

Dear Members

Resources Scrutiny Committee

A meeting of the Resources Scrutiny Committee will be held on **Tuesday 21 January 2025** at **6.30pm** in the **Craddock 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

RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

21 JANUARY 2025

Chair - Councillor M J Winnington

AGENDA

1	Minutes of 25 November 2024 as previously published on the Council's website.	
2	Apologies	
3	Public Question Time - Nil	
4	Councillor Session - Nil	
5	Called in Items - Nil	
		Page Nos
6	Members' Items - Nil	
7	Officers' Reports	
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Membership

Chair - Councillor M J Winnington

K M Aspin	B McKeown
E L Carter	A Nixon
M G Dodson	J S Powell
R A James	J P Read
A M Loughran	M J Winnington

Agenda Item 7(a)

General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Programme 2024-27

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	23 January 2025
Report of:	Deputy Chief Executive
Portfolio:	Resources

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To propose to the Council the General Fund Revenue Budget for 2025-26, the updated Capital Programme 2024-25 to 2027-28 and indicative budgets for 2026-27 to 2027-28.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the following be recommended to the Council:
- (a) The Budget Requirement for the General Fund Revenue Budget for 2025-26 be set at £18.347 million;
 - (b) The indicative General Fund Revenue Budgets be set at £17.404million for 2026-27 and £17.950 million for 2027-28;
 - (c) The General Fund working balance be set at a minimum of £1.0 million;
 - (d) The detailed capital programme as set out in **APPENDIX 2** be approved;
 - (e) That the Council Tax for 2025-26 be increased by 2.99% to £178.75;
 - (f) The Council's Tax Base be set at 49,634.15 (as determined by the Deputy Chief Executive resources);
 - (g) Note that the inflation parameter for fees and charges for 2025-26 was generally set at 3%.
 - (h) That the increase in stray dog budget be approved (£30k per annum)

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.2 As part of the council's annual budget setting process, it is required to determine its budget requirement and seek approval from council to approve it. The above recommendations allow the council to set the budget it needs to carry out its functions.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 This report is being delivered in a profoundly uncertain time for local government. Recent central government announcements suggest that their ambition is to change the local government landscape in such a way that only councils with a minimum population of 500,000 exist. The impact of this is discussed in the body of the report.
- 3.2 This report sets out the current position on the General Fund Revenue Budget for 2024-25 and indicative budgets for 2025-26 to 2027-28. It also reflects the position on the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2025-26, New Homes Bonus Grant allocation, the position on the Council's Collection Fund, the Council's Tax Base for 2025-26 and the consequential Council Tax for 2025-26.
- 3.3 The budget for 2025-26 is based on the estimated outturn position for 2024-25, which has been updated to reflect known changes and estimates for 2025-26.
- 3.4 Indicative budgets have been set out for 2026-27 and 2027-28 which include the key issues which it is anticipated will have a potential impact on the council's finances. However, it should be noted that there are substantial uncertainties regarding the central Government policy for local government finance. There is a significant anticipated change in the council's financial position in 2026-27 as central government have made clear that the intention is to reset business rates. This will remove all business rates growth that the council currently receives income from. It cannot be assumed that support will be provided to manage this reduction in resources by central government, particularly in light of the poor finance settlement which has been received. This will be discussed further in the body of the report.
- 3.5 The council is still operating with a one year financial settlement. Central government has suggested that it will move to multi year settlements but it is unclear what that will look like, particularly taking into account the ambition to remove county councils and district councils and merge other councils to achieve the minimum population size of 500,000.
- 3.6 A spending review is anticipated in the spring which may also look to make further savings. It is not possible to anticipate what impact this will have on the council at this stage.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 The revenue budget and the capital programme supports the delivery of all of the Council's priorities but primarily relates to 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."

5 Report Detail

Local government landscape

- 5.1 Central government released a white paper on Monday 16 December 2024 which laid out its ambitions to reshape the local government landscape. In its proposals are the end of the current arrangement of district councils and county councils, the merging of smaller unitary authorities and the creation of a new tier of "strategic authorities" which will sit above the new larger councils. The new councils are anticipated to have at least 500,000 people in their area. This will mean councils cover a much larger geographic area than present. The council was not consulted prior to these proposals being announced. There is currently a consultation on the future funding mechanism for local government which reflects the intention to move to a new local government structure but there is not one on the proposed structures themselves.
- 5.2 The paper sets a timeline of April 2027 for the first wave of new councils to "go live" with the remainder in April 2028. This is an incredibly ambitious timescale to work to and if it goes forward as planned is likely to have a massive impact on the council's ability to deliver its services and plans during the same time period.
- 5.3 It is unclear at this stage what costs are likely to occur as a result of these proposals. No figures have been included in the budget to reflect these proposals.
- 5.4 The recent change by central government of the national insurance rates will have a number of impacts on local government. First and most simply, the national insurance costs of the council will increase. Central government have stated that the council will be compensated for the impact of the increase in national insurance on directly employed staff but at this stage it is unclear if 100% of the increase will be covered. Due to the calculation being used, it is more likely that an element of the increased costs will be covered.
- 5.5 Secondly there will be an impact on partners of the council, be that direct suppliers of services, those who use council services or those who work more indirectly with the council. This is likely to cause increased pressures for them and they may in turn look to the council for greater support. In a worst case scenario organisations may be unable to continue to provide services at the same level or increase council costs if companies we work with seek to

increase their charges. This in turn will require the council to evaluate the manner in which it delivers services to ensure best value and support stakeholders where possible.

- 5.6 The final major change in the local government landscape is the reset of business rates. Central government have been clear that they are intending to reset business rates which means that the element of business rates that council's retain will change. In practice, this means that the "growth" element of business rates (the amount greater than the baseline) will be removed. Should no additional grants or compensatory mechanism be provided equal to this amount it will create significant pressures for local councils.

Provisional local government settlement

- 5.7 The budget settlement was very challenging for rural and district councils in general and Stafford Borough Council was no different.
- 5.8 The council saw no increase year on year in its settlement, which was in itself dependent on the council increasing its council tax the maximum amount. This stagnation contrasts sharply with the substantial increases experienced by some urban metropolitan areas - some of which saw increases of almost 10%. This is leading to rural areas becoming increasingly dependent on locally raised revenue through council tax and business rates. (the proposed reset in business rates in 2026/27 will make it more challenging for the council to balance its budget in future years, although the proposals suggest the council may not exist in its current form by this point in time).
- 5.9 In particular, the Settlement determines both the core funding to the Council and basis of incentive funding for Business Rates. A Baseline Funding Level was determined at the commencement of the current scheme in 2013-14 with a Tariff paid to central government representing the difference between income collected and the Baseline. The Baseline Funding now represents the sole major form of core funding following the reduction of Revenue Support Grant to a notional figure.
- 5.10 The settlement confirmed the continuation of the Council Tax referendum rules for lower tier councils from last year. It is still possible to increase Council Tax by the higher of 2.99% or £5 (rather than the higher of 1.99% or £5) without holding a referendum.

5.11 The 2025-26 Settlement is broken down as below:

	£m
Revenue Support Grant	0.1
Baseline funding level	3.1
Business rates multiplier compensation	0.6
Council tax	8.9
New Homes Bonus	0.2
Funding floor	2.0
Total	14.9

5.12 This demonstrates the anticipation that council tax will be increased by 2.99% by central government.

5.13 It was a single year settlement, but it was announced that multi year settlements were planned going forwards. It is unclear what time frame this will be.

Budget Issues and Adjustments 2025-26

Inflation

5.14 The budgets for 2025-26 reflect the nationally agreed £1,290 pay award for 2024-25. A provision of 3% has been included for 2025-26; then 2% for 2026-27 and 2% for 2027-28.

5.15 Individual calculations have been carried out in respect of the budgets most affected by inflation. For October 2024 inflation is running at 3.2% CPIH and 3.4% RPI. For contracts the estimated inflationary figure we have used is 3% for January 2025. For ongoing budgets, the general inflation assumption is 3%.

Spending changes

5.16 The detailed budgets have been refreshed to reflect the forecast for 2024-25. Additional provision has been made within Portfolio budgets for inflation and other general items, including for a pay award and increments.

5.17 For all portfolios the senior management restructure has been reflected. This can be seen in the detailed **APPENDICES ATTACHED**. It must be noted that the figures as presented reflect the nature of the shared service arrangement with Cannock Chase Council and respective hosting of services and so should not be viewed in isolation. Rather they should be taken into account with the detailed Cannock Chase Council appendices, which can be found in the equivalent budget setting report at Cannock Chase Council. Each council maintains its sovereignty over its respective costs/income. The overall saving

for the senior management restructure is circa £176k on an ongoing basis across both councils.

5.18 We have reviewed all major income streams to ensure they are appropriate and they are reflected in the appendices.

5.19 The major changes on the 2025-26 Portfolio budgets (recurring in future years) are itemised below:

- Insurance premiums - 2025/26 saw an increase of £87k this has been reflected on an ongoing basis.
- The increase in national insurance has been reflected in the budgets however no provision has been made for potential compensating income from central government as the detail is not clear as yet as to the amount and how long this will be for. This will be known in the final settlement.
- Provision has been made for the new local plan. A new local plan 2025-2045 is required as the previous adopted local plan is more than 5 years old. It will provide clear guidance to developers, and also members of the public, through planning policies and proposals in across the Borough. This will enable any resident or business to see the requirements related to future development. Therefore it is important that robust evidence based work continues to be carried out to support new policies and proposals as the new Local Plan progresses, to be adopted. Since the original budget was established a comprehensive new evidence base is now required to ensure the New Local Plan can progress to Examination. For example the Economic and Housing Development Needs Assessment (EHDNA) to underpin the new mandatory housing figure and identify the scale of employment land requirements for the New Local Plan will have to be completed.

Business Rates Income

5.20 The Council's exposure to volatility in Business Rates is a key risk with a reduction in income from business rates due to the failure or temporary closure of a key industry and successful appeals against Rateable Values and backdated refunds. In order to mitigate this risk as much as possible, provision is made in both the budget and final accounts for a reduction in income due to appeals.

2024-25 Forecast Outturn

- 5.21 The Budget for 2024-25 is monitored against the profiled budget. The latest portfolio position reflects the inflationary increases in costs and known changes in the forecast and the impact of the savings achieved. The estimated outturn is a £329k deficit against the profiled budget. This can be seen in the below table.

	2024/25 budget	2024/25 forecast	Variance
Portfolio	£	£	£
Community	1,205,810	1,111,500	(94,310)
Environment	4,075,350	4,226,510	151,160
Leisure	2,140,560	2,083,650	(56,910)
Planning	1,884,570	2,006,420	121,850
Resources	8,400,830	8,607,730	206,900
Total	17,707,120	18,035,810	328,690

- 5.22 The overall council position reflects a strong performance on investment income in year. This was driven by higher interest rates. It must be noted that the benefits are effectively windfalls as they cannot be guaranteed on an ongoing basis. Whilst interest rates were forecast to fall as inflation fell due to changes in macro economic events and central government policy changes they have not fallen as forecast. At present the council is forecasting a £1m surplus over the budgeted for position for investment income. This results in a favourable overall forecast outturn for 2024/25 of £76k. This can be seen in table 2 below.

Business Rates Pooling and Retention

- 5.23 There is an assumption that the reset of Business Rates growth achieved to date will occur in 2026-27 with no transitional payments made to the council. It is assumed that the council will remain part of the Staffordshire pooling arrangements in future years.

- 5.24 An analysis of the revised Retained Business Rates income for the Council is set out in **APPENDIX 3**.

New Homes Bonus

- 5.25 Allocations for the New Homes Bonus (NHB) scheme for 2025-26 will be £0.2m. It is assumed that the NHB scheme will contribute nothing to the council's budget post 2025/26. In a consultation published In December 2024, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) said it is proposing that 2025-26 will be the last year the NHB is paid "in its current format". MHCLG added: "It is the government's intention that 2025-26 will be the final year of the NHB in its current format and councils should consider this in their financial planning." Therefore it is prudent to assume no further payments at this time.

Revenue Budget Summary 2025-26

- 5.26 The Portfolio Budget position set out below reflects the forecast outturn position for 2024-25, the proposed budget for 2025-26, and indicative budgets for 2026-27 and 2027-28. The detailed budgets are included in **APPENDIX 1**.

Table 2: Revenue Budget Recommended to Council

	Forecast Outturn 2024-25 £000	Budget 2025-26 £000	Indicative Budget 2026-27 £000	Indicative Budget 2027-28 £000
Net Expenditure				
Portfolio budgets	18,036	19,379	19,735	20,084
Net investment income	(3,300)	(2,300)	(2,100)	(1,900)
Technical financing	5,247	2,587	884	881
Net Spending	19,983	19,666	18,519	19,065
Less: government Grants				
Business rates grants - S.31	(1,250)	(1,115)	(1,115)	(1,115)
New Homes Bonus	(431)	(204)	-	-
Budget Requirement	18,302	18,347	17,404	17,950
Financing				
Business Rates	(7,521)	(7,422)	(5,030)	(5,363)
Revenue Support Grant	(120)	(142)	(140)	(140)
Fund guarantee grant	(2,120)	-	-	-
Services grant	(20)			
Council Tax Income	(8,557)	(8,872)	(9,183)	(9,505)
Rural services delivery grant	(34)	-	-	-
Council tax deficit	15	102	-	-
Funding Floor	-	(2,035)	-	-
Total Financing	(18,357)	(18,369)	(14,353)	(15,008)
Transfer from/(to) Balances	(55)	(22)	3,051	2,942
Estimate of future years grant			(1,800)	(1,500)
Transfer from/(to) Balances	(55)	(22)	1,215	1,442

- 5.27 The above budgets are in general based upon the maintenance of existing service provision and delivery of the priorities set out in the existing Corporate Business Plan as well as the new draft corporate business plan.
- 5.28 The service for the collection and kennelling of stray dogs has seen a significant increase in kennelling costs, coupled with an increase in demand for the service. It is necessary therefore to increase the budget for the service by £30k, which is included as a recommendation and reflected in the budgets above.
- 5.29 As indicated above details are only currently available for the 2025-26 financial year. Limited amendments have been made to assumptions in relation to the new funding regime for 2026-27 and onwards. The Business

Rates Scheme in particular carries the greatest uncertainty, along with any outcome from other funding reviews. In light of the uncertainty as reflected in various sections of this report, it is difficult to project the true overall position over the medium term.

5.30 The major changes in the indicative Budget for 2025-26 when compared to the currently proposed 2025-26 budget are as set out in Table 3.

5.31 Table 3: Changes in 2025-26 budget assumptions

Description	Change £000
Portfolio budgets higher than anticipated	1,343
Investment income	(1,000)
Investment Reserve	400
MRP	(32)
Budget support reserve	750
New Homes Bonus	146
RSG	(21)
Council tax	29
Council tax deficit	102
Business rates	(1,218)
Funding floor	(2,035)
One off grants estimate	1,500
Total	(36)

5.32 There are numerous changes in the above table, reflecting the challenging landscape the council finds itself in. The primary changes are;

- the new grants paid to the council as a one off, (the funding floor from central government), the removal of the one off grants estimate.
- The increase in portfolio budgets driven by the increase in salaries, national insurance and the costs of the new local plan.
- There is increased investment income forecast as interest rates are no longer forecast to fall as quickly as originally anticipated as inflation is proving to be “stickier” than was originally forecast and growth forecasts have been reduced leading to a more fragile economic outlook.
- A new reserve has been created, the budget support reserve, to mitigate potential changes in funding regimes going forwards.
- There has been an increase in business rates income driven by an increase in the estimated multiplier and S31 grants indexation.

- 5.33 Table 2 identifies a transfer to balances in 2025-26 of £22k. The council has not budgeted for the national insurance support from central government as it is unclear exactly how much this will be at this stage. The difference of opinion across the sector on the amounts that will be received mean it is more prudent to not budget for this at this stage. When it is received this will have a positive impact on the position presented. The council has budgeted for one off grants from central government in its budget setting process in future years. This is based on a conservative analysis of previous years one off grant settlements. Moving towards multi year settlements would have given the council more certainty around budget planning if the reorganisation of local government were not being planned at the same time.

Reserves and Balances

- 5.34 Reserves and balances comprise general reserves, the Working Balance and Earmarked Reserves. They help the Council to cope with unpredictable financial pressures and plan for future spending commitments. They are an essential part of good financial management and assist the Section 151 Officer in providing reassurance to Council on the robustness of the estimates and the adequacy of reserves. (see **APPENDIX 6**)
- 5.35 The Council holds a number of earmarked reserves for specific purposes. Earmarked reserves are itemised in **APPENDIX 4**.
- 5.36 The Working Balance - the current policy has for several years been to maintain the level of the General Fund balance at a minimum of £1 million. This is maintained over the planning period, and supplemented by the Revenue Surplus reserve.

Capital Programme 2024-25 to 2027-28

- 5.37 The Capital Programme is attached as **APPENDIX 2**.
- 5.38 The significant change for the capital programme is the inclusion of the Food Waste budget of £1.458 million in 2025/26, at this time the budget reflects the one off grant received. Other changes reflect schemes approved during the year, slippage has also been reflected in the schemes being presented for approval as appropriate.
- 5.39 The council has capital resources of £0.702 million general fund and £4.341 million of S106 resources not allocated at present.

Council Tax Base and Collection Fund

- 5.40 The final part of the consideration of the Budget is the Council Tax Base. This is the number of properties in the borough expressed in terms of Band D equivalents. (**APPENDIX 5**)

- 5.41 The Council's Tax Base is now estimated to be 49,634.15 representing an increase of 0.7% on 2024-25. The increase reflects the net increase in new properties built, offset by the cost of the Local Council Tax Reduction scheme.
- 5.42 The Council's Collection Fund has been reviewed as part of the budget process.

Council Tax 2025-26

- 5.43 In determining the level of Council Tax for 2025-26 Cabinet will need to take into account the medium term financial position and the Council Tax Referendum Thresholds.
- 5.44 The proposed increase of 2.99% is within the guidelines for district councils as contained in Government policy. Each additional 1% increase in Council Tax would generate approximately £80,000 a year.
- 5.45 The proposed level of Stafford's Council Tax for 2025-26 is £178.75 for a Band D property with the overall level of Council Tax subject to final determination by Council in February 2025. The figures set out in this report may require minor amendment if any further information emerges before then.
- 5.46 The total Council Tax for the Borough will reflect the spending decision made by the County Council, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Fire Authority. In addition, in certain areas, parish council precepts are also added to the overall bill.

Financial Planning

- 5.47 The Government has intended to introduce a new financial regime for local government for several years. This long delayed change has meant that the council has struggled to plan for the medium term and decision making has been forced to be more focused on the short term than strategic on occasion. The announced change in business rates scheme (removing the growth), the change to potential unitarisation, removal of grants such as the rural services grant and pressure to deliver new government targets are leading to even more uncertain times than has been experienced to date.
- 5.48 After many years of austerity and savings being delivered, the council is having to make decisions around which services/projects it focuses on to ensure successful delivery. This could potentially be increasingly difficult depending on how events around the central government agenda develop over coming months.

- 5.49 The Council has at the present date minimal general fund uncommitted capital resources. Its future programme will be financed by the generation of capital receipts and prudential borrowing subject to its financing being prudent, sustainable and affordable. Although with the advent of higher interest rates, it is becoming harder to justify borrowing to fund capital spending, especially as there is also an opportunity cost to borrowing, of foregoing an investment return.

