

Dear Members

Cabinet

A meeting of the Cabinet will be held on **Thursday 18 January 2024** 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

CABINET - 18 JANUARY 2024

Chair - Councillor A T A Godfrey

AGENDA

- 1 Minutes of 4 January 2024 as circulated and published on 5 January 2024
- 2 Apologies
- 3 Councillors' Question Time (if any)
- 4 Presentation of Petition
 - (a) Red Lion Public House, Sutton
- 5 Proposals of the Cabinet Members (as follows):-

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(a) **ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO**

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(b) **LEISURE PORTFOLIO**

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Report contains information relating to an individual, which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual and information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding the information).

Membership

Chair - Councillor A T A Godfrey

A T A Godfrey	- Leader
R Kenney	- Deputy Leader
A N Pearce	- Climate Change Portfolio
J Hood	- Community Portfolio
A F Reid	- Economic Development and Planning Portfolio
I D Fordham	- Environment Portfolio
G P K Pardesi	- Leisure Portfolio
R P Cooke	- Resources Portfolio

Agenda Item 5a(i)**Proposals for Increasing Fixed Penalty Notice Charges: The Environmental Offences (Fixed Penalties) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2023**

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	18 January 2024
Report of:	Saul Hocking
Portfolio:	Environment Portfolio

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek approval from Cabinet to increase the current Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) in relation to environmental crimes - which include Littering, Graffiti, Fly tipping and Household Duty of Care offences and to introduce early payment provisions in this regard. This relates to the Government's increase in the upper limits of such fines, introduced by The Environmental Offences (Fixed Penalties) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2023.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet notes the Government's introduction of increased upper limits for Fixed Penalty Notices in relation to environmental crimes, and resolves to approve those new upper limits in relation to this Council's enforcement actions, for immediate implementation, subject to the following early payment provisions:
- (a) The current fine amount for those caught fly-tipping will increase from £400 to £1000, with an early payment option of £500 if paid within ten days.
 - (b) The current fine amount for those who litter will increase from £100 to £500, with an early payment option of £150 if paid within ten days.
 - (c) The current fine amount for those who graffiti will increase from £100 to £500, with an early payment option of £250 if paid within ten days.

(d) The current fine amount of those who breach their household waste duty of care will increase from £200 to £600, with an early payment option of £300 if paid within ten days.

- 2.2 That any increase in revenue derived from payment of such fines continues to be ringfenced and used to support environmental projects.
- 2.3 That the current Reward Scheme in relation to the reporting of dog fouling is expanded to include the reporting of Fly-tipping (subject to the same provisos).

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.4 Environmental crimes like littering and fly-tipping are cynical and opportunistic, often damaging wildlife and nature, creating eyesores and ruining our enjoyment of public places and spaces. It is anticipated that the new upper limits to fines will deter people from harming such spaces in the first instance and ensure that those who choose to offend face tougher consequences.
- 2.5 The proposals for early payment provisions seek to strike a balance between deterring repeat offending and ensuring that fines are proportionate and affordable. In addition, this approach recognises the costs associated with the Council having to pursue prosecution proceedings when FPNs are not paid.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 As members may be aware, the Government has introduced new legislation in an attempt to crackdown on environmental crimes. These provisions increase the upper limits for Fixed Penalty Notice fine amounts in relation to Littering, Graffiti, Fly tipping and Household duty of care offences (the latter relating to the duty placed upon households to dispose of their waste to an “authorised person”), to the maximum upper limits detailed in table 1 (see section 5). In summary the Government hope that by providing a stronger financial deterrent, it will help to reduce such crimes.
- 3.2 The introduction of the higher levels of FPN fines may give rise to an increase in the number of non-payment cases which, in turn, will mean an increase in prosecutions for unpaid fines (thereby increasing the burden on the Council’s resources). Hence it is proposed to reduce the cost for early payment to incentivise fine payments.
- 3.3 Also, Members should be aware that payment plans for FPNs are already available to those offenders who may be unable to pay the FPN amount in one payment and it is proposed that this option would remain available to optimise the prospects of recovering fines.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

