After three to five years, when the first tranche of site monitoring reports have been processed, actual costs will be better understood and the charges can be reviewed at that stage. Therefore, the charging structure may be revised to better reflect real costs.
- 5.18 For benchmarking, the charging structures for BNG monitoring in several other English LPAs have been reviewed. These case study examples are included in Appendix 2, namely Leeds City Council, Buckinghamshire County Council, New Forest District Council, Bracknell Forest Council, Calderdale Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council.
- 5.19 In summary, most of the case study LPAs charge a one-off fee payable at the signing of the legal agreement to cover the costs over the 30 years, and most include an index-linked element to account for inflation. Most also have charges tiered by size of the BNG site and some also by technical difficulty of creating or enhancing the habitats therein.

- 5.20 Of the benchmarked Councils the lower end examples start their scale of charges at around £2,000 - £5,000. The upper end ranges are more variable, and some have bespoke costs for large complex sites. Leeds City Council have a simple two-tier scale, charging £2,500 or £5,000, with the threshold for the higher fee being sites yielding more than 10 Biodiversity Units.
- 5.21 Buckinghamshire developed the most comprehensive staff-time calculator spreadsheet: the smallest and simplest sites are charged £8,618.24 through to the largest and most complex sites of greater than 20 hectares (ha) charged at £50,315.53. Buckinghamshire specified the most monitoring intervals (10) and used a staff day rate of £700.
- 5.22 One benchmarked Council, Bracknell Forest, charges pro-rata by hectares, e.g. a 25 ha site (large in BNG terms) would be £90,000 (versus £50,000 in the Buckinghamshire calculator) for the 30-year monitoring costs.
- 5.23 The Stafford Borough charging structure yields one-off fees ranging from a medium level of difficulty charge of minor (very small, less than 1 ha) being £1,653 through to £2,820 (small site up to 5 ha), a mid-range site being £3,863 (medium site up to 15ha) to a top end of £6,598 (Large sites - above 15 ha). Larger sites and higher difficulty are reflected in costs related to increased time allowance for site visits and for reviewing the reports.
- 5.24 For any biodiversity gain sites larger than 30 ha a bespoke fee will be agreed. In special circumstances, such as damage or loss to irreplaceable habitats, bespoke BNG compensation is required so these are also likely to need bespoke monitoring fees being agreed between developer and the authority.
- 5.25 On average (based on the previous 3 years), Stafford Borough receives 29 major applications and 193 minor planning applications per year.
- 5.26 It is likely that all major applications will include significant on-site BNG and that an estimate of a quarter of all minor applications ($193 / 4 = 48$). Therefore, approximately 77 BNG agreements will be processed on average each year.
- 5.27 Based on the calculator fees set out in this report (5.23) and assuming an average BNG agreement of a medium sized site at medium technical difficulty of habitat creation for all major applications and very small size sites at medium habitat difficulty for the qualifying minor applications, the following estimate of monitoring fee income is derived:
- 5.28 $29 \times £3,863$ (medium size land @ medium quality habitat) = £112,027
 $48 \times £1,653$ (very small land @ medium quality) = £79,344
- Grand total = £191,371 per annum**

- 5.29 Based on the calculator spreadsheet, each agreement will require officer time as part of the monitoring duties. There will be administration officer time in requesting monitoring reports and Ecologist time in reviewing each report. At certain key milestone years, there will also be the requirement to undertake site visits to ascertain the level of progress in achieving the aims of habitat quality, as agreed upon and set out in each Biodiversity Gain Plan and accompanying S.106 Agreement.
- 5.30 On average, it is estimated that, based on figures in 5.26, Year 2 report reviews and site visits will take 70-day's work. At the Year 10 interval this will rise to 83 days and then every subsequent year. This would equate to 17 weeks full time work and is therefore not achievable under current staffing resources.
- 5.31 Annual interest of fees has been set at 3.5%.
- 5.32 All fees will be reviewed at regular intervals.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

Not imposing monitoring fees would be detrimental to the Council's finances. Costs will rise significantly over 30 years and the total caseload of agreements to be monitored will also increase. An over-simplified charging structure could result in the Council failing to recover its costs in full or significantly over-charging. The money collected for the BNG monitoring process needs to be a ringfenced pot.