Horizon scanning

- 5.50 All of the changes in the above report, potential or known, are going to lead to challenges for the council. Recruitment was already very difficult for the council, competing with so many other organisations in both the public and private sector. With the additional uncertainty around the future structure of local government, even less applicants will be interested in moving between councils or joining local government. This is likely to impact service delivery and the council will have to prioritise which areas it focuses on.
- 5.51 The economy is showing some worrying signs with inflation starting to increase and a lack of growth. With the introduction of the changes in National Insurance next year this is anticipated to have a further detrimental impact on economic growth. Should this occur as expected, council services may well see more demand as it impacts on the general population. It may also lead to further savings being needed in government departments to bridge the gap created by the lack of economic growth and the consequential reduction in forecast tax revenues.
- 5.52 A multi year settlement has been promised next year which would help the council plan its financial position more effectively but the details around this are unclear at present.
- 5.53 The revenue budgets currently do not include the significant waste changes with the introduction of food waste collection required from April 2026, however, the capital costs have been included. At present there is no estimate of what or if any transitional funding will be received from the government. There is also the introduction of The Extended Producer responsibility scheme which relates to the obligations in relation to the collection of packaging materials as part of Simpler recycling. Provisional allocations have been advised but have not been included in the budget at this time as final allocations will not be confirmed until Autumn 2025. These payments will in part replace recycling credits currently received and at present are broadly expected to have a neutral financial impact.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

Contained in the report

6.2 Legal

Nil

6.3 Human Resources

Nil

6.4 Risk Management

A risk register is included in **APPENDIX 7**

Setting the budget is recognised as a significant risk to the council and included in the strategic risk register. The risks noted are both the setting of the budget within the timescales and the risks around setting a balanced budget. These are referenced throughout the report and the mitigations that have been put in place.

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

Nil

6.6 Health

Nil

6.7 Climate Change

Funding has been allocated to support the climate change agenda at the council. This will be managed by the appropriate service manager with reports being presented to members as appropriate to utilise the funds.

7 Appendices

Appendix 1: Detailed budgets

Appendix 2: Capital programme

Appendix 3: Business rates

Appendix 4: Reserves

Appendix 5: Band D equivalents

Appendix 6: Robustness of estimates and adequacy of reserves

Appendix 7: Risk register

8 Previous Consideration

None

9 Background Papers

Files are available in Financial Services

Contact Officer: Chris Forrester

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Ward Interest: Nil

Report Track: Resources Scrutiny Committee 21 January 2025, Council
11 February 2025

Key Decision: Yes

Community

	Outturn 2024-2025 £	Budget 2025-2026 £	Budget 2026-2027 £	Budget 2027-2028 £
1 Private Sector Housing (Standards)				
Employee Expenses	508,180	565,270	554,020	565,210
Transport Related Expenditure	15,300	15,540	15,790	15,790
Supplies & Services	21,990	30,410	30,540	30,540
Total Expenditure	545,470	611,220	600,350	611,540
Income	(422,310)	(443,710)	(444,770)	(453,230)
Total Income	(422,310)	(443,710)	(444,770)	(453,230)
Private Sector Housing (Standards) Net Expenditure	123,160	167,510	155,580	158,310
2 Housing Act Sewerage Works				
Premises Related Expenditure	2,170	2,210	2,250	2,300
Total Expenditure	2,170	2,210	2,250	2,300
Housing Act Sewerage Works Net Expenditure	2,170	2,210	2,250	2,300
3 Private Sector Hsg (Loans & Mortgages)				
Premises Related Expenditure	5,730	5,850	5,970	6,090
Total Expenditure	5,730	5,850	5,970	6,090
Income	(9,230)	(9,750)	(10,300)	(10,500)
Total Income	(9,230)	(9,750)	(10,300)	(10,500)
Private Sector Hsg (Loans & Mortgages) Net Expenditure	(3,500)	(3,900)	(4,330)	(4,410)
4 Partnerships				
Supplies & Services	25,140	25,140	25,140	25,140
Total Expenditure	25,140	25,140	25,140	25,140
Partnerships Net Expenditure	25,140	25,140	25,140	25,140
5 Homelessness & Housing Advice				
Employee Expenses	418,840	458,390	465,600	474,900
Premises Related Expenditure	98,270	118,810	119,090	122,070
Transport Related Expenditure	5,650	5,650	5,650	5,650
Supplies & Services	361,790	377,580	250,650	255,400
Third Party Payments	110,640	154,450	169,490	164,520
Total Expenditure	995,190	1,114,880	1,010,480	1,022,540
Income	(321,080)	(296,510)	(164,930)	(164,930)
Total Income	(321,080)	(296,510)	(164,930)	(164,930)
Homelessness & Housing Advice Net Expenditure	674,110	818,370	845,550	857,610
6 Glover Street				
Premises Related Expenditure	20,670	21,460	22,410	23,410
Supplies & Services	150	150	150	150
Total Expenditure	20,820	21,610	22,560	23,560
Income	(25,010)	(29,000)	(29,380)	(29,970)
Total Income	(25,010)	(29,000)		(29,970)
Glover Street Net Expenditure	(4,190)	(7,390)	(6,820)	(6,410)

Community

	Outturn 2024-2025 £	Budget 2025-2026 £	Budget 2026-2027 £	Budget 2027-2028 £
7 Grants & Contributions				
Supplies & Services	128,960	128,960	128,960	128,960
Total Expenditure	128,960	128,960	128,960	128,960
Grants & Contributions Net Expenditure	128,960	128,960	128,960	128,960
8 CCTV				
Premises Related Expenditure	9,080	9,620	10,200	10,810
Supplies & Services	18,330	18,330	18,330	18,330
Third Party Payments	138,240	152,060	167,270	175,630
Total Expenditure	165,650	180,010	195,800	204,770
CCTV Net Expenditure	165,650	180,010	195,800	204,770
Community Net Expenditure	1,111,500	1,310,910	1,342,130	1,366,270

Community Portfolio

Variation Statement 2025/2026 to 2027/2028

	2025/2026 Indicative	Real Terms / Efficiency Variations	2025/2026 Budget	2026/2027 Indicative	Real Terms / Efficiency Variations	2026/2027 Budget	Inflation	Real Terms / Efficiency Variations	2027/2028 Budget
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Employee Costs	1,066	- 42	1,024	1,088	- 68	1,020	19	1	1,040
Premises Related Costs	121	37	158	126	34	160	5	-	165
Transport Related Costs	21	-	21	21	-	21	-	-	21
Supplies and Services	449	131	580	454	-	454	5	-	459
Third Party	152	155	307	167	169	336	3	1	340
Total Expenditure	1,809	281	2,090	1,856	135	1,991	32	2	2,025
Income	- 576	- 203	- 779	- 586	- 63	- 649	- 1	- 9	- 659
Net Expenditure	1,233	78	1,311	1,270	72	1,342	31	- 7	1,366

Community Portfolio**Proposed Real Terms / Efficiency Variations****2025/26 Change**

	£'000	£'000
<u>Real Term Variations</u>		
Reduced utility charges		-13
National Insurance increase		14
Empty home officer		
Employees	22	
Income	-8	14
DFG recharge to capital		-6
Glover street additional income		-10
Senior management restructure		77
Minor variations		2
		<u>78</u>

2026/27 Change

	£'000	£'000
<u>Real Term Variations</u>		
Reduced utility charges		-13
National Insurance increase		14
DFG recharge to capital		-6
Glover street additional income		-10
Senior management restructure		88
Minor variations		-1
		<u>72</u>

2027/28 Change

	£'000	£'000
<u>Real Term Variations</u>		
Increase in pension costs		2
CCTV contract		5
DFG recharge to capital		-8
minor variations		-6
		<u>-7</u>

Economic Development and Planning

	Outturn 2024-2025 £	Budget 2025-2026 £	Budget 2026-2027 £	Budget 2027-2028 £
1 Management and Support				
Employee Expenses	230,630	273,760	279,490	285,230
Supplies & Services	78,380	41,150	41,150	41,150
Total Expenditure	309,010	314,910	320,640	326,380
Income	(20,540)	(23,560)	(24,020)	(24,490)
Total Income	(20,540)	(23,560)	(24,020)	(24,490)
Management and Support Net Expenditure	288,470	291,350	296,620	301,890
2 Building Control				
Supplies & Services	500	500	500	500
Third Party Payments	252,050	281,670	292,190	301,630
Total Expenditure	252,550	282,170	292,690	302,130
Building Control Net Expenditure	252,550	282,170	292,690	302,130
3 Development Management				
Employee Expenses	1,135,600	1,189,610	1,216,620	1,243,710
Transport Related Expenditure	24,690	24,690	24,690	24,690
Supplies & Services	201,140	201,140	201,140	201,140
Total Expenditure	1,361,430	1,415,440	1,442,450	1,469,540
Income	(796,170)	(756,500)	(756,500)	(756,500)
Total Income	(796,170)	(756,500)	(756,500)	(756,500)
Development Management Net Expenditure	565,260	658,940	685,950	713,040
4 Forward Planning				
Employee Expenses	288,950	319,670	328,520	335,330
Transport Related Expenditure	6,520	6,520	6,520	6,520
Supplies & Services	48,940	530,240	337,210	170,290
Total Expenditure	344,410	856,430	672,250	512,140
Income	(2,580)	(310,350)	(32,500)	(32,500)
Total Income	(2,580)	(310,350)	(32,500)	(32,500)
Forward Planning Net Expenditure	341,830	546,080	639,750	479,640
5 Land Charges - Local Searches				
Employee Expenses	59,770	63,630	64,980	66,340
Supplies & Services	28,080	34,210	32,860	31,500
Total Expenditure	87,850	97,840	97,840	97,840
Income	(103,840)	(97,840)	(97,840)	(97,840)
Total Income	(103,840)	(97,840)	(97,840)	(97,840)
Land Charges - Local Searches Net Expenditure	(15,990)	-	-	-

Economic Development and Planning

	Outturn 2024-2025 £	Budget 2025-2026 £	Budget 2026-2027 £	Budget 2027-2028 £
6 Land & Properties				
Premises Related Expenditure	446,040	154,050	117,300	103,850
Supplies & Services	131,990	1,590	1,590	1,590
Total Expenditure	578,030	155,640	118,890	105,440
Income	(564,530)	(160,510)	(122,880)	(90,260)
Total Income	(564,530)	(160,510)	(122,880)	(90,260)
Land & Properties Net Expenditure	13,500	(4,870)	(3,990)	15,180
7 Economic Growth and Strategic Projects				
Employee Expenses	358,060	398,330	405,570	413,610
Premises Related Expenditure	37,290	38,140	39,020	39,920
Transport Related Expenditure	1,600	1,600	1,600	1,600
Supplies & Services	143,210	33,210	33,210	33,210
Total Expenditure	540,160	471,280	479,400	488,340
Economic Growth and Strategic Projects Net Expenditure	540,160	471,280	479,400	488,340
8 Borough Tourism				
Supplies & Services	20,640	20,640	20,640	20,640
Total Expenditure	20,640	20,640	20,640	20,640
Borough Tourism Net Expenditure	20,640	20,640	20,640	20,640
Economic Development and Planning Net Expenditure	2,006,420	2,265,590	2,411,060	2,320,860

Economic Development and Planning Portfolio

Variation Statement 2025/2026 to 2027/2028

	2025/2026 Indicative	Real Terms / Efficiency Variations	2025/2026 Budget	2026/2027 Indicative	Real Terms / Efficiency Variations	2026/2027 Budget	Inflation	Real Terms / Efficiency Variations	2027/2028 Budget
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Employee Costs	2,207	38	2,245	2,253	42	2,295	43	6	2,344
Premises Related Costs	81	111	192	83	73	156	2	- 14	144
Transport Related Costs	33	-	33	33	-	33	-	-	33
Supplies and Services	516	347	863	490	178	668	-	- 168	500
Third Party Payments	243	39	282	251	41	292	6	3	301
Total Expenditure	3,080	535	3,615	3,110	334	3,444	51	- 173	3,322
Income	- 1,121	- 228	- 1,349	- 1,097	64	- 1,033	- 1	33	- 1,001
Net Expenditure	1,959	307	2,266	2,013	398	2,411	50	- 140	2,321

Economic Development and Planning Portfolio**Proposed Real Terms / Efficiency Variations****2025/26 Change**

	£'000	£'000
<u>Real Term Variations</u>		
National insurance costs		30
Review use of reserves		27
Local Plan Expenditure increased costs and rephasing		
Supplies	336	
Income	<u>-167</u>	169
Senior management restructure		9
Building Control Shared Service Adjustment		39
Land charges expenditure		11
Reduced planning fee income		22
Guildhall		
Expenditure	110	
Income	<u>-110</u>	-
minor variations		-
		<u>307</u>

2026/27 Change

	£'000	£'000
<u>Real Term Variations</u>		
Pay award and staffing variations		6
National insurance costs		30
Review use of reserves		37
Local Plan Expenditure increased costs and rephasing		
Supplies	168	
Income	<u>75</u>	243
Senior management restructure		44
Building Control Shared Service Adjustment		6
Land charges expenditure		10
Reduced planning fee income		23
Guildhall		
Expenditure	73	
Income	<u>-73</u>	-
minor variations		-1
		<u>398</u>

2027/28 Change

	£'000	£'000
<u>Real Term Variations</u>		
Increase in pension costs		5
Local Plan Expenditure costs and rephasing		-167
Building Control Shared Service Adjustment		7
Guildhall		
Expenditure	-15	
Income	33	18
Minor variations		-3
		<u>-140</u>

Environment

	Outturn 2024-2025 £	Budget 2025-2026 £	Budget 2026-2027 £	Budget 2027-2028 £
1 Management & Support				
Employee Expenses	183,300	195,030	198,960	202,990
Transport Related Expenditure	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Supplies & Services	43,450	43,450	43,450	43,450
Total Expenditure	227,750	239,480	243,410	247,440
Management & Support Net Expenditure	227,750	239,480	243,410	247,440
2 Regulatory Services				
Employee Expenses	883,260	802,900	748,390	763,860
Premises Related Expenditure	8,500	9,450	9,640	9,830
Transport Related Expenditure	23,500	23,500	23,520	23,540
Supplies & Services	51,140	51,190	51,220	51,250
Total Expenditure	966,400	887,040	832,770	848,480
Income	(227,400)	(234,560)	(234,790)	(235,150)
Total Income	(227,400)	(234,560)	(234,790)	(235,150)
Regulatory Services Net Expenditure	739,000	652,480	597,980	613,330
3 Strategic Health Delivery				
Employee Expenses	43,680	63,090	64,400	65,760
Transport Related Expenditure	500	500	500	500
Supplies & Services	300	300	300	300
Total Expenditure	44,480	63,890	65,200	66,560
Strategic Health Delivery Net Expenditure	44,480	63,890	65,200	66,560
4 Partnerships Environmental Management				
Employee Expenses	40,160	52,430	53,490	54,580
Premises Related Expenditure	90	960	980	1,000
Transport Related Expenditure	960	960	960	960
Supplies & Services	26,220	19,750	19,750	19,750
Total Expenditure	67,430	74,100	75,180	76,290
Income	(16,550)	(10,280)	(10,490)	(10,700)
Total Income	(16,550)	(10,280)	(10,490)	(10,700)
Partnerships Environmental Management Net Expenditure	50,880	63,820	64,690	65,590

Environment

	Outturn 2024-2025 £	Budget 2025-2026 £	Budget 2026-2027 £	Budget 2027-2028 £
5 Waste & Recycling				
Employee Expenses	71,640	74,510	76,190	77,900
Premises Related Expenditure	1,610	-	-	-
Transport Related Expenditure	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500
Supplies & Services	117,670	146,410	146,660	146,970
Third Party Payments	4,858,190	5,077,250	5,018,570	5,169,920
Total Expenditure	5,051,610	5,300,670	5,243,920	5,397,290
Income	(2,760,890)	(2,802,400)	(2,854,800)	(2,907,570)
Total Income	(2,760,890)	(2,802,400)	(2,854,800)	(2,907,570)
Waste & Recycling Net Expenditure	2,290,720	2,498,270	2,389,120	2,489,720
6 Bereavement Services				
Employee Expenses	280,750	303,580	310,010	314,960
Premises Related Expenditure	255,200	265,610	274,330	283,440
Transport Related Expenditure	5,870	5,870	5,870	5,870
Supplies & Services	346,300	327,650	328,790	329,970
Total Expenditure	888,120	902,710	919,000	934,240
Income	(1,981,050)	(1,987,120)	(2,026,810)	(2,067,270)
Total Income	(1,981,050)	(1,987,120)	(2,026,810)	(2,067,270)
Bereavement Services Net Expenditure	(1,092,930)	(1,084,410)	(1,107,810)	(1,133,030)
7 Misc Highways Functions (ex Planning)				
Premises Related Expenditure	43,380	44,940	46,500	48,130
Total Expenditure	43,380	44,940	46,500	48,130
Income	(10,190)	(5,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)
Total Income	(10,190)	(5,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)
Misc Highways Functions (ex Planning) Net Expenditure	33,190	39,940	41,500	43,130
8 Drainage Services				
Premises Related Expenditure	4,550	4,640	4,730	4,830
Supplies & Services	123,060	126,760	130,560	134,480
Total Expenditure	127,610	131,400	135,290	139,310
Drainage Services Net Expenditure	127,610	131,400	135,290	139,310
9 Street Scene				
Employee Expenses	2,184,940	2,310,530	2,358,600	2,405,040
Premises Related Expenditure	34,420	35,720	37,080	38,490
Transport Related Expenditure	309,740	315,800	321,970	328,270
Supplies & Services	430,460	432,490	434,560	436,680
Total Expenditure	2,959,560	3,094,540	3,152,210	3,208,480
Income	(733,590)	(748,700)	(765,190)	(779,640)
Total Income	(733,590)	(748,700)	(765,190)	(779,640)
Street Scene Net Expenditure	2,225,970	2,345,840	2,387,020	2,428,840

Environment

	Outturn 2024-2025 £	Budget 2025-2026 £	Budget 2026-2027 £	Budget 2027-2028 £
10 Cleansing Services				
Premises Related Expenditure	39,160	40,050	41,160	42,300
Supplies & Services	19,610	19,630	19,640	19,650
Total Expenditure	58,770	59,680	60,800	61,950
Cleansing Services Net Expenditure	58,770	59,680	60,800	61,950
11 Pest Control				
Employee Expenses	188,470	222,590	227,200	231,840
Transport Related Expenditure	10,220	10,420	10,630	10,840
Supplies & Services	43,870	43,870	43,870	43,870
Total Expenditure	242,560	276,880	281,700	286,550
Income	(156,480)	(181,030)	(184,660)	(188,360)
Total Income	(156,480)	(181,030)	(184,660)	(188,360)
Pest Control Net Expenditure	86,080	95,850	97,040	98,190
12 Dog Warden Service				
Transport Related Expenditure	2,510	2,510	2,560	2,610
Supplies & Services	3,920	3,920	3,920	3,920
Third Party Payments	6,360	35,990	36,120	36,840
Total Expenditure	12,790	42,420	42,600	43,370
Income	(9,000)	(9,230)	(9,420)	(9,610)
Total Income	(9,000)	(9,230)	(9,420)	(9,610)
Dog Warden Service Net Expenditure	3,790	33,190	33,180	33,760
13 Off Street Parking Services				
Employee Expenses	73,000	88,340	91,450	105,070
Premises Related Expenditure	861,500	900,600	926,730	953,880
Transport Related Expenditure	2,300	2,300	2,300	2,300
Supplies & Services	169,200	154,750	156,850	158,990
Third Party Payments	483,660	498,180	508,150	518,310
Total Expenditure	1,589,660	1,644,170	1,685,480	1,738,550
Income	(2,506,890)	(2,541,120)	(2,541,120)	(2,541,120)
Total Income	(2,506,890)	(2,541,120)	(2,541,120)	(2,541,120)
Off Street Parking Services Net Expenditure	(917,230)	(896,950)	(855,640)	(802,570)