4.1 Corporate Business Objective 2

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

5 Report Detail

- 5.1 Littering, graffiti, flyposting and fly-tipping blight communities, impose avoidable costs on the public purse and can harm the environment, with fly-tipping being aggravated by householders giving waste (e.g. old mattresses, bulky electrical items, waste building materials) to unauthorised carriers (contrary to their duty of care to dispose of their waste to an “authorised person”). Such crimes can also have a negative impact on amenity, people’s wellbeing and pride in place.
- 5.2 Street cleansing, including clearing up litter and fly-tipping, cost local authorities, in England, £743 million in 2021/22 and it typically costs this Council £250 every time that we clear up fly-tipped materials.
- 5.3 In the 2023 Anti-social Behaviour Action Plan, the Government explained that it wanted to see councils take a much tougher approach to these forms of anti-social behaviour and set out new upper limits for fixed penalties notices. The legal instrument (these new Regulations) increases the upper limit for the fixed penalties that can be issued for these offences - see Table 1 below.
- 5.4 Fixed penalty notices provide the relevant enforcing authorities with an effective and visible way of responding to these environmental crimes at a lower-cost alternative to prosecution. By paying a fixed penalty notice, a person can discharge their criminal liability for the offence. This approach also minimises the cost burden on local authorities in pursuing prosecution proceedings through the courts.
- 5.5 But given the scale of increases introduced by the new Regulations there is the potential for more cases to end up in the courts with the Council pursuing prosecution for unpaid FPNs. Therefore, it is proposed to reduce the cost for early payment if fines are paid within 10 days, to incentivise fine payments, thereby negating the amount of prosecution proceedings. These proposals, as set out in Table 1 below, seek to strike a balance between deterring repeat offending whilst incentivising the individual to settle the fine. Given the levels of proposed increases, it is recommended that the fines for early payment of littering offences is set at a level which is considered to be more proportionate to the scale of the offence, thereby achieving the latter objective.

Table 1. Current and Proposed FPN amounts

Fixed Penalty Notice	Current fine amount (£)	Reduction if paid within 10 days (£)	Proposed new fine amount (£)	Reduction if paid within 10 days (£)
Litter	100	50	500	150
Graffiti	100	50	500	250
Fly tipping	400	NA	1000	500
Household Duty of Care	200	120	600	300

5.6 Members will be aware that, historically, the small income received from FPNs has been ring-fenced and recycled into environmental initiatives such as buying litter-picking equipment for voluntary community groups and giving away free dog litter bags to promote responsible dog ownership. It is proposed to continue with this arrangement. Also, payment plans for FPNs is already offered and it is proposed that this would continue.

5.7 Finally Members will be aware that the Council incentivises the reporting of dog fouling by offering a reward of £100 to anybody who provides us with information that leads to either a successful prosecution or the issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice. It is proposed to expand this scheme to include the reporting of Fly-Tipping (subject to the same proviso that any evidence must lead to a successful prosecution or issuing of an FPN).

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

The financial implications arising from the implementation of these new Regulations and the proposals set out in this report are insignificant.

6.2 Legal

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 provides the principal legislative framework for these Regulations.

The Environmental Offences (Fixed Penalties) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2023 came into force in the summer of 2023.

The legal framework to deal with the non-payment of FPNs is already established.

6.3 Human Resources

None

6.4 Risk Management

None

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

None

6.6 Health

None

6.7 Climate Change

None directly but the responsible disposal of litter would contribute to broader environmental objectives.

7 Appendices

None

8 Previous Consideration

None

9 Background Papers

The Environmental Offences (Fixed Penalties) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2023 Memorandum.

Contact Officer: Saul Hocking

Telephone Number: 01785 619465

Ward Interest: None

Report Track: Cabinet 18 January 2024 (Only)

Key Decision: No

Agenda Item 5a(ii)**Garden Waste Processing Contract**

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	18 January 2024
Report of:	Head of Operations
Portfolio:	Environment Portfolio

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet of future arrangements for the disposal and processing of kerbside garden waste that is collected by Veolia on behalf of the Council as part of the Recycling and Waste Collection Services contract.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet approves that from 4 February 2024, Staffordshire County Council (SCC), as the Waste Disposal Authority (WDA), take on the contractual management of the disposal (via composting) and management of kerbside garden waste that is collected by Veolia on behalf of the Council as part of the Recycling and Waste Collection Services contract.
- 2.2 Cabinet approves an agreement that will see a transitional payment received by the Council from SCC to fully compensate for the removal of garden waste credits, for a one-year period, after the existing garden waste contractual agreement between the Council and Mill Farm expires.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.3 The Council has a contractual arrangement in place with Mill Farm, Chebsey, for the processing of kerbside collected garden waste. The contract is due to expire on 3 February 2024 and contractual extension options have been exhausted.
- 2.4 SCC, as the WDA, have indicated a willingness to take on contractual management of the disposal (via composting) and management of garden waste upon expiry of the existing contract between the Council and Mill Farm.
- 2.5 The recommendation avoids the cost of procurement, and importantly the significant risk of the new tendered cost outstripping the current and future recycling credits.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 Kerbside garden waste is collected separately from other kerbside waste by Veolia on behalf of the Council, in order that the material can go through a composting process to be sold privately as compost and as a soil improver. Retaining the contractual management within the Council is becoming increasingly less viable as any new procurement is likely to see gate fees increase significantly. Combined with this, garden waste credits received by the Council have reduced over recent years and from April 2025 are likely to cover disposal costs only.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 This report is most closely associated with the following corporate business objectives:
- To improve the quality of life of local people by providing a safe, clean, attractive place to live and work and encouraging people to be engaged in developing resilient communities that promote health and wellbeing.
 - To be a well-run, financially sustainable and ambitious organisation, responsive to the needs of our customers and communities and focussed on delivering our objectives.