6.2 Legal

There are no direct legal implications of the new monitoring fees' calculator. New legal agreements to secure BNG are mandatory in the BNG legislation so whilst the authority will have an increased legal burden resulting from BNG, the levying of a fee for ecology officer time has no effect on that legal burden. There is current practice already within the authority planning legal teams to levy a fee for legal time when setting up s106 agreements (for any purpose). This proposal relates to the ecology officer and administration time associated with these additional s106 agreements. At present any such fees would have to be determined and negotiated ad hoc with each developer and add to the legal officer time to do so. The fees and charges calculator simply provides a standardised way to derive that fee in a way that accounts for true costs over 30 years, and in doing so if anything reduces the burden on legal time.

6.3 Human Resources

The demand on ecology officer resource will increase over time due to BNG and BNG monitoring. Without levying fees this cost cannot be met without finding additional revenue. Failure to impose fees would significantly compromise the council's ecology resource. A lack of capacity in ecology would in turn compromise the processing time for planning applications and additionally providing expertise to wider areas of the council's operations including Local Nature Reserve management and other duties, which are set to increase due to the Extended Biodiversity Duty mandated in the Environment Act 2021.

6.4 Risk Management

None

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

None

6.6 Health

None

6.7 Climate Change

The successful implementation of BNG will aid the Council's Climate Change Adaptation Strategy with improved habitats storing more carbon.

7 Appendices

Appendix 1: Stafford Borough Fees Calculator

Appendix 2. Benchmarking of BNG Monitoring and Reporting Fees:

Case study examples for monitoring fees in other local planning authorities

8 Previous Consideration

None

9 Background Papers

None

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Ward Interest: Nil
Report Track: Cabinet 11 July 2024 (Only)
Key Decision: No

Stafford Borough Council Biodiversity Net Gain Monitoring Fee Calculator

Stafford Borough Council will monitor progress towards achieving the stated outcomes for all off-site Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) schemes that we regulate (this means those which we enter a S106 with for the purpose of securing the habitat management on a site for 30+ years). We do not charge a monitoring payment when a different body regulates the scheme such as through a conservation covenant. We will review monitoring reports sent in by the manager of the site at times set out within the Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (which should form part of the S106 for the site). It is for the Ecology Officer to ensure that these are appropriate. The tabs in this calculator can be used as a guide as to what we may consider to be appropriate. The Monitoring Fee is charged so that we can cover our costs of reviewing the monitoring reports, visit the site where necessary and work with the site owner to agree remedial measures if required. This calculator is to help determine a monitoring fee that will cover our costs for undertaking the above over 30+ years. It is based upon the site's size and technical difficulty associated with the habitat, as set out within the biodiversity metric.

Guidance

The monitoring fee in this calculator is based on the size of the biodiversity gain site and the technical difficulty of the habitats to be created as stated within the biodiversity metric. Use the technical difficulty of the most difficult habitat for the site. You can apply professional judgement where required and especially if a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan is available.

For biodiversity gain sites more than 30ha, a bespoke fee will be needed.

Enter info into green cells using the drop down arrows.

What size is the off-site BNG Scheme?	Very Small (<1 ha)
How technically difficult are the habitats being created?	Moderate
Monitoring Fee	£1,653.38

Monitoring Fee Lookup table	Technical difficulty:		
Size:	Low	Moderate	High
Very Small (<1 ha)	£1,115.12	£1,653.38	£3,343.82
Small (1 to <5 ha)	£1,824.91	£2,820.05	£5,799.48
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Appendix 2

Benchmarking of BNG Monitoring and Reporting Fees: Case study examples for monitoring fees in other local planning authorities

Leeds City Council

- Charge a one off-fee for 'Biodiversity Monitoring & Reporting Body' function
- Two-tier fee, scaled by number of Biodiversity Units (BUs) involved in the agreement
- £2.5k for up to 10 biodiversity units or £5k for over 10 biodiversity units (where units purchased directly from a private Habitat Bank or on developers' own land*)

COMMENTS:

- No indication of allowance for price inflation over 30 years.
- Simple, easy to understand.
- This applies only to non-council land.
- They suggest cost is in line with similar monitoring obligations of other S106 items such as Highways
- *W.Yorks Combined Authority also setting up a habitat banking vehicle (HBV) for selling Units on council land. The pricing of BUs will build in fees for 'habitat monitoring' (by a partner body) and for the 'BNG monitoring and reporting body function' (by the LPA).