Environment

	Outturn 2024-2025 £	Budget 2025-2026 £	Budget 2026-2027 £	Budget 2027-2028 £
14 Borough Markets				
Employee Expenses	185,120	13,160	13,520	13,880
Premises Related Expenditure	136,870	39,320	40,170	41,030
Transport Related Expenditure	100	-	-	-
Supplies & Services	52,350	36,640	36,640	36,640
Total Expenditure	374,440	89,120	90,330	91,550
Income	(72,760)	(33,000)	(33,000)	(33,000)
Total Income	(72,760)	(33,000)	(33,000)	(33,000)
Borough Markets Net Expenditure	301,680	56,120	57,330	58,550
15 Climate Change				
Employee Expenses	46,750	48,890	49,880	50,900
Total Expenditure	46,750	48,890	49,880	50,900
Climate Change Net Expenditure	46,750	48,890	49,880	50,900
16 Events				
Employee Expenses	-	35,200	36,520	38,510
Total Expenditure	-	35,200	36,520	38,510
Events Net Expenditure	-	35,200	36,520	38,510
Environment Net Expenditure	4,226,510	4,382,690	4,295,510	4,500,180

Environment Portfolio**Variation Statement 2025/2026 to 2027/2028**

	2025/2026 Indicative	Real Terms / Efficiency Variations	2025/2026 Budget	2026/2027 Indicative	Real Terms / Efficiency Variations	2026/2027 Budget	Inflation	Real Terms / Efficiency Variations	2027/2028 Budget
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Employee Costs	4,143	67	4,210	4,227	2	4,229	74	22	4,325
Premises Related Costs	1,650	- 309	1,341	1,705	- 324	1,381	42	-	1,423
Transport Related Costs	366	- 1	365	372	-	372	7	- 1	378
Supplies and Services	1,378	29	1,407	1,384	32	1,416	6	4	1,426
Third Party Payments	5,547	65	5,612	5,708	- 145	5,563	109	53	5,725
Total Expenditure	13,084	- 149	12,935	13,396	- 435	12,961	238	78	13,277
Income	- 8,675	123	- 8,552	- 8,811	146	- 8,665	- 115	3	- 8,777
Net Expenditure	4,409	- 26	4,383	4,585	- 289	4,296	123	81	4,500

Environment Portfolio**Proposed Real Terms / Efficiency Variations****2025/26 Change**

	£'000	£'000
<u>Real Term Variations</u>		
National Insurance increase		90
Environmental health staffing		133
Climate change post transferred from resources portfolio		49
Senior management restructure		-145
Markets provision		
Employees	-60	
Premises	-141	
Supplies	-36	
Income	<u>129</u>	-108
Utility costs		-155
Streetscene contract income		34
Waste		
Contract	124	
Dry recycling gate fees reflect tonnages and prices	-46	
Reduced recycling credits	2	
Chargeable garden waste	<u>-30</u>	50
Schedule 2 waste		-33
Sewer and penk drainage levy		11
Dog warden expenditure		30
Bereavement income		55
Parking		
Expenditure	24	
Income	<u>-75</u>	-51
minor variations		<u>14</u>
		<u>-26</u>

2026/27 Change

	£'000	£'000
<u>Real Term Variations</u>		
Pay and staffing variations		4
National Insurance increase		90
Environmental health staffing		63
Climate change post transferred from resources portfolio		49
Senior management restructure		-145
Markets provision		
Employees	-60	
Premises	-148	
Supplies	-36	
Income	129	-115
Utility costs		-164
Streetscene contract income		32
Waste		
Contract	-88	
Dry recycling gate fees reflect tonnages and prices	-47	
Reduced recycling credits	10	
Chargeable garden waste	-16	-141
Schedule 2 waste		-27
Sow and penk drainage levy		11
Dog warden expenditure		30
Bereavement income		57
Parking		
Expenditure	27	
Income	-75	-48
minor variations		15
		<u>-289</u>

2027/28 Change

	£'000	£'000
<u>Real Term Variations</u>		
Increase in pension costs		10
Waste		
Property growth	43	
Dry recycling gate fees	10	
Sale of recyclate	4	57
Minor variation		14
		<u>81</u>

Leisure and Culture

	Outturn 2024-2025 £	Budget 2025-2026 £	Budget 2026-2027 £	Budget 2027-2028 £
1 Leisure Section				
Employee Expenses	113,520	117,740	120,230	122,740
Transport Related Expenditure	2,250	2,250	2,250	2,250
Supplies & Services	4,610	4,610	4,610	4,610
Total Expenditure	120,380	124,600	127,090	129,600
Leisure Section Net Expenditure	120,380	124,600	127,090	129,600
2 Allotments				
Premises Related Expenditure	4,280	4,350	4,440	4,530
Supplies & Services	14,770	15,150	15,540	15,940
Total Expenditure	19,050	19,500	19,980	20,470
Income	(830)	(830)	(830)	(830)
Total Income	(830)	(830)		(830)
Allotments Net Expenditure	18,220	18,670	19,150	19,640
3 Ancient High House				
Premises Related Expenditure	(65,420)	10,540	10,750	10,970
Total Expenditure	(65,420)	10,540	10,750	10,970
Ancient High House Net Expenditure	(65,420)	10,540	10,750	10,970
4 Broadeye Windmill				
Premises Related Expenditure	3,030	3,050	3,150	3,250
Supplies & Services	70	70	70	70
Total Expenditure	3,100	3,120	3,220	3,320
Broadeye Windmill Net Expenditure	3,100	3,120	3,220	3,320
5 Izaak Walton Cottage				
Premises Related Expenditure	8,310	8,480	8,650	8,820
Total Expenditure	8,310	8,480	8,650	8,820
Izaak Walton Cottage Net Expenditure	8,310	8,480	8,650	8,820
6 Stafford Castle				
Premises Related Expenditure	12,690	12,940	13,200	13,460
Total Expenditure	12,690	12,940	13,200	13,460
Stafford Castle Net Expenditure	12,690	12,940	13,200	13,460
7 Leisure Management Contract				
Supplies & Services	377,210	441,470	575,440	443,410
Third Party Payments	602,480	570,920	504,400	505,740
Total Expenditure	979,690	1,012,390	1,079,840	949,150
Income	(159,370)	(185,330)	(260,040)	(202,760)
Total Income	(159,370)	(185,330)	(260,040)	(202,760)
Leisure Management Contract Net Expenditure	820,320	827,060	819,800	746,390

Leisure and Culture

	Outturn 2024-2025 £	Budget 2025-2026 £	Budget 2026-2027 £	Budget 2027-2028 £
8 Leisure Strategy				
Employee Expenses	330,550	339,660	349,020	358,380
Premises Related Expenditure	4,950	5,050	5,150	5,250
Supplies & Services	89,630	89,630	89,630	89,630
Third Party Payments	35,380	62,530	63,800	65,080
Total Expenditure	460,510	496,870	507,600	518,340
Leisure Strategy Net Expenditure	460,510	496,870	507,600	518,340
9 Parks & Open Spaces				
Employee Expenses	279,600	284,290	289,910	296,400
Premises Related Expenditure	411,890	431,190	442,240	453,660
Transport Related Expenditure	2,500	5,120	5,230	5,340
Supplies & Services	114,390	107,110	107,120	107,130
Total Expenditure	808,380	827,710	844,500	862,530
Income	(102,840)	(97,490)	(99,410)	(101,360)
Total Income	(102,840)	(97,490)	(99,410)	(101,360)
Parks & Open Spaces Net Expenditure	705,540	730,220	745,090	761,170
Leisure and Culture Net Expenditure	2,083,650	2,232,500	2,254,550	2,211,710

Leisure Portfolio**Variation Statement 2025/2026 to 2027/2028**

	2025/2026 Indicative	Real Terms / Efficiency Variations	2025/2026 Budget	2026/2027 Indicative	Real Terms / Efficiency Variations	2026/2027 Budget	Inflation	Real Terms / Efficiency Variations	2027/2028 Budget
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Employee Costs	733	9	742	750	9	759	7	12	778
Premises Related Costs	487	- 11	476	499	- 11	488	12	-	500
Transport Related Costs	7	-	7	7	-	7	-	-	7
Supplies and Services	658	-	658	792	1	793	-	- 132	661
Third Party Payments	581	53	634	513	55	568	11	- 8	571
Total Expenditure	2,466	51	2,517	2,561	54	2,615	30	- 128	2,517
Income	- 284	-	- 284	- 360	-	- 360	- 2	57	- 305
Net Expenditure	2,182	51	2,233	2,201	54	2,255	28	- 71	2,212

Leisure Portfolio**Proposed Real Terms / Efficiency Variations****2025/26 Change**

	£'000	£'000
<u>Real Term Variations</u>		
National insurance increase		9
Senior management restructure		63
Leisure Management Contract		
Third Party Payments		-10
Utility charges		-11
		<u>51</u>

2026/27 Change

	£'000	£'000
<u>Real Term Variations</u>		
National insurance increase		9
Senior management restructure		63
Leisure Management Contract		
Third Party Payments		-9
Utility charges		-11
minor variations		2
		<u>54</u>

2027/28 Change

	£'000	£'000
<u>Real Term Variations</u>		
Increase in pension costs		11
Leisure management contract		
Base contract change	-9	
Equalisation reserve	57	
Equalisation reserve Income	-132	-84
minor variations		2
		<u>- 71</u>

Resources

	Outturn 2024-2025 £	Budget 2025-2026 £	Budget 2026-2027 £	Budget 2027-2028 £
1 Public Buildings				
Employee Expenses	80,360	89,470	91,060	92,630
Premises Related Expenditure	1,259,980	1,306,290	1,339,820	1,374,440
Supplies & Services	122,180	130,030	132,310	134,620
Total Expenditure	1,462,520	1,525,790	1,563,190	1,601,690
Income	(497,470)	(489,430)	(404,140)	(404,140)
Total Income	(497,470)	(489,430)	(404,140)	(404,140)
Public Buildings Net Expenditure	965,050	1,036,360	1,159,050	1,197,550
2 Facilities Management				
Employee Expenses	239,990	294,490	301,310	306,180
Transport Related Expenditure	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
Supplies & Services	8,160	4,660	4,660	4,660
Total Expenditure	252,150	303,150	309,970	314,840
Facilities Management Net Expenditure	252,150	303,150	309,970	314,840
3 Executive Management				
Employee Expenses	980,600	1,012,230	1,040,740	1,065,000
Supplies & Services	32,520	34,200	35,040	35,620
Total Expenditure	1,013,120	1,046,430	1,075,780	1,100,620
Income	(158,960)	(159,370)	(162,500)	(165,760)
Total Income	(158,960)	(159,370)	(162,500)	(165,760)
Executive Management Net Expenditure	854,160	887,060	913,280	934,860
4 Corporate Business and Partnerships				
Employee Expenses	205,690	217,800	224,210	228,970
Transport Related Expenditure	200	200	200	200
Supplies & Services	46,670	37,440	37,930	38,270
Total Expenditure	252,560	255,440	262,340	267,440
Income	(17,000)	-	-	-
Total Income	(17,000)	-	-	-
Corporate Business and Partnerships Net Expenditure	235,560	255,440	262,340	267,440
5 Communications				
Employee Expenses	155,830	168,210	174,500	178,140
Transport Related Expenditure	80	80	80	80
Supplies & Services	18,710	18,710	18,730	18,750
Total Expenditure	174,620	187,000	193,310	196,970
Communications Net Expenditure	174,620	187,000	193,310	196,970

Resources

	Outturn 2024-2025 £	Budget 2025-2026 £	Budget 2026-2027 £	Budget 2027-2028 £
6 Customer Services				
Employee Expenses	385,130	403,830	413,760	422,410
Supplies & Services	6,630	11,530	11,530	11,530
Total Expenditure	391,760	415,360	425,290	433,940
Customer Services Net Expenditure	391,760	415,360	425,290	433,940
7 Out of Hours Service				
Supplies & Services	9,150	10,070	11,080	11,080
Total Expenditure	9,150	10,070	11,080	11,080
Out of Hours Service Net Expenditure	9,150	10,070	11,080	11,080
8 Law and Administration				
Employee Expenses	1,267,760	1,403,480	1,437,710	1,469,430
Premises Related Expenditure	2,360	2,410	2,460	2,510
Transport Related Expenditure	2,660	2,710	2,760	2,810
Supplies & Services	107,700	105,750	106,090	106,430
Third Party Payments	40,090	41,310	42,140	42,960
Total Expenditure	1,420,570	1,555,660	1,591,160	1,624,140
Income	(442,170)	(471,460)	(486,710)	(497,260)
Total Income	(442,170)	(471,460)	(486,710)	(497,260)
Law and Administration Net Expenditure	978,400	1,084,200	1,104,450	1,126,880
9 Finance				
Supplies & Services	1,350	1,350	1,350	1,350
Third Party Payments	843,000	876,810	893,350	909,590
Total Expenditure	844,350	878,160	894,700	910,940
Finance Net Expenditure	844,350	878,160	894,700	910,940
10 Human Resources Services				
Employee Expenses	635,580	674,560	693,430	709,460
Transport Related Expenditure	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Supplies & Services	105,110	105,110	105,110	105,110
Total Expenditure	742,690	781,670	800,540	816,570
Income	(274,580)	(291,900)	(300,260)	(307,360)
Total Income	(274,580)	(291,900)	(300,260)	(307,360)
Human Resources Services Net Expenditure	468,110	489,770	500,280	509,210

Resources

	Outturn 2024-2025 £	Budget 2025-2026 £	Budget 2026-2027 £	Budget 2027-2028 £
11 Technology				
Employee Expenses	1,202,020	1,261,260	1,296,480	1,331,700
Transport Related Expenditure	8,800	8,800	8,800	8,800
Supplies & Services	662,050	662,500	662,500	662,500
Total Expenditure	1,872,870	1,932,560	1,967,780	2,003,000
Income	(909,530)	(943,440)	(964,110)	(984,830)
Total Income	(909,530)	(943,440)	(964,110)	(984,830)
Technology Net Expenditure	963,340	989,120	1,003,670	1,018,170
12 Members Services				
Employee Expenses	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
Transport Related Expenditure	1,250	1,250	1,250	1,250
Supplies & Services	325,790	354,270	361,140	368,150
Total Expenditure	331,040	359,520	366,390	373,400
Members Services Net Expenditure	331,040	359,520	366,390	373,400
13 Revenues & Benefits				
Supplies & Services	77,270	85,670	85,670	85,670
Third Party Payments	1,694,880	1,767,010	1,808,900	1,852,630
Total Expenditure	1,772,150	1,852,680	1,894,570	1,938,300
Income	(847,230)	(793,430)	(793,430)	(793,430)
Total Income	(847,230)	(793,430)	(793,430)	(793,430)
Revenues & Benefits Net Expenditure	924,920	1,059,250	1,101,140	1,144,870
14 Housing Benefit Payments				
Supplies & Services	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Transfer Payments	18,461,020	18,835,740	19,217,950	19,607,810
Total Expenditure	18,471,020	18,845,740	19,227,950	19,617,810
Income	(18,361,300)	(18,728,530)	(19,103,090)	(19,485,150)
Total Income	(18,361,300)	(18,728,530)	(19,103,090)	(19,485,150)
Housing Benefit Payments Net Expenditure	109,720	117,210	124,860	132,660
15 Parish Councils				
Supplies & Services	51,000	51,000	51,000	51,000
Total Expenditure	51,000	51,000	51,000	51,000
Parish Councils Net Expenditure	51,000	51,000	51,000	51,000
16 Corporate and Democratic Core				
Supplies & Services	328,650	307,550	313,440	319,450
Total Expenditure	328,650	307,550	313,440	319,450
Corporate and Democratic Core Net Expenditure	328,650	307,550	313,440	319,450

Resources

	Outturn 2024-2025 £	Budget 2025-2026 £	Budget 2026-2027 £	Budget 2027-2028 £
17 Non-Distributed Costs				
Employee Expenses	230,130	239,970	244,770	249,670
Third Party Payments	43,300	44,170	45,050	45,950
Total Expenditure	273,430	284,140	289,820	295,620
Non-Distributed Costs Net Expenditure	273,430	284,140	289,820	295,620
18 Asset Management/Energy Conservation				
Supplies & Services	44,120	44,120	44,120	44,120
Total Expenditure	44,120	44,120	44,120	44,120
Asset Management/Energy Conservation Net Expenditure	44,120	44,120	44,120	44,120
19 Electoral Registration				
Employee Expenses	2,150	2,150	2,150	2,150
Supplies & Services	40,590	40,590	40,590	40,590
Total Expenditure	42,740	42,740	42,740	42,740
Electoral Registration Net Expenditure	42,740	42,740	42,740	42,740
20 Elections				
Supplies & Services	42,950	39,500	39,500	39,500
Total Expenditure	42,950	39,500	39,500	39,500
Income	(1,200)	-	-	-
Total Income	(1,200)	-	-	-
Elections Net Expenditure	41,750	39,500	39,500	39,500
21 Items to be Allocated				
Employee Expenses	(39,000)	(102,440)	(100,790)	(99,040)
Supplies & Services	(150,000)	(100,000)	(200,000)	(200,000)
Total Expenditure	(189,000)	(202,440)	(300,790)	(299,040)
Items to be Allocated Net Expenditure	(189,000)	(202,440)	(300,790)	(299,040)
22 Audit, Risk, Resilience and Procurement				
Third Party Payments	257,120	267,760	273,170	278,380
Total Expenditure	257,120	267,760	273,170	278,380
Audit, Risk, Resilience and Procurement Net Expenditure	257,120	267,760	273,170	278,380
23 Insurance Premiums				
Third Party Payments	255,590	281,150	309,270	340,200
Total Expenditure	255,590	281,150	309,270	340,200
Insurance Premiums Net Expenditure	255,590	281,150	309,270	340,200
Resources Net Expenditure	8,607,730	9,187,190	9,432,080	9,684,780

Resources Portfolio

Variation Statement 2025/2026 to 2027/2028

	2025/2026 Indicative	Real Terms / Efficiency Variations	2025/2026 Budget	2026/2027 Indicative	Real Terms / Efficiency Variations	2026/2027 Budget	Inflation	Real Terms / Efficiency Variations	2027/2028 Budget
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Employee Costs	5,743	- 74	5,669	5,871	- 48	5,823	110	28	5,961
Premises Related Costs	1,371	- 62	1,309	1,408	- 66	1,342	36	- 1	1,377
Transport Related Costs	19	-	19	19	-	19	-	-	19
Supplies and Services	1,605	349	1,954	1,718	154	1,872	14	2	1,888
Third Party Payments	3,097	181	3,278	3,162	210	3,372	73	25	3,470
Transfer Payments	14,633	4,203	18,836	13,419	5,799	19,218	390	-	19,608
Total Expenditure	26,468	4,597	31,065	25,597	6,049	31,646	623	54	32,323
Income	- 18,216	- 3,662	- 21,878	- 17,043	- 5,171	- 22,214	- 420	- 4	- 22,638
Net Expenditure	8,252	935	9,187	8,554	878	9,432	203	50	9,685

Resources Portfolio**Proposed Inflation/ Real Terms Efficiency Variations****2025/26 Change**