5 Report Detail

- 5.1 The Council has a contractual arrangement in place with Mill Farm, Chebsey, for the processing of kerbside collected garden waste. The contract is due to expire on 3 February 2024 and all contractual extension options have been exhausted.
- 5.2 The kerbside garden waste is collected by Veolia on behalf of the Council as part of the Recycling and Waste Collection Services contract. The garden waste is taken to Mill Farm where a composting process takes place, with the material then sold privately as compost and as soil improver.
- 5.3 The Council pay a gate fee to Mill Farm of £17.50 per tonne of garden waste disposed via composting. Last financial year (2022-23), the Council disposed of 10,654 tonnes of garden waste, resulting in a total payment of £186,445 to Mill Farm. Following expiry of the contract on 3 February 2024, Mill Farm have indicated that their gate fee payable would increase from £17.50 per tonne to £20.50 per tonne for a one-year period, however, as per the above, the Council does not have any further options to extend its contract.

- 5.4 SCC as the WDA, have agreed to pay a 'Transitional payment' to the Council to cover the difference between the Recycling Credit (£23.17) and the expected gate fee (£20.50) per tonne, should the Council decide to hand the disposal contract back to them. Over the last five years, the garden waste credit has exceeded the gate fee, therefore providing the Council with a contribution to collection costs each year. Last financial year (2022-23), the payment was £25.58 per tonne and this contribution to collection costs equated to £86,084. However, the garden waste credit payment (per tonne) has been reduced by SCC over recent years in order to help them achieve their own saving requirements as part of their medium-term financial plan. The garden waste credit currently received by the Council from SCC is £23.17 per tonne, meaning that disposal costs are covered, plus a contribution towards collection costs. It is likely that the garden waste credit from April 2025 will cover disposal costs only, removing the contribution towards collection costs.
- 5.5 SCC have indicated a willingness to take on the management of the disposal of garden waste (via composting) from the Waste Collection Authorities (WCAs) across Staffordshire, as it is a statutory function that they should provide as a WDA. They believe that opportunities for further contract savings exist, via economies of scale, should Councils hand back garden waste disposal responsibility and contracts to them. SCC have recently tendered garden waste disposal / composting services as part of their Household Waste and Recycling Centre provision and are also preparing to go out to tender for the disposal of kerbside garden waste.
- 5.6 The Council have received assurances from SCC that they will do all that they can to ensure disposal points or transfer stations will remain local, ensuring that collection costs are kept down, with minimal disruption to kerbside waste collection operations.
- 5.7 SCC have also provided assurances that the Council will still receive a financial payment for the period of twelve months after expiry of the existing contract, to compensate for the loss of garden waste credits. Based on tonnages from 2022-23 and the increase to a £20.50 per tonne gate fee, this is forecast to be £28,446 for the period February 2024 to February 2025:

Garden waste credits that would have been received on 10,654 tonnes @ £23.17 per tonne	£246,853
Disposal costs on 10,654 @ £20.50 per tonne	£218,407
Transitional Payment received by the Council	£28,446

- 5.8 It is considered there are several benefits to the Council, in handing back the responsibility for garden waste disposal to the WDA. The Council avoids the cost of procurement, and more importantly the significant risk of the new tendered cost outstripping the current and future recycling credit rates. The Council also shares the WDA's opinion that it will assist in providing economies of scale in regard to procurement and provide a more cost-effective service to both Stafford Borough and Staffordshire County Council taxpayers.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

The existing budgets for 23/24 and 24/25 reflect higher additional costs as Staffordshire County Council made the decision to reduce the recycling credit rate after the budget was set.

There will be an additional cost for the 2024/25 budget year reflecting the period from February 2025 when no compensation will be received.

As stated, there is also a risk that there could be an additional claim by the kerbside waste collection service provider depending on where the disposal point for the green waste is directed by Staffordshire County Council.

6.2 Legal

Retendering of the garden waste disposal contract, contract management, and contractual negotiations with the disposal point supplier will no longer be the responsibility of the Council. These will become the responsibility of SCC and will fall under SCC procurement procedures and regulations.

6.3 Human Resources

None

6.4 Risk Management

In approving the recommendations (item 2.1 and 2.2) the Council mitigates the risk of the new tendered cost outstripping the current and future recycling credit rates. The Council also mitigates against the risk of legal challenge from the industry, should it have to direct award a temporary contract to Mill Farm from the end of February 24, while it reprocures a new contract, which it would have to do.