Buckinghamshire County Council

- Charging a one-off fee for Biodiversity Monitoring
- Developed a Monitoring Fees Calculator – an excel spreadsheet based on estimated staff time
- Uses an assumed officer day rate of £700
- Uses an assumed inflation rate of 3.5% per annum
- Uses an assumed corporate overheads multiplier of 1.4 (ie 40%)

- Fees Calculator based on several input variables and pre-determined values:
- Size of BNG offset site (small 0-10ha, medium 11-20ha, large >20ha)
- Technical Difficulty of BNG habitats involved (Low, Moderate, High - use highest present on site)
- Number of monitoring events = 10, plus initial review of plan year zero - Some years reviewing report only, some years report plus site visit (4, 5 or 7 occasions depending technical difficulty)
- Estimated time per report or site visit (range: small sites of low diff to large sites of high difficulty)
- Track record/ experience level of site manager (a lower scale if they already manage more than 10 existing sites for nature)

COMMENTS

- Rather involved; initially complicated to understand but generates the figures automatically.
- The calculator would be consulted for each new agreement.
- Useful approach and the calculator could be adapted or simplified.
- Fixed inflation projection could draw criticism.
- Could also be used for levying a fee at time of each monitoring event rather than a one-off up-front payment, index linked for actual inflation using CPI or RPI.

New Forest Council

- Charging a one-off fee for Biodiversity Monitoring
- Based on 10 officer days (at £400) plus 2.5 general officer support days (at £250) for review of reports
- Based on five monitoring points at years 2, 5, 10, 20 and 30
- Flat fee of £4625, 'developments up to 50 units' (but units here meaning dwellings)
- Developments over 50 units 'Minimum £4,625. Additional rate charged if physical inspection likely to take additional time.'
- 'Subject to annual indexation uplift using the Retail Prices Index (RPI).'

COMMENTS

- RPI indexation applied to agreements is revised annually, but as it is still a one-off fee charged up- front this does not factor the ongoing cost (of officer time etc) increasing over the 30 years.
- On the other hand, a very straightforward approach to inflation and there will be an income stream from new agreements which rises year on year with RPI.
- Their proposals, as of March '22, also set out different fees for the range of other s106 agreements eg POS, affordable housing.

Bracknell Forest Council

- Charging a one off-fee for 'administration monitoring' of 106 agmts for BNG.
- Scaled by area; up to one hectare £3600
- Over one hectare £3660/ha pro rata

COMMENTS

- Based on estimate of hours 60hrs/ 60+hrs spent in admin and monitoring.
- No mention of indexation so does not factor costs increasing over 30 years.
- Pro rata the most expensive eg a 25ha site x £3600 = £90,000 compared to Bucks £50k for 20- 40ha, high complexity.

Calderdale Council (per guidance published Dec 2022)

- One-off charges payable 'to cover facilitation, monitoring and strategic biodiversity delivery':
- £2000 per BU 'to cover the cost of monitoring over 30-year period'
- £1000 per BU 'strategic biodiversity delivery charge'
- £2000 per BU one-off 'facilitation charge' for Council owned land-banks

COMMENTS

- The above were arrived at based on a proposal to sell BUs on council land priced at £20k per BU.
- The monitoring cost and the facilitation charge each being 10% of 20k, the strategic charge being 5% of 20k.

- For Habitat Banks, only the strategic charge would be levied, £1000.
- Monitoring fee plus Strategic charge applies to other cases.
- Facilitation charge applies to council land banks for baseline surveys, management plans etc.
- Strategic fee to contribute to biodiversity projects such as LWS surveys and management advice.
- Would query whether the strategic fee can be justified for BNG or whether a statutory duty of LPA.

South Cambridgeshire District Council

- 'District Council Ecologist Monitoring Fee' payable at each monitoring event
- 'To cover the cost of monitoring the Habitat Site and reviewing the Management Plan and the Monitoring Report'
- Paid in ten instalments years 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30
- Index Linked by way of CPI

COMMENTS

- Appears to be the only one of these case studies levying a fee at each monitoring event.