	£'000	£'000
<u>Real Term Variations</u>		
Staffing variations		63
National insurance increase		70
Climate change post transferred to Environment Portfolio		-49
Senior management restructure		-41
Reduced utility charges		-61
Reduced Civic Centre rental income		70
Members allowances		19
Items to be allocated		
Contract provision	-100	
Shared service saving delay	400	300
Apprenticeship levy		8
Insurance premiums		87
Shared Service Cost Rate Increase	95	
Shared Service Rate Increase on Income	-27	68
Housing benefits review of spend		
Expenditure	4,203	
Income	- 3,885	318
Bank charges		8
Reduced revenues and benefits grants and miscellaneous income		55
Audit fees		19
minor variations		1
		935

2026/27 Change

	£'000	£'000
<u>Real Term Variations</u>		
Staffing variations		90
National insurance increase		70
Climate change post transferred to Environment Portfolio		-49
Senior management restructure		-41
Reduced utility charges		-65
Reduced Civic Centre rental income		153
Members allowances		19
Items to be allocated		
Contract provision	-200	
Shared service saving	300	100
Apprenticeship levy		9
Insurance premiums		111
Shared Service Cost Rate Increase	104	
Shared Service Rate Increase on Income	-34	70
Housing benefits review of spend		
Expenditure	5,800	
Income	- 5,475	325
Bank charges		7
Reduced revenues and benefits grants and miscellaneous income		55
Audit fees		23
minor variations		1
		878

2027/28 Change

	£'000	£'000
<u>Real Term Variations</u>		
Increase in pension changes, increments and staffing		26
Insurance premiums		19
Shared services additional cost	7	
Shared Service additional income	- 3	4
Minor variations		1
		50

Appendix 2

DRAFT GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25 TO 2027/28					
	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	Program but not allocated £000
ENVIRONMENT					
Streetscene equipment	66	-	-	-	101
Streetscene Fleet replacement	430	579	-	-	-
Waste Contract - replacement green containers	93	35	35	35	-
Waste Contract - replacement blue bins	26	11	11	11	-
Waste Contract - replacement waste containers	81	4	4	4	-
Food Waste	-	1,458	-	-	-
Eccleshall Road Cemetery Biodiversity	14	-	-	-	-
Car Park systems	275	-	-	-	-
Total	985	2,087	50	50	101
COMMUNITY					
Disabled Facilities Grants	2,402	1,522	1,522	1,522	3,434
Private Sector Housing Assistance	103	-	-	-	-
Improvements at Glover St caravan site	5	-	-	-	-
Empty Homes	80	-	-	-	-
Total	2,590	1,522	1,522	1,522	3,434
LEISURE					
Stone Leisure Strategy Phase 2 (part s106)	758	-	-	-	-
Victoria Park Pedestrian Bridge	-	91	-	-	-
Stafford Castle - H&S Works	-	-	-	-	16
Yarnfield Recreational Facilities	17	-	-	-	-
Hixon Green Millennium Trust (HGMT)	2	-	-	-	-
Penkside	11	-	-	-	-
Stone Hockey and Rugby Club	400	-	-	-	-
SLC Solar Panels	215	-	-	-	-
Yelverton Park	150	-	-	-	-
Haywood and Hixon	419	-	-	-	-
Total	1,972	91	-	-	16
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING					
Growth Point capital	50	-	-	-	-
Stafford Town Centre Enhancement	19	-	-	-	-
Station Gateway	-	-	-	-	3,500
UK Shared Prosperity Hub	2,376	-	-	-	-
Rural England Prosperity Fund REPF	419	-	-	-	-
Replacement Parking Ticket Machines	60	-	-	-	-
Future High Street Fund Co-op	2,029	7,930	-	-	-
Future High Street Fund Station Approach	558	-	-	-	-
Future High Street Fund Guildhall	4,818	-	-	-	-
Total	10,329	7,930	-	-	3,500

DRAFT GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25 TO 2027/28					
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	Program but not allocated
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
RESOURCES					
Corporate IT equipment	50	156	50	-	-
Contact Centre Phone system	-	-	-	-	30
Civic Centre Generator	-	-	-	-	50
Accommodation transformation & rationalisation	8	-	-	-	670
Civic Car	40	-	-	-	-
Revenues and Benefits system	208	-	-	-	-
Total	306	156	50	-	750
TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME	16,182	11,786	1,622	1,572	7,801

Appendix 3

Business Rates Retention - Retained Income					
			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
			Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
				full reset	Full reset
Business Rates Collection Fund			£	£	£
Gross Rates			74,473,171	75,962,634	77,481,887
Less	Reliefs, Exemptions and Provisions				
Mandatory Relief			-8,889,230	-9,067,015	-9,248,355
Discretionary relief Council funded			-224,518	-229,008	-233,588
Discretionary relief Government funded			-2,686,202	-2,739,926	-2,794,725
Exemptions			-2,520,965	-1,982,174	-1,721,488
Cost Of Collection			-174,165	-175,036	-175,911
Losses on collection			-2,174,737	-2,218,231	-2,262,596
Non Domestic Rates Income			57,803,354	59,551,243	61,045,224
Less	amount due to				
Government			-28,901,680	-29,775,620	-30,522,610
County			-5,202,300	-5,359,610	-5,494,070
Fire			-578,030	-595,510	-610,450
Net Business attributable to SBC			23,121,344	23,820,503	24,418,094
General Fund determination of retained Business Rates					
Net Business Rates attributable to SBC			23,121,344	23,820,503	24,418,094
less	Tariff		-16,871,253	-17,208,678	-17,552,851
	Reset		0	-3,453,909	-3,522,987
Core Funding			-3,095,997	-3,157,917	-3,221,076
	Growth		3,154,094	0	121,180
Plus	New Burdens funding subject to Levy				
Small Bus Relief & other reliefs S.31			2,622,377	2,674,824	2,728,321
Amount subject to Pool levy			5,776,471	2,674,824	2,849,501
	Pool Levy		-2,888,235	-1,337,412	-1,424,750
Business Rates Growth			2,888,235	1,337,412	1,424,750
Retained Business Rates					
	Baseline Funding		3,095,997	3,157,917	3,221,076
	Growth		2,888,235	1,337,412	1,424,750
	S&SOT Redistribution		1,155,294	534,965	569,900
	Pooling agreement		282,900	0	147,165
TOTAL Retained Income			7,422,427	5,030,294	5,362,891

Appendix 4

GENERAL FUND RESERVES & BALANCES AND CAPITAL RESOURCES 2023 - 2027

	01/04/2025	01/04/2026	01/04/2027	01/04/2028
	£	£	£	£
Contingency				
Revenue Surplus	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00
Revenue Surplus	1,982,529.13	2,045,429.13	852,469.13	852,469.13
Insurance Reserve	661,472.83	661,472.83	661,472.83	661,472.83
VAT - Partial Exemption	195,300.00	195,300.00	195,300.00	195,300.00
Business Rates Pool Equalisation	4,566,085.02	4,566,085.02	4,566,085.02	1,834,265.02
B rates Contingency	685,000.00	685,000.00	685,000.00	685,000.00
Leisure Equalization Reserve	- 603,860.00	- 372,720.00	- 82,320.00	133,330.00
	8,486,526.98	8,780,566.98	7,878,006.98	5,361,836.98
Grants				
Strategic Health Delivery	30,782.27	30,782.27	30,782.27	30,782.27
Stepping Stones Unspent S&S	4,559.27	4,559.27	4,559.27	4,559.27
Homelessness Prevention	44,197.20	44,197.20	44,197.20	44,197.20
Neighbourhood Planning Grant	34,256.73	34,256.73	34,256.73	34,256.73
Stafford & Surrounds	5,722.95	5,722.95	5,722.95	5,722.95
Elector Grant	113,567.84	113,567.84	113,567.84	113,567.84
Inspire Grant	7,000.00	7,000.00	7,000.00	7,000.00
Rough Sleeping Grant	25,646.01	25,646.01	25,646.01	25,646.01
Planning Registers New Burdens	36,240.52	36,240.52	36,240.52	36,240.52
Northern Gateway Project	40,705.40	40,705.40	40,705.40	40,705.40
Housing Benefit Admin Grant	67,182.00	67,182.00	67,182.00	67,182.00
Flexible Homelessness Support Grant	169,309.27	169,309.27	169,309.27	169,309.27
Homelessness Reduction Act Grant	75,743.84	75,743.84	75,743.84	75,743.84
PCC Locality Deal Funding	29,670.39	29,670.39	29,670.39	29,670.39
EU Exit Preparation	24,968.00	24,968.00	24,968.00	24,968.00
Garden Community Grant	1.06	1.06	1.06	1.06
Eastgate Masterplan	5,309.00	5,309.00	5,309.00	5,309.00
Parks Improvement	153.00	153.00	153.00	153.00
Football Foundation Riverway ATP	8,849.00	8,849.00	8,849.00	8,849.00
Domestic Abuse Accom Duty New Burdens	18,555.00	18,555.00	18,555.00	18,555.00
Test and Trace	30,177.57	30,177.57	30,177.57	30,177.57
Revs and Bens Grants	5,820.00	5,820.00	5,820.00	5,820.00
Council Tax Hardship Fund	59,640.16	59,640.16	59,640.16	59,640.16
Support for Vulnerable Renters	3,425.00	3,425.00	3,425.00	3,425.00
Safety of women at night	144.00	144.00	144.00	144.00
OPCC Safer Streets	4,686.62	4,686.62	4,686.62	4,686.62
Homelessness Prevention Grant 22-23	10,017.50	10,017.50	10,017.50	10,017.50
Domestic Abuse Grant 22 23	10,703.00	10,703.00	10,703.00	10,703.00
Domestic Abuse Grants 23 24	34,593.00	34,593.00	34,593.00	34,593.00
UKSPF Revenue Grant	3.74	3.74	3.74	3.74
Elections Voter accessibility	24,062.00	24,062.00	24,062.00	24,062.00

	01/04/2025	01/04/2026	01/04/2027	01/04/2028
	£	£	£	£
Grants continued				
Council Tax Rebate	188,380.00	188,380.00	188,380.00	188,380.00
Fuel Payment Grant - Dept Energy	36,510.00	36,510.00	36,510.00	36,510.00
RSI 24 25 Grant	131,580.00	-	-	-
Levelling up capacity station gateway	76,000.00	76,000.00	76,000.00	76,000.00
Asylum Grant	50,250.00	50,250.00	50,250.00	50,250.00
	1,408,411.34	1,276,831.34	1,276,831.34	1,276,831.34
Donations				
Loans to Sports Clubs	22,088.09	22,088.09	22,088.09	22,088.09
Grants Sports Clubs	4,488.75	4,488.75	4,488.75	4,488.75
Castle Donations	9,628.00	9,628.00	9,628.00	9,628.00
High House Donations	23,071.81	23,071.81	23,071.81	23,071.81
	59,276.65	59,276.65	59,276.65	59,276.65
Shared Services				
HR Shared Service	139,935.86	139,935.86	139,935.86	139,935.86
IT Shared Service	165,706.46	165,706.46	165,706.46	165,706.46
Legal Shared Service	94,644.93	96,144.93	97,644.93	99,144.93
Shared Services Transformation	365,397.80	365,397.80	365,397.80	365,397.80
	765,685.05	767,185.05	768,685.05	770,185.05
Rolling Programme				
Housing Needs Survey	52,770.00	52,770.00	52,770.00	52,770.00
Elections	93,425.49	132,925.49	172,425.49	211,925.49
	146,195.49	185,695.49	225,195.49	264,695.49
Community				
Home Energy Conservation	31,700.00	31,700.00	31,700.00	31,700.00
Private Sector Housing	12,596.00	12,596.00	12,596.00	12,596.00
Sanctuary	6,009.18	6,009.18	6,009.18	6,009.18
Earned Autonomy Community safety	25,000.00	25,000.00	25,000.00	25,000.00
Empty Homes Officer	7,645.07	15.07	15.07	15.07
DFG Balance of Contribution	864.41	864.41	864.41	864.41
MEES Grant	743.67	743.67	743.67	743.67
Tenancy Sustainment Officer	47,793.07	47,793.07	47,793.07	47,793.07
Housing Options Officer	840.00	840.00	840.00	840.00
Housing Options Officer	91,990.00	91,990.00	91,990.00	91,990.00
Taxi Marshalls	5,381.64	5,381.64	5,381.64	5,381.64
	230,563.04	222,933.04	222,933.04	222,933.04

	01/04/2025	01/04/2026	01/04/2027	01/04/2028
	£	£	£	£
Corporate				
Training	95,920.18	95,920.18	95,920.18	95,920.18
Budget support	2,412,100.43	3,162,100.43	3,912,100.43	4,662,100.43
Climate Change	274,228.00	274,228.00	274,228.00	274,228.00
Business Initiative	500,000.00	500,000.00	500,000.00	500,000.00
Provision for Future Maintenance	43,129.84	43,129.84	43,129.84	43,129.84
Pensions Reserve	341,039.70	249,039.70	157,039.70	65,039.70
Covid 19 Reallocation	1,136,921.81	1,136,921.81	1,136,921.81	1,136,921.81
Corporate Pot	433,457.68	433,457.68	433,457.68	433,457.68
Anchor Org for Clinically Vulnerable	148.29	148.29	148.29	148.29
Building Maintenance	36,349.98	36,349.98	36,349.98	36,349.98
Unpresented cheques pre 2021-22	250,379.11	250,379.11	250,379.11	250,379.11
Contracts reserve	1,134,356.27	1,434,356.27	1,434,356.27	1,434,356.27
Partnerships FPN Income	2,385.31	2,385.31	2,385.31	2,385.31
Partnerships Contrib to Shared				
Community Dev Post	27,140.00	27,140.00	27,140.00	27,140.00
Asset valuation	200,000.00	200,000.00	200,000.00	200,000.00
SAC interest	200,000.00	200,000.00	200,000.00	200,000.00
IT Reserve	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
	7,087,560.60	8,045,560.60	8,703,560.60	9,361,560.60
Environment				
Streetscene Transformation	82,750.00	110,100.00	137,450.00	164,800.00
CAMEO - emissions trading scheme	57,767.67	57,767.67	57,767.67	57,767.67
Stewardship Rural Payments Agency	25,773.60	25,773.60	25,773.60	25,773.60
Cremator Maintenance Plan	80,453.40	80,453.40	80,453.40	80,453.40
Environmental Fines	11,516.27	11,516.27	11,516.27	11,516.27
Streetscene Trading	117,602.84	117,602.84	117,602.84	117,602.84
Taxi Licences	63,911.62	63,911.62	63,911.62	63,911.62
Operations Project Management	1,530.62	1,530.62	1,530.62	1,530.62
Strategic Health Delivery Ctrb to Reserve	29,411.81	29,411.81	29,411.81	29,411.81
New Parking Machines at Freedom Leisure	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50
	470,721.33	498,071.33	525,421.33	552,771.33
Leisure				
Football development fund	12,923.68	20,923.68	28,923.68	36,923.68
HLF Vict Park - equalisation reserve	82,353.39	82,353.39	82,353.39	82,353.39
Freedom Performance Bone	50,000.00	75,000.00	100,000.00	125,000.00
Leisure Management Contract Reserv	548,296.00	548,296.00	548,296.00	548,296.00
Alleyes Dryside Provision	80,000.00	80,000.00	80,000.00	80,000.00
Vic Park Cafe and Area Hire	23,101.63	23,101.63	23,101.63	23,101.63
Tourism	4,524.75	4,524.75	4,524.75	4,524.75
	801,199.45	834,199.45	867,199.45	900,199.45

	01/04/2025	01/04/2026	01/04/2027	01/04/2028
	£	£	£	£
Planning				
LDF	277,839.33	- 0.00	- 0.00	- 0.00
CIL Reserve	- 20,250.00	- 20,250.00	- 20,250.00	- 20,250.00
Dev Mgmt. Equalisation	23,833.76	23,833.76	23,833.76	23,833.76
20% Planning Increase	195,507.69	325,507.69	455,507.69	585,507.69
Stafford TC Strategic Review	71,763.00	71,763.00	71,763.00	71,763.00
Station Gateway	17,280.13	17,280.13	17,280.13	17,280.13
Economic Growth Strategy	80,000.00	80,000.00	80,000.00	80,000.00
Stone Leisure Revenue Funding	59,213.10	59,213.10	59,213.10	59,213.10
	705,187.01	557,347.68	687,347.68	817,347.68
Resources				
Health & Safety	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00
HR future shared service development	53,887.64	53,887.64	53,887.64	53,887.64
Localisation of Council Tax Support	187,992.63	151,632.63	115,272.63	78,912.63
R12 Employee Survey Outcomes	20,000.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	20,000.00
R13 Organisation Development Plan	60,000.00	60,000.00	60,000.00	60,000.00
Mayoral Afternoon Tea	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00
Property Maintenance	9,340.00	9,340.00	9,340.00	9,340.00
Council tax support new burdens	12,233.00	12,233.00	12,233.00	12,233.00
	361,453.27	325,093.27	288,733.27	252,373.27
Section 106				
Section 106 commuted sums	1,229,839.78	1,229,839.78	1,229,839.78	1,229,839.78
Cannock SAC contributions	308,247.37	308,247.37	308,247.37	308,247.37
S106 swimming pool	408,810.75	408,810.75	408,810.75	408,810.75
S106 Sports cts/hall	339,887.86	339,887.86	339,887.86	339,887.86
S106 Artificial Turf	61,889.40	61,889.40	61,889.40	61,889.40
Cannock SAC Partnership	1,148,198.59	1,095,188.59	1,041,088.59	1,017,558.59
Biodiversity Contributions S106	25,500.00	25,500.00	25,500.00	25,500.00
S106 Bowling Green Contribution	1,186.51	1,186.51	1,186.51	1,186.51
	3,523,560.26	3,470,550.26	3,416,450.26	3,392,920.26
Revenue	24,046,340.47	25,023,311.14	24,919,641.14	23,232,931.14
Capital Programme Funding				
RCCO GF	638,869.65	869.65	71,869.65	38,869.65
Investment Reserve	6,700,000.00	7,993,000.00	7,993,000.00	8,100,000.00
Revenue Surplus	23,209.17	17,209.17	17,209.17	17,209.17
Invest to Save	8,413.69	8,413.69	8,413.69	8,413.69
Budget support	15,961.00	15,961.00	15,961.00	15,961.00
New Homes Bonus	879,405.64	879,405.64	879,405.64	163,405.64
VAT Shelter	126,562.10	126,562.10	126,562.10	25,562.10
	8,392,421.25	9,041,421.25	9,112,421.25	8,369,421.25
Rollovers				
Rollovers 19-20	11,318.10	11,318.10	11,318.10	11,318.10
	11,318.10	11,318.10	11,318.10	11,318.10

	01/04/2025	01/04/2026	01/04/2027	01/04/2028
	£	£	£	£
Capital Contingency				
RCCO HSF/SG	3,788,781.00	3,483,781.00	3,483,781.00	-
Working Balance Transfer	2,549,000.00	-	-	-
New Homes Bonus	782,431.00	431.00	431.00	431.00
Economic Development	912,000.00	912,000.00	912,000.00	912,000.00
Civic Car	460.00	460.00	460.00	460.00
	8,032,672.00	4,396,672.00	4,396,672.00	912,891.00
Capital Sinking Fund				
Cremator Sinking Fund	850,000.00	900,000.00	950,000.00	1,000,000.00
Pest Control Vehicles	16,000.00	32,400.00	48,800.00	65,200.00
Sweepers Sinking Fund	695,999.00	186,999.00	256,999.00	326,999.00
Rowley Park 3G Pitch Sinking Fund	180,000.00	195,000.00	210,000.00	225,000.00
Riverway	175,000.00	200,000.00	225,000.00	250,000.00
Victoria Park Safety	80,000.00	80,000.00	80,000.00	80,000.00
Tenterbanks CP Bud B	35,780.00	35,780.00	35,780.00	35,780.00
CRM replacement reserve	74,162.50	74,162.50	74,162.50	74,162.50
	2,106,941.50	1,704,341.50	1,880,741.50	2,057,141.50
Capital	18,543,352.85	15,153,752.85	15,401,152.85	11,350,771.85
Earmarked	42,589,693.32	40,177,063.99	40,320,793.99	34,583,702.99

Band Equivalents

Parish	Tax Base Post LCTS 2025-26
Adbaston	227.04
Barlaston	1,040.08
Berkswich	793.14
Bradley	230.05
Brocton	542.38
Chebsey	249.49
Church Eaton	293.83
Colwich	1,890.59
Creswell	877.81
Doxey	904.25
Eccleshall	2,156.93
Ellenhall	65.59
Forton	142.87
Fradswell	84.27
Fulford	2,285.54
Gayton	86.22
Gnosall	2,011.82
Haughton	457.32
High Offley	388.61
Hilderstone	277.43
Hixon	748.78
Hopton and Coton	844.90
Hyde Lea	187.68
Ingestre	84.10
Marston	88.73
Milwich	199.61
Norbury	200.04
Ranton	189.25
Salt and Enson	184.28
Sandon and Burston	171.18
Seighford	769.32
Stafford	19,943.11
Standon	330.03
Stone	6,403.94
Stone Rural	750.96
Stowe-By-Chartley	194.15
Swynnerton	1,361.73
Tixall	130.07

Parish	Tax Base Post LCTS 2025-26
Weston	478.00
Whitgreave	88.55
Yarnfield and Cold Meece	814.38
Subtotal	49,168.05
MOD Class O	466.10
Total	49,634.15

Report of the Chief Finance Officer on the Robustness of the Budget Estimates and the Adequacy of the Council's Reserves

Introduction

Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 places a duty on the Chief Financial Officer (or Section 151 Officer, the Head of Finance) to make a report to the Council on the robustness of budget estimates and the adequacy of the Council's reserves. The Council must have regard to this report when making its decisions about budgets and council tax for the forthcoming year. This is because the Council is setting the council tax before the commencement of the year and cannot increase it during the year. An understanding of the risks of increased expenditure during the year in terms of likelihood and impact is therefore important.