There does remain a risk regarding the handing back of responsibility for garden waste disposal to the WDA, around the control of the procurement process and the resultant location of the tipping destination that is procured.

Should the designated tipping destination be significantly further away than the current destination the Council could be faced with an additional claim by the kerbside waste collection service provider, depending on where the disposal point is. However, that risk remains, whether it is procured by the Council or the WDA. To mitigate the risk the Council has received assurances from county officers, at a senior level, that all that is possible will be done, as part of the procurement process, to ensure that disposal points are kept local, for example, by using distance from Councils offices as one of the key scoring / weighting factors.

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

None

6.6 Health

The provision of high-quality waste collection and disposal services is key to ensuring the health and wellbeing of the Council's residents.

6.7 Climate Change

The provision of well specified, efficient, and affective waste collection and disposal service is seen as key to achieving the Council's climate change ambitions.

7 Appendices

None

8 Previous Consideration

None

9 Background Papers

Re-Procurement of Garden Waste Processing Contract - Cabinet Briefing - 5 October 2023

Contact Officer:	Lee Booth
Telephone Number:	01785 619896
Ward Interest:	All
Report Track:	Cabinet 18 January 2024 (Only)
Key Decision:	No

Agenda Item 5b(i)**Allocation of S106 funds - Enson Lane, Stone**

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	18 January 2024
Report of:	Councillor G P K Pardesi
Portfolio:	Leisure Portfolio

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider the allocation of the agreed S106 funding (Planning Applications 10/14117/OUT and 14/20602/REM) towards the provision of upgrades of existing grass areas, grass pitch construction and the upgrade costs of a new clubhouse and changing rooms.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the authority to allocate and use an existing off-site contribution under the terms of a Section 106 Agreement for £400,000 (Planning Application 10/14117/OUT and 14/20602/REM) be granted to Stone Hockey and Rugby Club.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.2 Stone Hockey Club have agreed to a merger with Stone Rugby Club at their Enson Lane site, on the condition that Stone Rugby Club invest the £400,000 from the Section 106 Agreement into the newly formed Stone Hockey and Rugby Club. The money will be then used to construct a new clubhouse. For this merger to work Stone Hockey Club is providing the facility and Stone Rugby Club is providing investment. Without this investment the merger will fail to go through, and Stone Rugby Club will have to find a new venue.
- 2.3 The merger of the two clubs has been approved by England Hockey and England Rugby.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 Stone Rugby Club used to play their matches at the Tilling Drive site. The Rugby Club leased the land and had done so for many years. Bibby Ltd the company who owned the land, decided to sell the land to a housing developer leading to the building of residential development on that land.
- 3.2 When planning approval was given to develop the land for residential development. Stone Rugby Club agreed to move their rugby club to Stone Hockey Club, situated at Enson Lane, Stone. The new club would become Stone Hockey and Rugby Club (SHARC).
- 3.3 A sum of £400,000 was agreed as a S106 payment that would be made payable to SHARC. To develop grass pitches and to build a new clubhouse and changing rooms.
- 3.4 England Hockey and England Rugby have both given their approval to the proposed development and are actively working with the club to ensure this happens.
- 3.5 Stone Hockey Club received a grant of £200,000, when nearby public open space was used to build a retirement home. The agreement requires Stone Hockey Club to allow football to be played at their site for a period of 20 years.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 The creation of Stone Hockey and Rugby Club following the development of Stone Rugby Club's previous ground would support Corporate Business Plan 2021 - 2024 Objective 2 of providing an attractive, safe, and healthy place to live, work and enjoy and Objective 4 which is to be a self-sustaining organisation, that is financially sustainable.

5 Report Detail

- 5.1 Planning Application 10/14117/OUT and 14/20602/REM relates to the residential development of Tilling Drive and the subsequent loss of the playing pitch used by Stone Rugby Club.
- 5.2 To compensate for the loss of the playing pitch, it was agreed that a sum of £400,000 would be made payable to the Rugby Club in the form of S106 grant.
- 5.3 Through negotiations with Stone Hockey Club, England Rugby, and England Hockey, it was agreed that Stone Rugby Club would join Stone Hockey Club at their premises at Enson Lane Stone and the new club would then become known as Stone Hockey and Rugby Club (SHARC).

5.4 It was agreed by all parties, Stone Hockey Club, Stone Rugby Club, England Hockey, and England Rugby, that Stone Hockey Club would provide the venue and Stone Rugby Club would provide the funds to develop the facility.

5.5 Although a verbal agreement has been reached by all parties, a legal agreement will not be finalised until Stone Rugby Club have access to the funds, to allow the merger to take place.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

None

6.2 Legal

None

6.3 Human Resources

None

6.4 Risk Management

None

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

None

6.6 Health

None

6.7 Climate Change

None

7 Appendices

None

8 Previous Consideration

None

9 Background Papers

None

Contact Officer: John Martin
Telephone Number: 07970 237905
Ward Interest: St Michael's and Stonefield
Report Track: Cabinet - 18/1/2024 (Only)
Key Decision: No

Agenda Item 5c(i)

General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Programme 2023-26

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	18 January 2024
Report of:	Deputy Chief Executive
Portfolio:	Resources

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To propose to the Council the General Fund Revenue Budget for 2024-25, the updated Capital Programme 2023-24 to 2026-27 and indicative budgets for 2025-26 to 2026-27.
- 1.2 To approve the introduction of new car parking charges as per **APPENDIX 8**.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the following be recommended to the Council:
 - (a) The Budget Requirement for the General Fund Revenue Budget for 2024-25 be set at £17.504 million;
 - (b) The indicative General Fund Revenue Budgets be set at £17.708 million for 2025-26 and £17.453 million for 2026-27;
 - (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 2024-25 be increased by 2.99% to £173.56;
 - (f) The Council's Tax Base be set at 49,302.73 (as determined by the Head of Finance);
 - (g) Note that the inflation parameter for fees and charges for 2024-25 was generally set at 6%.
 - (h) That the new car parking charges contained in **APPENDIX 8** be approved

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 sets out the current position on the General Fund Revenue Budget for 2023-24 and indicative budgets for 2024-25 to 2026-27. It also reflects the position on the Local Government Finance Settlement 2024-25, New Homes Bonus Grant allocation, the position on the Council's Collection Fund, the Council's Tax Base for 2024-25 and the consequential Council Tax for 2024-25.
- 3.2 The budget for 2024-25 is based on the estimated outturn position for 2023-24, which has been updated to reflect known changes and estimates for 2024-25.
- 3.3 Indicative budgets have been set out for 2025-26 and 2026-27 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 potential change in the council's financial position in 2026-27 should the business rates reset take place. It cannot be assumed that support will be provided to manage this reduction in resources by central government at this time. The council is still operating with a one year financial settlement.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 The revenue budget and the capital programme have been based on the Council's priorities.

5 Report Detail

- 5.1 The respective Portfolio Budgets were submitted to Resources Scrutiny Committee on the 9 January 2024; the minutes from that committee is included at **APPENDIX 9**.

Budget Issues and Adjustments 2024-25

Inflation

- 5.2 The budgets for 2024-25 reflect the £1,925 pay award for 2023-24. A provision of 4% has been included for 2024-25; then 3% for 2025-26 and 2% for 2026-27.

- 5.3 Individual calculations have been carried out in respect of the budgets most affected by inflation. Inflation as measured by the Consumer Prices Index (November 2023) is 3.9% and for the Retail Prices Index it is 5.3%. Some contracts, most significantly for Freedom Leisure but also Veolia, have been individually calculated to reflect high inflation figures (the estimated CPI figure we have used is 5% for January 2024). For ongoing budgets, the general inflation assumption is 3%.

Spending pressures/Loss of income

- 5.4 The detailed budgets have been refreshed to reflect the forecast for 2023-24. Additional provision has been made within Portfolio budgets for inflation and other general items, including for a pay award and increments.
- 5.5 The pressures on the 2024-25 Portfolio budgets (recurring in future years) are itemised below:
- Increased investment in the finance team to meet the needs of the authority. It has been highlighted that as the council is embarking on numerous investment schemes there needs to be greater support provided by finance. As such an amount of £159k has been included in the base budget to increase staffing and support investment in the team.
 - The creation of a budget for transformation has been included at £100k. This will enable the council to review its processes and procedures to ensure it is delivering best practice in its service provision.
 - The pay award for 2023/24 came in significantly higher than had been estimated. This has a knock on effect for future years and has been reflected in the base budget.
 - Proposed changes to the garden waste contract will have a detrimental impact on the base budget position. This is because transferring the contract back to the county council will result in the loss of the net recycling credit on green waste disposal.

Budget savings proposals

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

Table 1: budget savings

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

Business Rates Income

- 5.7 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.

2023-24 Forecast Outturn

- 5.8 The Budget for 2023-24 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 £317k deficit.
- 5.9 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. At present the council is forecasting a £2.2m surplus over the budgeted for position for investment income. This results in a favourable overall forecast outturn for 2023/24 of £2m. This surplus will be set aside as an investment reserve to allow the council to make investments in services and assets.