Robustness of Budget Estimates

The Council's budget estimates for 2025-26, including the forecast outturn for 2024-25, have been prepared by appropriately qualified and experienced staff in consultation with service managers. Budgets have been discussed and fully managed by the Leadership Team.

The budget for 2025-26 has been constructed based upon the maintenance of existing level of service, adjusted for known changes in 2024-25. It is considered to accurately reflect likely expenditure in 2025-26, being based on historic information, experience of expenditure in previous years and latest projections where appropriate.

The indicative budgets for 2026-27 and 2027-28 are similarly based upon the best information available at this moment in time.

The full risk assessment of the Council's Budget 2025-26 has been carried out and is included in APPENDIX 7.

The impact of the National Living Wage has been incorporated into the budget. Allowance has also been made for staff incremental progression. Sufficient provision has been built in for current employer pension contributions, in line with the 2023 actuarial valuation.

Inflation on contractor costs has been allowed based on the projected retail/consumer prices index increases and on energy budgets based on anticipated tariff increases as well as specific reviews of particularly high value contracts such as the Freedom Leisure contract. Any differential inflationary uplift as required by contracts has been reflected.

Some fees and charges are budgeted to increase in 2025. Given the demand-led nature of some of the more significant income budgets, such as parking, development control and land charges, prudent but realistic assumptions have been made about estimated income. Major sources of income will continue to be closely monitored throughout the year with a view to protecting overall income to the Council as far as possible.

Net investment income of £1,500k has been included within 2025-26 budgets. This has been based on current projections of bank rate which are anticipated to start to reduce towards the end of 2025-26. Prudent assumptions about cash flow have been made and the advice of the Council's treasury management consultants has been taken into account in determining the average rate of return.

No specific contingency budget is provided in 2025-26 as it is considered that the Council's overall revenue balances are sufficient to act as an overall contingency (see below). However, robust budget monitoring arrangements, including Business Rates monitoring, are in place and will continue throughout the year. In addition to budget monitoring by officers, all Cabinet members will receive a monthly update and there will be quarterly reports to the Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees via "Performance Reports".

Significant expenditure and income budgets will be monitored closely during the year. Any projected variances will be addressed in a timely manner.

The Council has a Risk Management Strategy and has identified its key corporate risks. Significant financial risks will be managed appropriately. In addition, some financial risks will be mitigated by the Council's insurance arrangements.

I can therefore confirm that the budget estimates as presented are robust.

Adequacy of the Council's Reserves

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) has issued guidance on local authority reserves and balances. It sets out three main purposes for which reserves are held:-

- A working balance to help cushion the impact of uneven cash flows and avoid unnecessary temporary borrowing.
- A contingency to cushion the impact of unexpected events or emergencies.
- A means of building up funds to meet known or predicted liabilities, known as earmarked reserves.

The Council is projected to hold total General Fund reserves of £24.046 million at 31 March 2025 and £25.023 million at 31 March 2026. This includes S106 amounts of £3.524 million at 31 March 2025 and £3.471 million as at the 31 March 2026.

The Council also has a planned four-year capital programme which is financially sustainable based on current capital resources and a prudent assessment of future capital resources. The financial strategy includes the use of unallocated reserves and a Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay to supplement capital resources and mitigate any borrowing requirement; nevertheless, Prudential Borrowing to finance the Council's capital programme will be used where there is a robust business case.

The successful Future High Streets Fund bid has enabled the inclusion of the project in the capital programme. At an overall cost of £21.5 million, this project presents a substantial challenge to deliver; but it also presents financial risks. It is essential that costs are controlled and milestones are met, to avoid the prospect of defaulting on

Government requirements, additional borrowing and/or additional revenue contributions.

The quantum of the Future High Streets Fund bid, its financial risks and the future debt repayments on borrowing, coupled with the ongoing additional costs of (in particular) inflation and waste management, represent burdens on the Financial Plan. When combined with the uncertainty of a fundamental Government review of local government finance, the medium term outlook is very challenging. There is no scope over the Financial Plan period for further discretionary projects or expenditure that could have a negative effect on reserves.

The Council has set a policy of a minimum level of general reserves of £1 million. The Budget for 2025-26 has been constructed on the basis that there will be a level of general reserves in excess of £1 million.

I can therefore confirm that the Council's reserves are adequate.

Chris Forrester Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer

Appendix 7

Working Balance - Financial Risks facing the Authority

Risk	Level of risk	Explanation of risk / justification for cover
Inflation	Medium	Inflation has been included in the Financial Plan in accordance with Government policy.
Investment interest	Medium	The amount earned depends on the prevailing interest rates and the level of cash balances held. Prudent assumptions have been made.
National insurance increase	Medium	The increase in national insurance is anticipated to have major implications for businesses and charities in the area. This might increase pressure on council services and may increase pressures in council contract expenses going forwards.
Major income sources:		
• Planning fees	Medium	Dependent on economic conditions.
• Land charges fees	Low	Dependent on the housing market/basis of determining recoverable expenses/proposed transfer to Land Registry.
• Car parking	Medium	Certain amount of volatility based on demand.
• Environmental services	Low	Licensing income dependent on renewals.
• Bereavement services	Low	Some risk as it is a major source of income. For example, should new entrants cause a reduction in income this would be a challenge to the service.
• Spending pressures:		
Waste and recycling	Medium	There is significant uncertainty with regards to waste and recycling moving forwards. The introduction of food waste collection has a significant potential impact on council budgets which is unclear at present.
• Leisure management	Medium	Result of the changing habits of residents in the area post covid and the need to attract them back to using facilities. Energy costs remain high and there are new budget entrants to the market. Future leisure contract procurement will coincide with local government reorganisation causing uncertainty in the market.
• Levelling Up	High	The Future High Streets Fund and LUF station gateway schemes represent major investment programmes over a number of years with substantial Council contributions. It includes obligations to

Risk	Level of risk	Explanation of risk / justification for cover
		Government, requires engagement of partners and carries high expectations locally. It therefore represents a major financial risk.
Funding Sources:		
New Homes Bonus	High	The scheme is likely to come to an end, but it is unclear how these monies will be allocated to councils going forwards, if at all.
Business Rates Scheme and Resets	Very High	A reset of growth achieved under the current system is going to take place in the middle of the current medium term financial plan. How the reset is implemented could have material implications. A reserve has been created to mitigate the risk.
Volatility in Business Rates	High	The Council will be exposed to volatility or reduction in its business rates due to the failure or temporary closure of a key businesses and successful backdated appeals against Rateable Values. Greater control of Business Rates gives councils greater freedoms and removes dependency on central funding, but it passes on a greater risk to core funding if Business Rates income falls.
Funding settlements from central government	High	With central government only awarding one year settlements it makes ongoing funding uncertain for the council. Reserves have been created where appropriate and possible to mitigate potential reductions in central government funding. There are proposals to move to multi year settlements but it is unclear what this will look like in practice as yet.
Local Government Reorganisation:		
Recruitment	High	The plans by central government to effectively end the current local government structures and replace them with new much larger councils will have major impacts on the sector. The council was already experiencing difficulties with recruitment and retention but this move will create even more difficulty in the sector as people are less likely to be willing to join organisations which are planned to be wound up. This is in turn likely to result in higher use of consultants to fill vacancies and increase costs. It

Risk	Level of risk	Explanation of risk / justification for cover
		may also harm the retention of staff as they look to move to roles with greater long term certainty in other organisations or sectors.
Enacting the changes	High	The move to new local government structures will require large amounts of investment, both staffing time and financial investment. This is currently not budgeted for due to lack of detail on the proposals beyond a targeted end result. (much larger and fewer councils and the creation of new strategic authorities overlying them with Mayors)

Agenda Item 7(b)**Fees and Charges Review 2025/2026**

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	23 January 2025
Report of:	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources)
Portfolio:	Resources Portfolio

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to propose to the Council the Fees and Charges for 2025.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the proposed Fees and Charges for 2024 be recommended to Council for approval, specifically the new charges in paragraph 5.10 and the increases above 3.4% in **APPENDIX 1**.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.2 The report sets out the proposed changes to Fees and Charges for 2024. In accordance with the revised financial regulations agreed by Council on the 16 September 2019 the following items are included:
- Where a new charge has been introduced.
 - The proposed increase is above the annual level of inflation.
 - Where the power to set fees and charges has been specifically reserved by the Council.
- 2.3 In addition, this report includes those fees and charges where no increase is proposed from 1 April 2025, for noting.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 The setting of fees and charges is an important part of the annual budget setting process. For October 2024 inflation is running at 3.2% CPIH and 3.4% RPI.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 This report supports all of the Council's Corporate Priorities.

5 Report Detail

- 5.1 The proposed charges will have a direct impact on the 2025-26 budget and beyond. Decisions that relate to next year's budget and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (2025-28) should be taken in the context of the Council's overall financial position and an analysis of any available data that can inform the direction of the Council's financial strategy.
- 5.2 There is no certainty on what the financial landscape will be moving forwards. In addition, the government has indicated that it is going to review business rates with a planned reset, fairer funding reforms and new homes bonus, starting early in the spring of 2025. This adds further uncertainty about the financial position of the council moving forwards.
- 5.3 Apart from the risks regarding future Government support to local government, the council is facing increasing financial pressures from existing service delivery. It is also unclear at present what the impact of the increase in national insurance and minimum wage will have on partners providing services on behalf of the council. Essential services will continue to be in great demand, and benefits and debt defaults may increase as businesses take into account the increased costs that they face. Costs, including in respect of pay, supplies and contractors, are all likely to rise. The scope for the Council to increase income in proportion to inflation is limited: we have no control over Business Rates and Council Tax is effectively capped at the higher of 2.99% or £5.
- 5.4 The size of the projected budget gap should be considered when making discretionary decisions over income and expenditure. Put simply, the higher the yield from fees and charges, the smaller the budget gap, which reduces the need to find savings elsewhere. This needs to be balanced by the diminishing returns - in general, the higher the charge for a service, the lower the demand. Also, relatively high charges can have secondary impacts: they may exclude or discourage some customers from using Council services who would normally depend on such services; and they may have an adverse impact on the local economy.

- 5.5 The process for setting fees and charges reflects the revised financial regulations as agreed by Council on 16 September 2019. This set out the criteria for fees and charges which would be reported to Cabinet and Council for approval as follows:
- Where a new charge has been introduced.
 - The proposed increase is above the annual level of inflation.
 - Where the power to set fees and charges has been specifically reserved by the Council.
- 5.6 There has also been a change in process for this cycle that the fees and charges changes are now effective from the 1 April rather than the 1 January. This brings them into line with the budget setting cycle.
- 5.7 For 2025/26, inflation - as defined in financial regulations - is the Retail Prices Index, which currently stands at 3.4%. However, in general, where officers have delegated authority, charges will rise by approximately 3%, allowing for rounding.
- 5.8 Certain fees are set by reference to external bodies or set by legislation/regulations. These are included in the full list of published fees and charges but are not referred to in this report.
- 5.9 Fees and charges are also set after bearing in mind market conditions. As a result, some charges where the Council has the power to vary them will not rise, the most significant of which are:
- Taxi licence fees are subject to a separate review and require consultation.
- 5.10 Charges for new services are as set out below.
- Crematorium token amount of cremated remains £5.00
 - Cemeteries shoring timber for grave excavation £225.00
- 5.11 There are some fees proposed to be deleted.
- Private water supply cost recovery basis, will change to full cost incurred unless otherwise stated in regulations
 - Crematorium babytainers / bags - no longer use these in the service
 - St Johns Market - no longer operational
- 5.12 Proposed increases above the threshold of 3.4% are detailed in **APPENDIX 1**.
- 5.13 A full copy of Fees and Charges will be available on the Members' portal before the Council meeting and will be published on the website once approved by Council.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

Fees and charges are an important source of income to the Council. As costs rise with inflation, if income from fees and charges does not rise proportionately, this will add to the 2025-26 budget gap - the difference between projected expenditure and income.

6.2 Legal

As set out in the report.

6.3 Human Resources

As set out in the report.

6.4 Risk Management

The risk issues contained in this report are not strategic and therefore should not be included in the Strategic Risk Register.

The level of income generated by the Council from fees and charges is a key risk as a number of the Council's main income streams are sensitive to adverse economic conditions and can vary significantly as a result.

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

The Council operates a concessionary fees and charges scheme.

6.6 Health

None

6.7 Climate Change

None

7 Appendices

None

8 Previous Consideration

None

9 Background Papers

File available in Financial Services.

Contact Officer: Emma Fullagar
Telephone Number: 01543 464 720
Ward Interest: Nil
Report Track: Cabinet 23 January 2025 (only)
Key Decision: Yes

APPENDIX 1

Fees and Charges 2025/26 Increases above or below 3.4% rounded inflation

LICENCE FEES	Existing Charge £ - p	VAT	Date Set	Proposed Charge 01-Apr-25 £ - p
Pre-Application Form Checking Service				
Checking of application forms prior to submission for all licence applications	26.50	NB	01/01/2024	40.00
Animal Welfare Regulation Licence				
(Riding Establishments, Animal Boarding Establishments, Dog Breeding and Pet Shops)				
1, 2 or 3 year Licence	200.00	NB	01/01/2024	300.00
Additional Charge after licence is granted	122.00	NB	01/01/2024	150.00
Reinspection	122.00	NB	01/01/2024	150.00
Variation	67.00	NB	01/01/2024	100.00
Exhibition Licence 3 years	145.00	NB	01/01/2024	150.00
Additional Charge after licence is granted	78.00	NB	01/01/2024	100.00
Administration fee for additions/ amendments of licence	11.25	NB	01/01/2024	20.00
Street Trading				
A500 road sites annual fee per site	6,376.00	NB	01/01/2023	3,000.00
STAFFORD CREMATORIUM				
Memorial Seats - Existing Seats Only				
Bench Style				
(a) For a 10 year period	1,300.00	S	01/01/2024	1,360.00
(b) Renewal fee for a further 10 years	650.00	S	01/01/2024	670.00
(c) Additional Plaque	170.00	S	01/01/2024	200.00
Sanctum				
(a) Purchase price	1,000.00	S	01/01/2024	1,200.00
(b) Additional lease per annum	30.00	S	01/01/2024	33.00
(c) Additional inscription per letter	2.50	S	01/01/2024	2.55
(d) Witness placing within	44.50	S	01/01/2024	46.00

PREMISES LICENCE FEES	Existing Charge £ - p	VAT	Date Set	Proposed Charge 01-Apr-25 £ - p
Bingo Club				
Transitional Non Fast-Track Application	1,625.00	NB	01/01/2024	1,750.00
New Application	3,250.00	NB	01/01/2024	3,500.00
Annual Fee	925.00	NB	01/01/2024	1,000.00
Application to Vary	1,625.00	NB	01/01/2024	1,750.00
Application to Transfer	1,110.00	NB	01/01/2024	1,200.00
Application for Re-instatement	1,110.00	NB	01/01/2024	1,200.00
Application for Provisional Statement	3,250.00	NB	01/01/2024	3,500.00
Licence Application-provisional statement holde	1,110.00	NB	01/01/2024	1,200.00
Copy Licence	22.00	NB	01/01/2024	25.00
Notification of Change	46.00	NB	01/01/2024	50.00
Betting Premises (excluding Tracks)				
Transitional Non Fast-Track Application	1,392.50	NB	01/01/2024	1,500.00
New Application	2,785.00	NB	01/01/2024	3,000.00
Annual Fee	555.00	NB	01/01/2024	600.00
Application to Vary	1,392.50	NB	01/01/2024	1,500.00
Application to Transfer	1,110.00	NB	01/01/2024	1,200.00
Application for Re-instatement	1,110.00	NB	01/01/2024	1,200.00
Application for Provisional Statement	2,785.00	NB	01/01/2024	3,000.00
Licence Application-provisional statement holde	1,110.00	NB	01/01/2024	1,200.00
Copy Licence	22.00	NB	01/01/2024	25.00
Notification of Change	46.00	NB	01/01/2024	50.00
Tracks				
Transitional Non Fast-Track Application	1,160.00	NB	01/01/2024	1,250.00
New Application	2,320.00	NB	01/01/2024	2,500.00
Annual Fee	925.00	NB	01/01/2024	1,000.00
Application to Vary	1,160.00	NB	01/01/2024	1,250.00
Application to Transfer	880.00	NB	01/01/2024	950.00
Application for Re-instatement	880.00	NB	01/01/2024	950.00
Application for Provisional Statement	2,320.00	NB	01/01/2024	2,500.00
Licence Application-provisional statement holde	880.00	NB	01/01/2024	950.00
Copy Licence	22.00	NB	01/01/2024	25.00
Notification of Change	46.00	NB	01/01/2024	50.00

PREMISES LICENCE FEES continued	Existing Charge £ - p	VAT	Date Set	Proposed Charge 01-Apr-25 £ - p
Family Entertainment Centres				
Transitional Non Fast-Track Application	925.00	NB	01/01/2024	1,000.00
New Application	1,850.00	NB	01/01/2024	2,000.00
Annual Fee	695.00	NB	01/01/2024	750.00
Application to Vary	925.00	NB	01/01/2024	1,000.00
Application to Transfer	880.00	NB	01/01/2024	950.00
Application for Re-instatement	880.00	NB	01/01/2024	950.00
Application for Provisional Statement	1,850.00	NB	01/01/2024	2,000.00
Licence Application-provisional statement holde	880.00	NB	01/01/2024	950.00
Copy Licence	22.00	NB	01/01/2024	25.00
Notification of Change	46.00	NB	01/01/2024	50.00
Adult Gaming Centres				
Transitional Non Fast-Track Application	925.00	NB	01/01/2024	1,000.00
New Application	1,850.00	NB	01/01/2024	2,000.00
Annual Fee	925.00	NB	01/01/2024	1,000.00
Application to Vary	925.00	NB	01/01/2024	1,000.00
Application to Transfer	1,110.00	NB	01/01/2024	1,200.00
Application for Re-instatement	1,110.00	NB	01/01/2024	1,200.00
Application for Provisional Statement	1,850.00	NB	01/01/2024	2,000.00
Licence Application-provisional statement holde	1,110.00	NB	01/01/2024	1,200.00
Copy Licence	22.00	NB	01/01/2024	25.00
Notification of Change	46.00	NB	01/01/2024	50.00

Agenda Item 7(c)

Constitution Update: Procurement Act 2023

Committee:	Resources Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	21 January 2025
Report of:	Head of Law and Governance
Portfolio:	Resources

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To recommend changes to the Procurement Regulations in the Constitution.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 To recommend to Council that The Procurement Regulations in the Constitution be updated as set out in the **APPENDIX**.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.2 The Procurement Act 2023 comes into force on 24 February 2025 and the Councils internal procurement rules should be updated to reflect the change in law.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 Public Procurement is the process by which public authorities, including the Council, purchase work, goods or services. It is subject to a legal framework designed to encourage free and open competition and value for money.
- 3.2 The Public Contract Regulations 2015 sets out the processes that public authorities are obliged to follow when conducting procurement. These regulations are due to be replaced by the Procurement Act 2023.
- 3.3 The Council's internal Procurement Regulations provide practical advice to officers on how to conduct procurement exercises so that they comply with applicable laws and achieve value for money. With the change in legislation, the internal regulations need updating to reflect the new provisions.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 CBO 4: ensuring services have up to date procurement processes in place

5 Report Detail

- 5.1 On 24 February 2025, the Procurement Act 2023 (“the Act”) will replace the Public Contract Regulations 2015. The legislation set out the procedures that public authorities need to follow when conducting public procurement exercises. The Council’s internal Procurement Regulations will need updating to reflect this change in law.