Local Government Finance Settlement 2024-25 and Autumn Statement

- 5.10 The Local Government Finance Settlement for 2024-25 was received by the Council in December.
- 5.11 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 form of core funding following the demise of Revenue Support Grant.
- 5.12 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. The Statement also made various updates to policy regarding Business Rates reliefs, New Homes Bonus for one year (2024-25), but did not include statements on New Homes Bonus for the medium term, the Fair Funding Review or a Business Rates reset.
- 5.13 The 2024-25 Settlement included £1.986m for funding guarantee grant. This is a one off grant designed to maintain a minimum level of core spending power. It is important to note that this spending power guarantee was calculated on the basis that council tax was increased by the maximum 2.99%. If the council were to not increase this by the maximum, it would have a detrimental impact on future years budgets. This detrimental impact would be driven by the grants in future years being less than the “lost” potential income from not increasing council tax.
- 5.14 It is also worth noting that investment income is not taken into account when calculating the base funding position of the council as it cannot be seen as a guaranteed income stream to fund service delivery.

Business Rates Pooling and Retention

- 5.15 There is an assumption that any reset of Business Rates growth achieved to date will be deferred until at least 2026-27.
- 5.16 The Budget assumes that the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Business Rates Pool will remain in place. It is also likely that even if there is a 50% reset in business rates growth with effect from 1 April 2026, then transitional relief and/or the use of the Council’s reserves set aside for smoothing Business Rates fluctuations may well nullify any losses that would otherwise have been incurred in 2026-27.

- 5.17 Business Rates increase each year in line with the prevailing CPI of the preceding September. The freezing of the NNDR multiplier has only been applied to small businesses. This will result in a loss of income to the Council, offset by compensation for this loss via the NNDR Multiplier Section 31 grant. Section 31 Grant will cover the whole loss.
- 5.18 An analysis of the revised Retained Business Rates income for the Council is set out in **APPENDIX 3**.

New Homes Bonus

- 5.19 Allocations for the New Homes Bonus (NHB) scheme for 2024-25 will be £432k. It is assumed that the NHB scheme will continue in some form in future years and as such an amount has been allocated in 2025-26 and 2026-27 of £350k.

Rural Services Delivery Grant

- 5.20 The 2024-25 allocation is £29k. This amount was unchanged from 2023-24 and there is no assumption that this to be repeated in future years.

Core spending power grant

- 5.21 The core spending power grant of £18k has been allocated for 2024-25. It is assumed that this is a one off payment and is therefore not reflected in budgets post 2024-25.

Revenue Budget Summary 2024-25

- 5.22 The Portfolio Budget position set out below reflects the forecast outturn position for 2023-24, the proposed budget for 2024-25, and indicative budgets for 2025-26 and 2026-27. The detailed budgets are included in **APPENDIX 1**.

Table 2: Revenue Budget Recommended to Council

	Forecast Outturn 2023-24 £000	Budget 2024-25 £000	Indicative Budget 2025-26 £000	Indicative Budget 2026-27 £000
Net Expenditure				
Portfolio budgets	16,489	17,707	18,036	18,624
Net investment income	(2,600)	(1,950)	(1,000)	(840)
Technical financing	3,172	2,325	1,169	166
Net Spending	17,061	18,082	18,205	17,950
Less: government Grants				
NNDR multiplier - S.31	(147)	(147)	(147)	(147)
New Homes Bonus	(598)	(431)	(350)	(350)
Budget Requirement	16,316	17,504	17,708	17,453
Financing				
Business Rates	(6,256)	(6,873)	(7,173)	(6,747)
Revenue Support Grant	(113)	(120)	(120)	(120)
Council Tax Income	(8,235)	(8,557)	(8,901)	(9,259)
Fund guarantee grant *	(1,587)	(1,986)		
Core spending power grant	(114)	(18)		
Rural services delivery grant	(29)	(29)		
Total Financing	(16,334)	(17,583)	(16,194)	(16,126)
Transfer from/(to) Balances	(18)	(79)	1,514	1,327
Funding guarantee estimate *			(1,500)	(1,000)
Revised transfer from/(to) balances	(18)	(79)	14	327

5.23 Table has been updated from the report of the 4 January 2024 to reflect the impact of the Cannock led shared service budgets. There have been no other changes, although the local government finance settlement is still provisional at this stage.

5.24 The above budgets are in general based upon the maintenance of existing service provision and delivery of the priorities set out in the Corporate Business Plan. During 2023/24 a zero based budgeting exercise was undertaken. During this exercise budgets were reviewed line by line by the finance team with the budget holders. The results of this exercise have been reflected in the budgets in table 2.

5.25 As indicated above details are only currently available for the 2024-25 financial year. Limited amendments have been made to assumptions in

relation to the new funding regime for 2025-26 and onwards. The Business Rates Scheme in particular carries the greatest uncertainty, along with any outcome from the Fair Funding Review. 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.