- 5.2 Full details of the proposed revised regulations can be found in the **APPENDIX**. Revisions include:

Replacing reference to EU Treaty Principles with new key principles set out in the Act. The Council must have regard to these principles when conducting procurement.

Clarifying that public procurement thresholds are now set nationally rather than by the EU.

Reference to the new Central Digital Platform that has been produced by the Cabinet Office to advertise procurement opportunities and information on new notices that will need to be published as part of a procurement process.

Reference to the National Procurement Policy Statement that the Council will need to have regard to.

Adds a specific requirement for officers to consider the impact of a procurement on climate change as part of considering commissioning of the procurement.

Clarifies that shared service agreements between the Council and another public authority would not be classed as procurement.

Clarifies that tenders should now be evaluated on the basis of “Most Advantageous Tender” rather than “Most Economically Advantageous Tender” - confirming that importance can be placed upon considerations other than cost where appropriate.

Removes reference to “competitive dialogue” and “competitive procedure with negotiation” (which were specific procedures prescribed under the previous legislation) and refers to the ability of the Council to choose its own competitive procedures going forward.

Clarifies that the value of contracts should be calculated inclusive of VAT when looking at thresholds within the Act (the threshold for Medium Value Transactions is therefore changed from £25k (excluding VAT) to £30k

(inclusive of VAT), to align with the threshold for when contracts become “notifiable below-threshold contracts” under the Act, and the threshold for High Value Transactions is changed from £50k (excluding VAT) to £60k (including VAT).

Clarifies that standstill periods, between a notice of intention to award a contract and the award of the contract, can now be reduced to 8 working days.

- 5.3 It is important that the Councils internal rules accord with the latest national legislation. The existing rules are set out in the Procurement Regulations within the Council’s Constitution. Part 2, Article 15 of the Constitution, states that changes to the Constitution will only be approved by the full Council after consideration of a recommendation from the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.
- 5.4 It should be noted that the new Act will apply to all procurement processes that commence on or after 24 February 2025. Where contracts have been advertised or directly awarded before that date, regard will still need to be had to the previous legislation.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

Nil

6.2 Legal

The Councils internal rules on procurement should be amended to reflect the provisions of the Procurement Act 2023.

6.3 Human Resources

Nil

6.4 Risk Management

Failure to update internal rules may result in using outdated procedures and failure to comply with legal obligations. In this case, non-compliance could lead to a risk of contract awards being challenged in court by unsuccessful bidders.

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

Nil

6.6 Health

Nil

6.7 Climate Change

Nil

7 Appendices

Appendix 1: Procurement Regulations

8 Previous Consideration

None

9 Background Papers

None

Contact Officer: Ian Curran

Telephone Number: 220

Ward Interest: Nil

Report Track: Resources 21 January 2025, Council 11 February 2025

Key Decision: N/A

Section 9

Procurement Regulations

Contents

Section Number	Section Title
	Glossary
	Summary of Options Available for the Procurement Process
1	Introduction
2	Context
3	Before We Start
4	Commissioning the Procurement
5	How We Buy The Goods And Services We Need
6	Quotations Process
7	Tendering Process
8	Framework Agreements
9	Concession Contracts
10	Conditions Of Contract
11	Changes to Contracts
12	Exceptions From The Regulations

Glossary of terms

Term	Definition / Explanation
Chief Officer	This means all Members of Leadership Team
Central Digital Platform	This is the online central system provided by the Cabinet Office for the publication of notices, documents and other information in relation to the Procurement Act 2023. It is used by the public sector to advertise and bid for procurement opportunities.
Consortium	An association of several business organisations who are legally bound together to work towards a commonly held aim. Or, it can mean two or more economic operators.
Contract	Any agreement where we agree to carry out or to buy or sell any goods, work, services or utilities for payment or otherwise.
Contract Lots	A contract may be split into discrete aspects (lots) which tenderers may bid for separately or combined, as specified in the tender.
Crown Commercial Services	This is the central procurement service run by HM Government for the public sector. The website address is ccs.cabinetoffice.gov.uk. This will allow you access to Framework Agreements, Catalogues, etc
Electronic procurement and e-tendering	The use of bespoke procurement software products. E-tendering systems allow all aspects of the tendering process to be carried out electronically including the despatch of tender documents, receipt of and responding to clarification questions and return of completed tenders. You can take advantage of reduced minimum time periods for above-threshold procurements when you use electronic procurement. You can get advice and guidance on this from a procurement advisor.

Term	Definition / Explanation
Procurement Act	The Public Procurement Act 2023, and any regulations made thereunder, together with relevant EU directives, case law and guidance issued.
Framework agreement	An agreement or other arrangement which sets the terms (in particular the price and, where appropriate, quality) under which the provider will enter into one or more contracts or a series of contracts with us. This may also be referred to as a call-off contract, a continuous contract or a standing offer.
National Procurement Policy Statement	The statement published by the government in accordance with section 13 of the Procurement Act: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/663c9bbd1834d96a0aa6d314/E03126162 - Un Act - National Procurement Policy Statement V2 Elay.pdf
Open procedure	This means an advert will be placed and the tender will be open to anyone who shows an interest. An open procedure is always a single stage procurement exercise.
Procurement Advisor	This will be the Head of Transformation and Assurance or staff from Staffordshire County Council or any other organisation providing professional support to the delivery of procurement exercises
Public organisation	Any organisation which may award a public contract under the Procurement Act.
Public services contract	One under which we employ a person or other legal entity to provide services.
Public Supply contract	A contract to buy goods (not land or the product of an activity); or hire goods, whether or not we install them.
Public Works Contract	A contract for carrying out work under which we employ a person or other legal entity to do the work. Works are defined as including: • building and civil engineering work; • installing, for example, heating and electrical equipment or ICT equipment; • carrying out work such as tiling and papering; and • maintaining buildings.

Term	Definition / Explanation
	We may also treat the following activities as a contract for work: • A contract where we employ a provider to act as our agent when letting works contracts. An agreement where a developer constructs a building on their own land (according to our needs) and then transfers the land and structure to us at a later date.
Signing a contract	A contract includes arrangements for formally accepting a tender. Contracts can only be awarded and signed/sealed by Authorised Officers. A purchase order will in effect be the contract for lower value purchases and so the rules for signing a contract will apply. See 10.5 for more details
Standstill period	The period of time between giving notice of our plan to award the contract and the confirmation of the award of the contract which is needed under the Procurement Act. This gives unsuccessful companies the chance to ask for a debriefing and to challenge an award of a contract.
Tendering	A formal procedure for getting written offers (tenders) for supply.
Third sector	Non-governmental organisations that are driven by value and which mainly reinvest any profit to further social, environmental or cultural aims. The sector includes voluntary and community organisations, charities, social enterprises, faith groups, housing associations and co-operatives and mutuals.
Value for money	This is not the lowest price but the best combination of whole-life costs and quality to meet users' needs. You should always assess value for money over the whole life of the contract and you should take into account all costs and benefits to society as a whole including the environmental and social benefits and costs, not just those directly relevant to us. (OGC 2008).

Summary of Options Available for the Procurement Process

Category	Value	Process
Minimal value transactions	Up to £1,000	No requirement to obtain written quotations but still have a duty to obtain value for money
Low Value transactions	From £1,000 up to £10,000	Two written / evidenced quotations must be obtained. This can be done by undertaking price comparisons on websites e.g. for goods.
Intermediate Value Transactions	From £10,000 up to £30,000	Three written quotations must be obtained. Alternatively an existing framework agreement can be used.
Medium Value Transactions	Over £30,000 and up to £60,000	Quotes obtained through formal process, where providers must comply with a specification. Alternatively an existing framework agreement can be used. The opportunity must be advertised on the Central Digital Platform by publishing a below-threshold tender notice. For services, a contract should be issued, rather than relying on the general terms and conditions included in a purchase order
High Value transactions	Over £60,000 and up to the Procurement Thresholds	A tendering process should be followed, with support from a Procurement Advisor. Alternatively it may be agreed that a framework agreement can be used. The opportunity must be advertised on the Central Digital Platform by publishing a below-threshold tender notice. Consideration should also be given to advertising in an appropriate trade/professional journal

Category	Value	Process
Procurement Threshold transactions	Goods, Services and Works over the threshold amounts set out in the Procurement Act 2023, and/or regulations made thereunder: Goods and Services - £213,477; Works - £5,336,937 Light Touch - £663,540	Special rules apply – speak to a Procurement Advisor

1 Introduction

- 1.1 These regulations are part of our constitution and are our procedural regulations for buying items for the Council (the Regulations). They do not apply to buying items or services from within the Council. Where services such as printing and graphic design are provided internally, these services should be used unless agreement is reached with the internal service that a particular piece of work needs to be sourced externally.
- 1.2 These regulations apply to all contracts for goods, services or works for us, or which we provide, and the award of any Concession, unless paragraphs 1.5 and 1.6 apply or you have a valid waiver under regulation 12 (section headed 'Exceptions from the regulations').
- 1.3 The regulations apply to any contract that result in us making a payment and some types of contract where a service is being provided for us which results in some income being generated for us.
- 1.4 The regulations also apply if we are acting as the lead organisation in partnership or other joint arrangement or if we appoint a subcontractor in connection with any contract.
- 1.5 The regulations do not cover grants which we may receive or make.
- 1.6 The regulations do not apply to:
 - contracts of employment;
 - Investment transactions placed by the Section 151 Officer for treasury management;
 - contracts placed by the Council Solicitor for external legal services; and
 - contracts relating to interest in land (also known as property) - this primarily relates to the purchase and disposal of land;
 - contracts relating to selling or otherwise disposing of our assets.
 - Sharing services with another contracting authority in the public interest
- 1.7 If you are in any doubt about whether the regulations apply, you must always check with the Head of Transformation and Assurance or the Head of Law and Governance.
- 1.8 Our 'best value duty' is very important. It means that we must always consider how each procurement meets our duty to secure continuous improvement in what we do after taking account of economy, efficiency, effectiveness and outcomes. As a result, we need to question whether we should be buying anything at all and, if we do, whether we can buy it best ourselves or jointly, or if we should rely on someone else to get better value.

- 1.12 The regulations have three main aims. These are to:
- keep to the obligations that govern spending public money, such as the Procurement Act;
 - get best value in the way we spend money, so that we may in turn offer better and more cost-effective services to the public; and
 - protect people who follow the regulations.
- 1.13 These regulations may be waived if the Monitoring Officer, the s151 Officer or the Head of Transformation and Assurance decides:
- you are buying something jointly with one or more public organisations and you are following their procurement processes;
 - a contract or subcontract which is governed by nationally negotiated conditions of contract from one or more professional institutions, for example Institute of Civil Engineers (ICE) building contracts and any condition of these regulations, does not match a condition in those conditions of contract; and
 - we are working in line with procurement regulations entering into a framework agreement negotiated by another public organisation.
- 1.14 **These regulations must be complied with by all employees involved in the procurement of goods, services or works. Failure to comply may result in Disciplinary action.**
- 1.15 Any interim contractor or consultant who is responsible to us for preparing or supervising a contract on our behalf must do the following. They must:
- keep to these regulations as though they were an employee , though the procedure for inviting, opening and accepting tenders will need to be agreed with the Head of Law and Governance or the Head of Transformation and Assurance.
 - produce all the records they keep in relation to the contract, if requested by the Council; and
 - at the end of a contract, send all records, documents and so on relating to the contract to the Chief Officer concerned and
 - always deal with the ownership of intellectual property rights, generally these should belong to the council
- 1.16 An employee will not, without approval from the Section 151 Officer, enter into a contract for supplying goods or services under any operating or finance lease, rental or any other credit arrangements.

2 Context

- 2.1 The UK has signed up to the World Trade Organisations Agreement on Government Procurement and is committed to compliance with its principles of fairness, impartiality, transparency and non-discrimination. The Procurement Act sets down what obligations are placed on us when we are buying.
- 2.2 The Procurement Act sets out a number of key principles that we must have regard to in carrying out procurement:
- Deliver value for money,
 - Maximise public benefit,
 - Be transparent in our procurement activities,
 - Act with integrity
 - Equal treatment and non-discrimination of suppliers,
 - Have regard to the fact that small and medium-sized enterprises may face particular barriers to participation, and consider whether such barriers can be removed or reduced.
- 2.3 In addition, the government publishes a National Procurement Policy Statement setting out the strategic priorities that all contracting authorities must have regard to when exercising any procurement activities.
- 2.4 We all now need to think about the way we arrange this, for example, e-auctions, e-tendering, or setting up a framework or placing a supply contract. More and more, councils are working collaboratively through joint procurements (in other words, buying the goods and services you need with another department or another council or councils and sometimes other public organisations).
- 2.5 If you are buying larger or expensive goods, work or services, remember that the regulations for higher value orders and contracts are stricter than for those of lower value. This is so that the benefits of a more thorough, complicated process are not outweighed by the price compared to the value of the goods, work or services in question.
- 2.6 At the highest end of the value scale, we **must** follow full procedures set out in the Procurement Act. In these cases, you **must** consult a Procurement Advisor before you start buying what you need.

3 Before we start

Before you buy goods and services

3.1 You must ensure that you have:

- (i) the appropriate authority to procure goods and services, especially for those over £60,000. Authority may come from the Council's Scheme of Delegations or a specific Cabinet or Council decision; and
- (ii) Sufficient revenue and/or capital budget to fund the purchase (please refer to the Council's Financial Regulations).

3.2 You will need to determine the value of the contract early in the process as this will affect the procurement route that you will need to follow. The value of a contract means the estimated total value over the length of time it will apply, including any extension options (**not the yearly value**). The contract values referred to within these regulations are inclusive of any VAT payable unless stated otherwise.

- If the contract is for buying a single item, which is not related to buying other items, the contract is worth the price, or estimated price, referred to in that contract.
- If the contract is for buying a related group of items, the contract is worth the total price, or estimated total price, of the group.
- If there is no set length of time for the contract, this is the estimated value of the contract over a period of four years.
- You should not split contracts to avoid the values, either by item or length. This is particularly relevant for invoice/purchase led expenditure which over time becomes a Contract, i.e. regular purchases of similar items over a period of time. There are however circumstances where it is appropriate to split a contract into "lots".

3.3 Before starting a procurement process, you need to make sure that you have carefully identified the need and fully assessed the options for meeting it, i.e. think carefully about what you are commissioning and how best to do this. Before you start, you **must** consider the following:

- Is there a clear business need, supported by appropriate evidence and a budget in place?
- Can you buy what you need with another service or another council? If you think you could save us money or achieve other advantages if you bought what you need with someone else, consider whether there is an existing framework arrangement, in-house provider or contract you can use. This framework or contract could be one we have already set up or one set up by another council or joint-purchasing organisation or run centrally by the Government (such as Crown Commercial Services).

- Is there some kind of recognised purchasing group in place (often referred to as a buying consortium) where members can use the purchasing arrangements to buy goods or services? If there is a group in place, you do not have to keep to these regulations. However, you can only buy the goods or services that are covered by the group arrangements. If the goods or services are outside the scope of the group arrangements, you must use some other method of procurement in line with these regulations. A Procurement Advisor can give you more advice on this.

You need to be able to evidence that you have fully considered what you need to buy, why and how this is to be done. It is essential that you produce and maintain comprehensive records of all decision-making throughout the procurement of the contract and retain such records for at least 3 years from the date the contract is entered into.

- 3.4 If after considering other buying solutions you are going to use a joint procurement with another council, the relevant Chief Officer in consultation with the Head of Law and Governance or the Head of Transformation and Assurance may determine that the procurement regulations for another public authority should be followed rather than these regulations.
- 3.5 If you decide that you or your partners are likely to need to buy the goods or services again in the future, it may be that the best way to buy them is by setting up a framework agreement. A framework agreement allows a number of providers to sell you the goods, work or services you need when you need them. There are many types of contracts which will be suited to a framework agreement and it is important that you agree this with a Procurement Advisor before you start to make sure that the type of contract being used is most suitable.

Purchase of ICT hardware, software and services

- 3.6 If you are planning to buy any ICT hardware, software or services, you must consult the Technology Services Manager to make sure that the procurement is compliant with the Council's ICT policy/strategy and existing software or equipment where relevant.

Employment issues and TUPE (Transfer of Undertaking Protection of Employment Regulations)

- 3.7 Entering into new contractual arrangements or changing existing contractual arrangements can give rise to TUPE implications. It is not always obvious that there are TUPE implications (for example, when a contract with another supplier comes to an end and is to be put out to tender again). So, **if in any doubt, you must get the** advice of an HR or Legal specialist to make sure that any relevant TUPE arrangements are in place.

- 3.8 Where it has been decided that goods, work or services should be bought from an external source, you **must** consider the effects this may have on the existing in-house team and the possibility of staff transferring to the new provider under TUPE.
- 3.9 These contracts **must** contain conditions to make sure appropriate workforce (and other) information will be made available in enough time when that contract is due to end to make sure that we can fulfil TUPE obligations.
- 3.10 TUPE situations will almost always give rise to pensions issues.

HR will support you in getting the advice you need on this from the Pensions Section. You will need an actuarial statement on pension information for any proposed TUPE transfers. HR will arrange to get this from the Pensions Section. It is the responsibility of the person managing the tender process to liaise with HR on TUPE matters.

Making sure we keep to law and policies

- 3.11 When making or proposing a contract on our behalf, the procuring officer will:
- keep to all relevant legal requirements including Procurement Act, relevant health and safety, environmental and equalities, diversity and discrimination law;
 - keep to these regulations; and
 - keep to our financial regulations.

Honesty and conflicts of interest

- 3.12 Every officer who takes any decision or has any influence about a contract must keep to our code of conduct for employees and must comply with the Bribery Act 2010. They must also complete and sign the Declaration of Interest and Confidentiality document.
- 3.13 Every officer who has a financial interest in a contract must advise their Head of Service and contact the Monitoring Officer who will make a record in a book we will keep for the purpose, under Section 117 of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 3.14 You should not accept any gifts or hospitality from anyone tendering for a contract we are leading on or from any current supplier. If you do, this may be a disciplinary offence. You **must** tell the Monitoring Officer if you are dealing with a contract for the Council and have been offered such a gift or hospitality and advise your Head of Service. Further details on Gifts and Hospitality can be found in the Employee's Code of Conduct.

4 Commissioning the Procurement

Defining the Need

- 4.1 At the least, you **must** clearly and carefully:
- (i) specify the goods, work or services to be supplied;
 - (ii) the agreed programme for delivery;
 - (iii) the terms for payment together with all other terms and conditions; and
 - (iv) ensure that you will have the funds in the budget to pay for them.
- 4.2 This means you **must** decide before beginning the procurement process the size, scope, and specification of the goods, work or services needed. If you are buying with someone else, you **must** decide this scope with your partners first.
- 4.3 When identifying and defining the need, you should make sure you have involved an appropriate wider range of organisations relevant to the goods, work or services to be supplied. By knowing the market and encouraging a wider supply base, you have more chance to find the right providers and achieve the right services at the right price.

Procurement strategy

- 4.4 Once you have decided on the need, you **must** decide on a strategy for buying the goods, work or services.
- 4.5 This means taking a step back from the traditional procurement process and assessing the purchasing options particularly when purchasing services. For example, using a grant may be appropriate for a highly specialised service, if you know there is only one provider, or a very few suspected providers, or the project is of a low financial value. This is because it would not make financial sense for one specialist provider to go through a full tendering process.
- 4.6 You **must** consider options for delivering goods, work or services. The options for goods, works or services are:
- not buying the goods, having the work done or providing the services at all;
 - providing the goods, work or services ourselves (i.e. appropriate use of in-house support services e.g. printing and design work);
 - getting someone else to provide the ongoing goods, work or service (using the 'third sector' or another local authority or public organisation); or
 - providing the goods, work or services with someone else (the private or 'third' sector or another local authority or public organisation).

- 4.7 Once you have established this, you will then need to consider the most appropriate procurement route; this will largely be determined by the value of the procurement and the options for this are set out in section 5.
- 4.8 If you are in any doubt about the above, you should get advice from a Procurement Advisor.
- 4.9 As part of the commissioning of the procurement, you will also need to consider what else is important to the Council in this procurement. The two key issues are:

Social Value - do you just need the goods, work or services? Or are there other things you want to bring about (for example, improved environmental performance, new jobs) or added social value. In certain cases the procurement process can help achieve this wider social value by meeting a particular social, environmental or economic aim. In respect of public service contracts, the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 requires you to consider how your proposal might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the Council's area, and how the contract might secure that improvement.

Climate Change - consider the impact of what you are purchasing has on the environment and whether anything can be done to contribute towards the Council's ambition to reduce our impact on climate change. This could include:

- (a) identifying opportunities for reducing emissions that contribute to climate change and poor air quality. This includes sourcing of low or zero carbon energy wherever possible and phasing out the use of fossil fuels from our fleets, and transitioning to zero or low emission vehicles.
 - (b) the application of relevant environmental and sustainability standards to support minimising the ecological harm caused by chemicals such as herbicides.
 - (c) encouraging suppliers to adopt processes and procedures to reduce their environmental impact including the volume and type of packaging used for the delivery of goods.
- 4.10 You should include references to these issues in your specification and evaluation model as appropriate.

5 How we buy the goods and services we need

- 5.1 Choosing the procurement route to be followed is largely dependent on the value of the contract. The options are outlined in the table at the beginning of these Regulations and are summarised below:

Category	Value	Process
Minimal value transactions	Below £1,000	No quotations required
Low value transactions	£1,000 up to £10,000	2 written quotations required
Intermediate value transactions	£10,000 up to £30,000	3 written quotations required
Medium value transactions	£30,000 up to £60,000	quotations to be obtained via a formal process. Sections 84 to 88 of the Procurement Act apply.
High value transactions	£60,000 and up to the Procurement Thresholds	Tendering process in accordance with these Regulations and sections 84 to 88 of the Procurement Act.
Above Procurement Threshold transactions	Check current Procurement Thresholds	Tendering process required in accordance with the Procurement Act

- 5.2 Framework agreements may be used instead of obtaining quotations or tendering for goods, works and services.
- 5.3 Details on each of these processes is explained in more detail in the sections on Quotations (section 6) and Tenders (section 7).
- 5.4 If you need to purchase goods or services urgently and do not have sufficient time to follow the relevant process, please refer to the Section on Exceptions (section 12).

6 Quotations Process

Minimal Value Transactions (below £1,000)

- 6.1 For transactions valued below £1,000 (not including VAT), you still have a duty to ensure best value in terms of economy, efficiency and effectiveness is obtained. There is no specific requirement to obtain alternative quotations but if you think that the first quotation you obtain is expensive then you should consider obtaining at least one further quotation.

Low-value transactions

- 6.2 For transactions valued at or over £1,000 but below £10,000 (not including VAT) you **must** get two written/evidenced quotations before you issue a purchase order specifying the goods, work or services. Price comparisons undertaken via the Internet will be acceptable providing evidence is retained (e.g. screen prints) – this will generally apply to the purchase of goods.

Intermediate-value transactions (i.e. £10k to £30K)

- 6.3 For transactions valued at or over £10,000 but below £30,000, you **must** get three written quotations before you issue a purchase order or contract (for services and works), specifying the goods, work or services.

Medium Value Transactions / Formal Quotes Process (i.e. £30k to £60k)

- 6.4 For all transactions valued at or over £30,000 but below £60,000, you will need to follow a Formal Quotes Process.
- 6.5 You must:
- Publish a below-threshold tender notice on the Central Digital Platform;
 - Seek to obtain a minimum of three written quotations;
 - Maintain a record of the quotations received;
 - Maintain comprehensive records of all decision-making;
 - Issue a purchase order to the provider of the successful quotation.
 - For services or works you should obtain legal advice as to whether it is necessary to issue a contract – advice should be sought at the outset of the procurement process so that contract details can be issued to interested parties as part of the quotations process.
 - Publish a contracts details notice on the Central Digital Platform as soon as reasonably practicable, after entering into the contract.

Receiving Quotations

- 6.6 For quotations below £30,000 the only requirement is that they must be evidenced in writing and you should retain this evidence for a minimum of 24 months.
- 6.7 For quotations of £30,000 up to £60,000 you need to have a formal process for accepting quotations.

The quotations must be:

- opened at a set time;
- opened by an officer nominated by the Head of Service or Service Manager as appropriate ;
- logged under the price given; and
- kept on the relevant file.

6.8 Electronic quotations can be accepted. They should be sent to a specific email address, preferably a generic service email address for the service.

Evaluation of Quotations and the Decision to Award

6.9 All written quotations for contracts valued below £60,000, **must** be evaluated on the basis of the lowest price, unless other conditions are shown in the document used to invite quotes. If this is the case, the contract should be awarded on that basis. For guidance on the use of quality evaluation criteria, please see 7.32 to 7.38.

6.10 The decision to award will be taken as follows:

- Quotations from £1,000 up to £10,000 – Service Manager or officer authorised by them;
- Quotations of £10,000 up to £60,000 – Service Manager or above

6.11 For quotations of £30,000 and above, the award decision should be publicised on the Central Digital Platform by publishing a Contract Details Notice as soon as practicable after entering into the contract and recorded in the Contracts Register.

Exceptions to the Quotations Process

6.12 If you receive less than the specified number of quotations, you must try and get other quotations or an exemption from the regulations in line with Section 12 (section headed Exceptions from the Regulations).

7 Tender Process

7.1 You **must never** deliberately split down the value of contracts to avoid tendering. Wherever possible, we should make our purchases in the form of a single large contract rather than a series of smaller contracts.

7.2 However, there will be circumstances where splitting contracts into “lots” is appropriate. A Procurement Advisor will guide you on whether this is appropriate.

Full tender procedures below Procurement Thresholds

7.3 For transactions valued at over £60,000 (including VAT) but below the Procurement Thresholds, you must carry out a formal tender process in line with the following principles:

- Openness
- Transparency
- Visibility
- Value for money
- In the best interests of the council
- Competition

7.4 You should follow the Open procedure for tenders over £50,000 but below the Procurement Threshold. You should seek advice from a Procurement Advisor on all tenders.

Ensure that comprehensive records are maintained of all decision-making during the procurement procedure and are maintained for a minimum of 3 years from the date the contract is entered into.

Full tender procedures (over the Procurement Thresholds)

7.5 If your contract has a value over the relevant Procurement Thresholds shown in the table below, you **must** follow the Procurement Act 2023.

	Thresholds from January 2024
For goods and services (including goods and consultancy services)	£213,477
For works	£5,336,937
For Light Touch Contracts	£5,336,937

These limits are changed in January every two years. You **must** check the latest limits before you go ahead.

7.6 If you are inviting tenders for contracts over Procurement Thresholds, you **must** decide on the procedure to follow before you advertise and it **must** be one of the following.

- Open procedure (all interested providers send us a tender in response to a tender notice).
- Competitive flexible procedure (a process that sets conditions which a supplier must satisfy in order to participate as long as those conditions are a proportionate means of ensuring that suppliers have the legal and financial capacity, or the technical ability, to perform the contract).

You must discuss and agree the appropriate route to use for your tender with a Procurement Advisor as part of the sourcing strategy.

- 7.7 The Procurement Act, and associated guidance, gives further detail on how competitive tendering can be lawfully achieved. If in doubt, you should get the advice from a Procurement Advisor.
- 7.8 The Procurement Act contains conditions relating to providing notices and other documents electronically.
- 7.9 For each contract, unless we say differently below, you must publish a tender notice on the Central Digital Platform. Any advertisements you publish as well as this (e.g. in a specialist publication) **must not**:
- appear in any form before you have published a tender notice on the Central Digital Platform; and
 - contain any information in excess of that contained within the tender notice on the Central Digital Platform.

See also 7.15 and 7.16 regarding advertising tenders

- 7.10 You **must** always follow the minimum timescales relating to tender procedures governed by the Procurement Act. The timescales given for completing and returning tenders are only the minimum, so there is flexibility to extend timescales to encourage bids from smaller providers or consortiums. If procurement falls under the Procurement Threshold, there is no formal time limit. Similarly, when faced with short timescales within which to use the funds, you should still make sure the process used is fair, clear, proportionate and accessible to all, including SMEs.

Using the Competitive Flexible Procedure

- 7.11 You **must** get advice from a Procurement Advisor as soon as possible before starting a tender process, particularly when using a competitive procedure other than the open procedure.

Tender documents

- 7.12 Every invitation to tender should include:
- the nature, purpose, start date and period of the contract;

- the detailed specification and quantities of goods, work or services to be supplied or carried out;
- the times at, or within which, and the places at which the goods, work or services are to be supplied or performed;
- a copy of the conditions of contract which the successful contractors will have to keep to (see section 10 for details);
- a requirement for the tenderer to provide information about their technical, commercial and financial standing if we do not already have the information;
- information on TUPE, where applicable;
- the evaluation criteria (with weightings) for awarding the contract;
- a statement that we do not have to accept the lowest or any tender;
- the closing time and date, and address for receiving tenders; and
- a named procurement advisor.

Insurance Requirements

- 7.13 Insurance conditions must be contained in the tender specification and the conditions of contract. The type and level of insurance cover must be discussed and agreed with the Chief Internal Auditor and Risk Manager.
- 7.14 The insurance limits advised will relate to each claim. For public liability and employers' liability, the cover must be in place throughout the period covered by the contract. For professional indemnity, the conditions are more complicated. Not only must the cover be in place throughout the period covered by the contract but also for another six years after the end of the contract (or 12 years if the contract is under seal). For certain types of services, for example, financial advice, the amount of professional indemnity insurance cover will need to be higher to protect us in case anyone gives inappropriate advice.

Advertising

- 7.15 As a minimum you must advertise the goods, services or works required on the Central Digital Platform by publishing the relevant notice. This must be done before advertising the opportunity elsewhere. You should consider whether it is appropriate to advertise the tender in an appropriate trade/professional journal or a local newspaper.
- 7.16 For all tenders over the Procurement Threshold you are required to place a tender notice on the Central Digital Platform. Other notices may also need to be published - seek guidance from your Procurement Advisor on what is required for your tender.

Issuing and return of tenders

- 7.17 You should always use electronic procurement (or e-procurement) systems rather than paper systems where practicable. All tenders should be sent out and returned electronically via an approved e-tendering system where possible.
- 7.18 All tenderers should be informed that the Council will not accept or consider tenders sent in by fax or email.
- 7.19 The procuring officer must send to every person who wants to give us a tender any documents which meet the requirements of regulations 7.12. This includes a returnable tender form or other document which tells each company wanting to tender to:
- include their offer price (or prices) for the goods, work, services or utilities;
 - include their signature or seal;
 - return the filled-in tender form by a certain date and time by the method stated in the tender documents.
- 7.20 Where conditions of participation are issued as part of the tender process then the rules for the issue, return and opening of tenders should be followed.

Receiving and opening tenders

- 7.21 Every response to an invitation to tender should be delivered no later than the date and time stated for the return of tenders in the invitation to tender. Generally, we will not open a tender if it is received late. In exceptional circumstances where a tender is received late but before the tenders are opened, this may be accepted subject to the relevant Chief Officer and either the Monitoring Officer, the s151 Officer or the Head of Transformation and Assurance being satisfied that there is a valid reason for the tender arriving late and that this was beyond the control of the tenderer.
- 7.22 If the circumstances mean it is appropriate, e.g. there has been a delay by the Council in providing a clarification response, the Service Manager or Chief Officer may extend, for a reasonable period, the closing time and date for receiving tenders. This applies as long as all participants have been notified (i.e. every organisation that was invited to tender), in the same way, and this must be before the closing date and time for the return of the tenders.

Electronic Procurement

- 7.23 All tenders returned via the e-tendering system will be opened on or shortly after the specified date and time, via officers authorised to use the e-tendering system.
- 7.24 The e-tendering system will maintain a record of the tenders received, opened and the officer(s) undertaking the opening of the tenders.

- 7.25 Once opened, the tender documents will be sent electronically to the lead officer for the procurement. The lead officer will arrange for the tender documents to be stored securely on the network and arrange for those officers involved in the evaluation process to have access to them.

Paper/Hard copy

- 7.26 If there is authorisation to use a non e-procurement procedure, all tenderers should:
- be asked to provide both a paper copy of their tender and a copy on a read-only CD-ROM, securely packaged and clearly labelled with the tenderer's name and contract reference, and
 - be provided with a tender envelope, which bears the word 'TENDER' followed by the subject the tender relates to and the closing date and time for receiving tenders;
 - advised that the tender envelope should not be labelled or marked in any way that identifies who is providing the tender.
- 7.27 The Head of Law and Governance will ensure that there is an appropriate system in place for the secure storage of tenders until the time we have given for their opening. We will not open tenders before the closing date and time.
- 7.28 Two officers authorised by the Head of Law and Governance **must** open all tenders at the same time. They **must** not be involved in the tender evaluation and award.
- 7.29 Any tender envelope which is labelled or marked in such a way that identifies who is providing the tender will be rejected.
- 7.30 The authorised officers will list the opened tenders in the tenders record book. Tenders must be signed and dated by the people opening them. Pages with prices in them do not need to be signed, only the total price page.
- 7.31 Once opened, arrangements will be made for the lead officer for the procurement to collect the tenders. The lead officer will arrange for the tender documents to be stored securely and arrange for those officers involved in the evaluation process to have access to them.

Evaluating tenders

- 7.32 For contracts valued over £60,000 and for all contracts governed by the Procurement Act, we **must** use the 'best value' tender evaluation procedure based on identifying the most advantageous tender (MAT). On occasions where the only obvious difference between products and solutions will be that of price (for example if you are buying stationary or other standard items), tenders will normally be evaluated based upon lowest price.

It is unlikely that you could choose providers for services or work on price alone as these will often need wider evaluation techniques. When deciding on how we evaluate tenders, we need to be careful that using a lowest-price method of evaluation rather than wider considerations to identify the MAT is appropriate for the procurement.

7.33 The evaluation process involves scoring tenders fairly by a panel of officers or independent experts using criteria which **must**:

- be already set out in the invitation to tender documents in order of importance;
- be strictly kept to at all times throughout the tender process;
- reflect the principles of best value;
- include price;
- consider whole-life costing, particularly in the case of capital equipment where the full cost of maintenance and so on should be taken into account;
- be able to be assessed independently;
- be weighted according to importance;
- show wider social value if this has been included in the specification; and
- avoid any discrimination, or other cause which goes against any of our policies or that would be a breach of any of the principles set out under 2.2.

7.34 The panel of evaluators should review and score the submissions independently. A moderation process should then take place to consider the scores and comments of each officer and to reach a consensus on each tenderers score.

7.35 A record should be maintained by each officer involved in the evaluation process of their scores and notes to support their scores. Notes can be of positive attributes of the tender, any omissions or concerns. This information will be used to feedback to unsuccessful tenderers. A comprehensive record should be maintained for at least 3 years from the date the contract is entered into, as this may be needed as evidence if the contract award is challenged.

7.36 If you use this evaluation method, a decision to award the contract must be in favour of the company which sends us the most advantageous tender. (In other words, the tender that achieves the highest score in the independent assessment.)

- 7.37 At the end of the evaluation process, prior to making the final award decision a financial appraisal will need to be conducted on the preferred bidder. This will generally be in the form of a company credit check and will be arranged by the Procurement Advisor.
- 7.38 In certain circumstances you may decide not to award the contract to any of the tenderers. You will need to advise all tenderers of the decision and the reasons for this and, where the value of the contract is above the Procurement Threshold, a procurement termination notice will need to be published on the Central Digital Platform. If you intended to revise the specification and re-start the procurement process then it may be appropriate to advise the unsuccessful tenderers of this.

Awarding Contracts

- 7.39 The decision to award a tender of over £60,000 will be taken by the relevant Chief Officer. Please refer to Section 10 for details on who can sign contracts.
- 7.40 You **must** make sure that the appropriate budget holder has the funds in place before you make the award.
- 7.41 You **must** record in writing the results of the tender-evaluation process and the decision to award a contract.
- 7.42 We cannot accept any tender which breaches the Procurement Act.

Award of Contracts below the Procurement Threshold

- 7.43 All contracts awarded that are below the Procurement Threshold must be publicised on the Central Digital Platform by publishing a Contract Details Notice. The contract award should also be publicised on the Council's website and the Contracts Register updated accordingly.
- 7.44 While a standstill period is not compulsory for a contract below the Procurement Threshold, depending on your procurement, it may be prudent to consider adopting a voluntary standstill period (a minimum of 8 working days) in order to mitigate against the likelihood of a challenge.