5.26 The major changes in the indicative Budget for 2024-25 when compared to the currently proposed 2024-25 budget are as set out in Table 3.

5.27 Table 3: Changes in 2024-25 budget assumptions

Description	Change £000
Portfolio budgets higher than anticipated	1,840
Investment income	(1,600)
Investment reserve	1,500
Business initiative reserve	500
Climate change	250
Business Rates higher than anticipated	(495)
Council tax income	(82)
NHB	(82)
Funding guarantee grant	(1,986)
Revenue Support Grant	(120)
Other unbudgeted grant	(47)
Total	(322)

5.28 The primary changes in the table above are the new grants paid to the council as a one off (Funding guarantee grant £1.986m. Three new reserves have also been created. The investment reserve is to provide monies to invest in council assets and services. This reserve will enable the council to make transformational change in the way that it engages with residents and delivers services for the betterment of residents of the council. The business initiative reserve is for service areas to build robust business cases to bid for resources from to support service delivery. These business cases will be presented to an evaluation panel to ensure maximum value for money is being achieved. Finally, an additional amount has been set aside for climate change to add to the existing climate change reserve, bringing the total to £275k. All three are one off resources rather than being built into the base budget.

5.29 Table 2 identifies a transfer to balances in 2024-25, taking into account the savings detailed in table 1. To date the council has not budgeted for the one off grants from central government in its budget setting process due to material uncertainty about the amounts. Additional lines have been added to table 2 this year to reflect what the grant amounts in future years may be. They are based on a prudent estimate driven by the amounts awarded for 2024-25. As per the table if they are considered then a £14k transfer from reserves will take place in 2025-26. Whilst there is a deficit of £327k in 2026-27, this is driven in part by accounting for the business rates reset in year and

consequential reduction in business rates with no compensating funding being assumed. As referred to above, there is still significant uncertainty in relation to the whole of local government funding.

- 5.30 A Business Rates reset will have a negative impact on the Borough, as the amount currently received is based on a low baseline - above which the Borough retains Business Rates income. A Business Rates review is likely to reset this baseline to a higher level for Stafford, which will leave less scope to generate the same level of income as in the past. There is no certainty that this change will happen in 2026-27, but an assumption needed to be made, because the Government has signalled in the past that such a review will be forthcoming. The Council has long anticipated the change and holds a reserve to provide a buffer for significant fluctuations, and this will enable losses of the magnitude set out above, at least in the short term, to have no impact on the revenue budget. It is also likely that such a major change would be accompanied by transitional relief, which will soften the losses resulting from the policy change, albeit for a limited period.

Reserves and Balances

- 5.31 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**)
- 5.32 The Council holds a number of earmarked reserves for specific purposes. Earmarked reserves are itemised in **APPENDIX 4**.
- 5.33 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 2023-24 to 2026-27

- 5.34 The Capital Programme is attached as **APPENDIX 2**.
- 5.35 There have been no significant changes in the projects to be delivered, slippage has been reflected in the schemes being presented for approval as appropriate.
- 5.36 The council has capital resources of £714k general fund and £5,486k of S106 resources not allocated at present. This is an increase from the previous years general fund unallocated amount of £156k and £5,100k S106.

Council Tax Base and Collection Fund

- 5.37 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**)
- 5.38 The Council's Tax Base is now estimated to be 49,302.73 representing an increase of 0.9% on 2023-24. The increase reflects the net increase in new properties built, offset by the cost of the Local Council Tax Reduction scheme.
- 5.39 The Tax Base has been calculated as follows:

Council Tax base for budget setting purposes	52,580.09
Less: impact of Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme	<u>-3,277.36</u>
	<u>49,302.73</u>

- 5.40 The Council's Collection Fund has been reviewed as part of the budget process.

Council Tax 2024-25

- 5.41 In determining the level of Council Tax for 2024-25 Cabinet will need to take into account the medium term financial position and the Council Tax Referendum Thresholds.
- 5.42 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.
- 5.43 The proposed level of Stafford's Council Tax for 2024-25 is £173.56 for a Band D property with the overall level of Council Tax subject to final determination by Council in February 2024. The figures set out in this report may require minor amendment if any further information emerges before then. Such an increase amounts to £5.04 on a Band D property, or about 10p per week.
- 5.44 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

- 5.45 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 changes to the local government financial regime potentially include

Business Rates Retention and the reset of Business Rates, a replacement for New Homes Bonus and a Fair Funding Review.