Award of Contracts Above the Procurement Threshold

- 7.45 Prior to publicising the outcome of the procurement and awarding the contract, information must be issued to all bidders who submitted an assessed tender (an "Assessment Summary"). This is to provide all bidders with feedback and reasons for their tender scores. The Assessment Summary **must** include:
- details of the award criteria (including the weightings) and assessment methodology used for assessing the tender;
 - the score or ranking the company achieved against each criterion and reasons for those scores;

- explanation(s) as to where the tender was unsuccessful and why it was unsuccessful - this should include reference to the assessment methodology;
- the scores and reasons why the winning tender was successful; and
- any other **relevant** information.

Standstill period (for Contracts Above the Procurement Threshold only)

- 7.46 Once the Assessment Summaries have been issued, the outcome of the procurement must be publicised by publishing a Contract Award Notice on the Central Digital Platform. For all contracts tendered under the Procurement Act, we **must** have **at least** an 8 (eight) working day 'standstill period' between publication of the decision to award and the start of the contract. The date that the Contract Award Notice is published, marks the start of the 8 working day standstill period. Special rules apply if a company asks us for a debrief on the tender process. Even if a company asks for a debrief outside of the standstill period, we **must** still provide this. In this instance, you must get advice from a Procurement Advisor as soon as possible.
- 7.47 Once the standstill period has ended, and there have been no formal challenges submitted, you are free to enter into the contract. A Contract Details Notice must be published on the Central Digital Platform **within 30 days** of the contract being entered into.

Tender Records and Audit Trail

- 7.48 The Lead Officer for the tender **must** keep adequate records of the procurement process for a minimum of 3 years following contract award. Such records should include:
- invitations to quote/tender
 - quotations/tenders
 - details of any exceptions and reasons for them
 - award criteria used
 - tender documents
 - reasons for selecting the successful contractor and for not selecting unsuccessful contractors
 - details of all communications with tenderers
 - any decisions to suspend these regulations and use of any delegated powers and

- details of all other decision-making in relation to the procurement and reasons why those decisions were made.

7.49 Records relating to the successful tenderer should be kept for a minimum of six years after the end of the contract to which they relate. However, documents relating to unsuccessful tenderers may be destroyed after 3 years from the award of the contract provided there is no dispute about the award.

8 Framework agreements (including Crown Commercial Services, ESPO, WMS)

- 8.1 You **must** always consider use of framework agreements for goods, work and services, **if they exist**, for all procurements over £30,000.
- 8.2 Framework agreements are arrangements that are already in place with providers for providing goods, work or services on agreed terms for a set period for estimated quantities against which orders may be placed, (known as call off contracts), if and when needed during the contract period. They offer benefits of bulk-buying, improved services and reduced administration costs over the period of the arrangement.
- 8.3 A framework agreement may have the option for you to hold a mini-competition with all the capable providers on the framework when you come to buy for us. You **must** get advice from a Procurement Advisor on carrying out a mini-competition.
- 8.4 You should seek advice from a procurement advisor on whether a call-off contract from an existing framework may be relevant in your own case. You will also need to check if legally you can use a particular existing framework agreement.
- 8.5 If there isn't a framework already in place (or if one does not exist with partners which you can use), you **must** consider if it would be better value to set up a new framework. This is likely if you are going to need to buy the same or similar goods and services again in the future. You can get guidance on how to set up a framework from a procurement advisor.

9 Concession contracts

- 9.1 You must use a concession contract if we want to hire someone to provide a service within the council area if they will be charging the public for the services being provided.
- 9.2 There are a number of exemptions if a public works concession contract is proposed.
- 9.3 If the company which plans to provide the services is going to subcontract the services, this may fall within the Procurement Act rules. In all cases, if the company is buying goods or services as part of the concession contract, any procurement should be carried out in line with these regulations.

- 9.4 You **must** get advice from a procurement advisor before carrying out any procurement relating to a concession contract.

10 Conditions of contract

- 10.1 There must be written evidence of every contract and all contracts must be in a form agreed with the Head of Law and Governance.
- 10.2 All transactions **must** use an appropriate model form of contract approved by the Head of Law and Governance (or a form decided by the Chief Officer after consulting the Head of Law and Governance\).
- 10.4 For all contracts for services if the model conditions of contract are not suitable, you **must** consult Legal Services to produce a suitable set of conditions of contract (with other advisors if necessary) before inviting tenders.
- 10.5 The following officers are authorised to sign Contracts (or Purchase Orders where applicable):
- Quotations of £1,000 up to £10,000 – Service Managers or an officer nominated by them;
 - Quotations of £10,000 up to £60,000 – Service Managers;
 - Contracts of £60,000 up to £100,000 – Chief Officers
 - Contracts of £100,000 or above will be done under seal
- 10.6 If a contract is strategically important or politically sensitive, or if the extended limits would be valuable, for example, contracts for land or property, the contract **must** be in writing and an official seal must be placed on it. **Note** that contracts that require execution under the Council's seal can only be signed by a limited number of authorised signatories. This should be arranged with Legal Services.

11 Changes to Contracts

Transferring contracts

- 11.1 In appropriate circumstances we may agree to transfer a contract to another contractor. You must ask for advice on how to transfer a contract from Legal Services, before any contract is transferred.

Changing and extending contracts

- 11.2 Depending on any legal restrictions and the need to keep to these regulations, a Chief Officer may authorise the following extensions to an existing contract, if the budget has been confirmed.

- An extension for a particular period under the terms and conditions of the contract (but depending on the satisfactory performance when monitoring the contract).
- A single extension of the contract by up to 12 months as long as this would not place the contract over the relevant Procurement Threshold or break any law.

Details of any extensions to contracts should be kept with the original contract.

- 11.3 Any changes (including variation orders), and if relevant a resulting change in price, decided in line with the contract terms may be authorised by the officer who signed the contract or a person nominated by them providing those changes are lawful, comply with these regulations and are within the approved budget for the contract.
- 11.4 Any extension to the contract period cannot be longer than the original length of the original contract.
- 11.5 You **cannot** extend or change contracts arranged under the Procurement Act without consulting a Procurement Advisor and/or seeking Legal advice.

12 Exceptions from the Regulations

- 12.1 An exception to these regulations means we give permission to agree a contract without keeping to one or more of these regulations. We may grant an exception under conditions set out below. We cannot grant an exception if to do so would mean breaking any laws on public procurement or other relevant legislation.
- 12.2 The relevant Chief Officer in consultation with two of the following officers may grant an exception to these regulations for contracts under £100,000 (including VAT):
- Monitoring Officer (Head of Law and Governance):
 - Section 151 Officer and Deputy Chief Executive (Resources);
 - Head of Transformation and Assurance.

For contracts over £100,000 approval will also be needed from the relevant Cabinet Member.

- 12.3 If you want an exception, you must apply in writing using the request for waiver form and send it to your Chief Officer in the first instance. Please include the exception you want and your reasons for it.
- 12.4 The Head of Law and Governance will keep a register of all exceptions to these regulations.

- 12.5 We will not agree an application for an exception unless you have a good reason. We do not consider a lack of time caused by poor forward planning as a good reason and so will not allow it.

Exceptions which involve the request for waiver form

- 12.6 We may grant an exception in the following circumstances:

- If there is an unexpected emergency involving danger to life or health or serious damage to property, or if the goods, work or services are needed more urgently than would be possible if we followed the tender or quotation procedure.
- If, for technical reasons, the goods, work or services can be bought from only one provider and this can be justified.
- If the proposed contract is an extension or change to the scope of an existing contract with a value (including the change or extension) that is below the Procurement Threshold. However, this does not apply if the existing contract provides for an extension.
- If you are buying works of art, museum artefacts, manuscripts or archive collection items.
- To develop our aims to develop the economy, without breaking public procurement rules.
- In line with Section 41 or Section 74 of the Procurement Act regarding Direct Award in Special Cases and Modification of Public Contracts.

Exceptions which do not need you to fill in the request for waiver form

- 12.7 We will grant an exception to these regulations and you will not need separate authorisation in the following circumstances:

- If you place an order with a single provider under an existing corporate contract or framework agreement.
- If you place an order through a buying consortium of which we are a member.
- As part of a partnering contract that involves a series of contracts with one provider.
- If you have attempted but have been unsuccessful in obtaining the required number of quotations or more than one tender.
- If any law says we must contract differently from these Procurement Regulations.

- If you place an order under an arrangement, of which we are a member that has gone through a competitive process which meets conditions in the Procurement Act, for example, Crown Commercial Services.
- For goods, work or services which must be provided by a public utility or a local authority other than us under their legal powers.

Agenda Item 7(d)**Corporate Plan 2025-26 to 2028-29 -
Proposals**

Committee:	Resources Scrutiny
Date of Meeting:	21 January 2025
Report of:	Head of Transformation and Assurance
Portfolio:	Resources

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report sets out the proposed vision, priorities and objectives that will form the basis of the new Corporate Plan for 2025-26 to 2028-29.
- 1.2 The report also sets out the timeline for the production of the new plan and an outline of how engagement with the local community and stakeholders will be undertaken in developing the plan.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked to approve the proposed vision, priorities and objectives and the commencement of consultation on the proposals in preparation for a new Corporate Plan 2025-26 to 2028-29.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.3 The adoption of a corporate plan, provides clarity in what the Council is seeking to achieve and allows for a framework to be put in place to deliver this and for performance to be reported against it.
- 2.4 In order to ensure that the Council's vision meets the needs of the borough, it is important to consult with the local community and stakeholders to seek their views.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 Work on the current corporate plan was started during the Covid pandemic in 2020. There has been considerable change both locally and nationally since then. A full review has been undertaken of progress over the last few years and consideration given to aspirations for the future.

This has been used to frame the proposed vision, priorities and objectives for the new corporate plan.

- 3.2 We will consult with the community and our stakeholders to involve them in influencing the vision, priorities and objectives for the new Corporate Plan. It will provide us with the opportunity to explain why we are producing a new plan, what this will aim to do and, importantly, provide an opportunity to actively listen to the views of our community.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 The process of producing a new corporate plan will determine the Council's priorities for the next 4 years.

5 Report Detail

- 5.1 The Council's current Corporate Plan was developed 4 years ago. Whilst good progress has been made in the delivery of our priorities, there has been considerable change both locally and nationally.
- 5.2 Good corporate planning will ensure that the Council has a clear framework within which actions can be taken and which achieve the greatest impact on agreed priorities and objectives within the resources available. This is increasingly important due to the challenges the Council is facing.
- 5.3 Initial discussions with the Cabinet Members indicate that the overarching priorities for the new corporate plan will continue to focus on:
- the economy of the Borough;
 - the health and wellbeing of residents;
 - climate change and our environment; and
 - being a well managed Council.
- 5.4 The priorities are supported by a number of objectives that set out what the Council is aiming to achieve. The priorities are largely consistent with previous Corporate Plans. However, the vision and objectives have been updated. These are set out in **APPENDIX 1**:
- 5.5 The proposed vision, priorities and objectives will be used as the basis of engaging with local people and stakeholders in the development of a new Corporate Plan, to gauge public reaction to these.
- 5.6 We will use engagement with the community and our stakeholders to inform and involve them in determining the priorities and objectives of the Corporate Plan. The consultation will involve various channels including via the local media, our website, social media and through our Members where we can present and test our priorities for action and associated objectives.
- 5.7 It will provide us with the opportunity to explain why we are undertaking the production of a new plan now and what this will aim to do and, importantly, provide an opportunity to actively listen to the views of those we consult with.

5.8 Set out below are details of the options that we propose to use as part of the consultation. We will look at the scope of our consultation and will complete a stakeholder mapping exercise to establish who to consult with.

- Online survey;
- Local media, social media, etc;
- Consult partners and stakeholders (including the voluntary sector);
- Staff and Member engagement;

5.9 The timeline for the production of the new corporate plan is set out in **APPENDIX 2**.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

There are no direct financial implications as this stage in the development of the new corporate plan. A number of the proposed priorities/objectives have ongoing schemes for delivery which already have budget allocated to them. Where new projects come forward as part of the development of the delivery plans, these will need to be costed and consideration given to whether this can be accommodated within existing budgets or whether additional funding will be required.

6.2 Legal

The Local Government Act 1999 requires local authorities to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which their functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness (the Best Value Duty). Regard must be had to the statutory guidance which advises authorities to set clear and achievable priorities, to review corporate plans to ensure they are current and realistic, and to ensure resources are used effectively considering the resources available.

6.3 Human Resources

None

6.4 Risk Management

The Council's Strategic Risk Register sets out the risks the Council faces in delivering its priorities. This will be updated to reflect the new priorities in due course.

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken as part of the development of the Corporate Plan and engagement will form a key part of this.

6.6 Health

None

6.7 Climate Change

It is proposed that climate change will remain a priority for the Council in the new corporate plan.

7 Appendices

Appendix 1: Proposed vision, priorities and objectives

Appendix 2: Timetable for the new corporate plan

8 Previous Consideration

None

9 Background Papers

None

Contact Officer: Judith Aupers

Telephone Number: 01543 464411

Ward Interest: All

Report Track: Cabinet 5 December 2024

Resources Scrutiny Committee 21 January 2025

Key Decision: Yes

Stafford Borough Council's Corporate Plan 2025/26 to 2028/29

Our Vision:

To be an effective Council that promotes a growing economy, strong, healthy communities and a sustainable environment.

Priority 1 - Prosperous Economy

What we want to achieve (our objectives):

1. A prosperous economy where our workforce has the skills to drive growth to benefit our communities.
2. Vibrant town centres that are the focus for economic, cultural and community life.

How we will deliver this:

1. Complete the delivery of our ambitious regeneration schemes to transform Stafford town centre.
2. Work with our partners to develop a new Economic Growth Strategy with a compelling and dynamic vision for the future of the Borough's economy.
3. Promote the Borough as an excellent place to do business and invest.
4. Develop a pipeline of economic projects that attract funding from the private sector and government investment.
5. Prepare a new Local Plan that identifies sites for homes, including affordable housing, with good infrastructure, land for employment, protection of our green spaces and policies that reduce the impact of climate change.

Priority 2 - Communities and Wellbeing

What we want to achieve (our objectives):

1. A safe and secure place to live for local people, including social housing for those who need it.
2. The opportunity for local people and communities to enjoy healthy lifestyles by providing good leisure and cultural services.
3. A reduction in health inequalities and greater equality and inclusion.
4. A safe and cohesive Borough

How we will deliver this:

1. Work towards delivering council owned social housing that contributes to meeting the needs of the local authority as recognised by the new Housing Strategy
2. Reduce and prevent homelessness and rough sleeping, by delivering the commitments set out in the new Homelessness Strategy 2025 and commit to reducing the number of households in B&B accommodation.

3. We will work towards everyone having a home that meets their needs, and is conducive to a healthy living environment, providing adaptations where appropriate.
4. Review how Leisure, Culture and Heritage provision can promote healthy empowered communities.
5. Promote health in all we do and encourage opportunities for participation, engagement and wellbeing.
6. Develop a Community Wellbeing Strategy to set out the delivery of community safety and health and wellbeing priorities by the Council and the Community Wellbeing Partnership.
7. Build positive engagement between communities and partners to encourage cohesion, engagement and empowerment.

Priority 3 - Climate Change, Nature Recovery and the Environment

What we want to achieve (our objectives):

1. Natural and built environments that are sustainable, protected, and enhanced.
2. Public areas that are clean and tidy.
3. Less waste.
4. Reduced carbon emissions from the Council's activities.
5. A smaller community carbon footprint and reduced borough wide carbon emissions.
6. Improved public open spaces, play areas, parks and landscapes, including increased biodiversity, and wild flowering and pollinators.

How we will deliver this:

1. Adopt an up-to-date Local Plan with positive policies that reduce carbon emissions and minimise the impact of climate change.
2. Deliver our Climate Change Action Plan.
3. Promote biodiversity in all new development.
4. Produce and implement a Nature Recovery Strategy.
5. Increase awareness of climate change and its causes with residents, organisations and businesses and encourage action to mitigate it.
6. Support households to minimise the waste they produce and maximise their reuse and recycling.
7. Invest more in our parks and open spaces.

Priority 4: Well Managed Council

What we want to achieve (our objectives):

1. Good customer experience;
2. Effective management of Council finances
3. Value for money to local taxpayers;
4. Effective use of our assets
5. Good governance across the Council;

How we will deliver this:

1. Provide more services on-line whilst maintaining telephone and reception services for customers.
2. Fund Council services by a prudent mix of council tax, fees and charges for services and investments, whilst maintaining adequate reserves
3. Complete delivery of the value for money improvement plan
4. Deliver our transformation and digital strategies to ensure that our services are efficient and effective.
5. Undertake an asset management review of buildings and fleet.
6. Review our Code of Governance

Core Principles / How we will deliver:

- Put our residents / customers at the centre of everything we do
- Climate change to be considered in all of our decisions and embedded in our service delivery
- Show leadership in our communities
- Build on the benefits of sharing services with Cannock Chase Council
- Transform service delivery, through the effective use of technology
- Promote good governance - integrity, accountability and transparency
- Promote a culture of one team that gets things done

Timetable for Production of the Corporate Plan for 2025/26 - 27/28

Milestones	Meeting Dates
Cabinet - Draft Plan	5 December 2024
Consultation with stakeholders on the Draft Plan	December 2024 / January 2025
Resources Scrutiny Committee - consultation on the Draft Plan	21 January 2025
Cabinet - Final Plan	6 March 2025
Council for approval	8 April 2025

Work Programme - Resources Scrutiny Committee

Committee:	Resources Scrutiny
Date of Meeting:	21 January 2025
Report of:	Head of Law and Governance
Portfolio:	Resources

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the Resources Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the report be noted.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.2 The first stage in achieving a Member-led Overview and Scrutiny process is to develop a Work Programme for the Members of the Committee to own.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 Accordingly, an up-to-date copy of the Resources Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme is provided for Members to consider or amend as appropriate.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 This report is most closely associated with the following Corporate Business Objective 3:-

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 Members will recall that one of the fundamental philosophies behind the creation of Overview and Scrutiny is that the process should be Member-led and the first stage in achieving this is to develop a Work Programme that is:-

- Owned by all Members of the Scrutiny Committee;
- Flexible to allow the Committee to react to urgent items;
- Contain aspects of both Overview and Scrutiny.

5.2 Therefore, at each scheduled meeting of the Resources Scrutiny Committee, an up-to-date copy of the Work Programme will be provided for Members to consider or amend as appropriate.

5.3 The Work Programme includes provision for the Committee to scrutinise appropriate items delivered through the Council's Service Delivery Plan up to twelve months in advance, whilst maintaining the flexibility to respond to any issues that may arise.

5.4 Accordingly, attached at **APPENDIX** is the Resources Scrutiny Committee's current Work Programme to consider or amend as appropriate.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

Nil

6.2 Legal

Nil

6.3 Human Resources

Nil

6.4 Risk Management

Nil

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

Nil

6.6 Health

Nil

6.7 Climate Change

Nil

7 Appendices

None

8 Previous Consideration

Nil

9 Background Papers

File available in Law and Administration.

Contact Officer: Ian Curran

Telephone Number: 01785 619220

Ward Interest: Nil

Report Track: Resources 21 January 2025 (Only)

Key Decision: N/A

Agenda Items - Resources Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday 5 March 2025 at 6.30pm

Report Deadline: Tuesday 18 February 2025

Officer Reports: **Q3 Performance and End of Year Update**
Head of Transformation and Assurance

Review of the Constitution
Head of Law and Governance

Business Planning Report
Head of Law and Governance

Work Programme
Head of Law and Governance

Future Items:

S106 Unallocated Monies

Transformation - priority areas: system upgrades, finance changes

Synergy between CCDC and SBC (shared services)

IT Projects

Approval of business cases