- 5.46 Each of these issues have been discussed in previous years' budget reports, with the conclusion that it was impossible to determine how both Core and Incentive based funding will change under the new regime. Material variances exist between the best /worst case future scenarios and it is essential that a prudent approach is adopted until further details become available.
- 5.47 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.
- 5.48 The major potential adverse impact over the medium term is regarding Government policy, a Business Rates reset being the most significant. However, any reset is likely to be accompanied by a reasonable lead-in, with transitional relief. The Council also holds a reserve to soften the impact of Business Rates fluctuations, which could support the 2024-25 Budget if needed.

Horizon scanning

- 5.49 There are several areas of uncertainty for the council going forwards and at present no budgetary provision has been made as costings are unclear. Primary amongst these is the introduction of food waste collection. This a new service that central government are legislating for the council to undertake. We are unsure of the arrangements for this or if funding will be provided by central government but if it is not, then this will be a cost pressure for the council.
- 5.50 As inflation is starting to converge with the Bank of England target of 2% it is unlikely that interest rates will remain at their current levels for the entirety of the next financial year. This will mean investment income starting to reduce. As interest rates decrease the amount of contribution to the investment reserve will reduce to compensate to avoid creating a budget deficit.
- 5.51 Central government funding remains a challenge to forecast. With only one-year settlements being provided and the driver for the amounts being awarded subject to change budgeting for them is very difficult. This year we have modelled up what it would look like if they were to be awarded again next year.

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 corporate 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. For example, the business rates reserve to offset the potential business rates reset.

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:

Appendix 2:

Appendix 3:

Appendix 4:

Appendix 5:

Appendix 6:

Appendix 7:

8 Previous Consideration

None

9 Background Papers

Files are available in Financial Services

Contact Officer:	Chris Forrester
Telephone Number:	01543 464 334
Ward Interest:	Nil
Report Track:	Cabinet 4 January 2024 Resource Scrutiny Committee 9 January 2024
Key Decision:	Yes

Community

	Outturn 2023-2024 £	Budget 2024-2025 £	Budget 2025-2026 £	Budget 2026-2027 £
1 Private Sector Housing (Standards)				
Employee Expenses	501,090	520,180	535,920	547,000
Premises Related Expenditure	240	-	-	-
Transport Related Expenditure	20,470	15,300	15,540	15,790
Supplies & Services	50,790	30,190	30,410	30,540
Total Expenditure	572,590	565,670	581,870	593,330
Income	(426,550)	(417,660)	(430,090)	(438,870)
Total Income	(426,550)	(417,660)	(430,090)	(438,870)
Private Sector Housing (Standards) Net Expenditure	146,040	148,010	151,780	154,460
2 Housing Act Sewerage Works				
Premises Related Expenditure	2,170	2,170	2,210	2,250
Total Expenditure	2,170	2,170	2,210	2,250
Housing Act Sewerage Works Net Expenditure	2,170	2,170	2,210	2,250
3 Private Sector Hsg (Loans & Mortgages)				
Premises Related Expenditure	5,730	5,730	5,850	5,970
Total Expenditure	5,730	5,730	5,850	5,970
Income	(8,740)	(9,230)	(9,750)	(10,300)
Total Income	(8,740)	(9,230)	(9,750)	(10,300)
Private Sector Hsg (Loans & Mortgages) Net Expenditure	(3,010)	(3,500)	(3,900)	(4,330)
4 Partnerships				
Supplies & Services	25,290	25,140	25,140	25,140
Total Expenditure	25,290	25,140	25,140	25,140
Partnerships Net Expenditure	25,290	25,140	25,140	25,140
5 Homelessness & Housing Advice				
Employee Expenses	492,040	523,580	529,530	540,590
Premises Related Expenditure	72,090	65,580	65,640	67,390
Transport Related Expenditure	3,260	5,650	5,650	5,650
Supplies & Services	243,750	243,790	246,000	250,650
Total Expenditure	811,140	838,600	846,820	864,280
Income	(102,360)	(117,000)	(117,000)	(117,000)
Total Income	(102,360)	(117,000)	(117,000)	(117,000)
Homelessness & Housing Advice Net Expenditure	708,780	721,600	729,820	747,280
6 Glover Street				
Premises Related Expenditure	33,640	33,700	35,400	37,190
Supplies & Services	430	150	150	150
Total Expenditure	34,070	33,850	35,550	37,340
Income	(21,200)	(18,420)	(18,850)	(19,230)
Total Income	(21,200)	(18,420)	(18,850)	(19,230)
Glover Street Net Expenditure	12,870	15,430	16,700	18,110

Community

	Outturn 2023-2024	Budget 2024-2025	Budget 2025-2026	Budget 2026-2027
	£	£	£	£
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	10,780	11,430	12,120	12,850
Supplies & Services	45,480	18,330	18,330	18,330
Third Party Payments	94,860	138,240	152,060	167,270
Total Expenditure	151,120	168,000	182,510	198,450
CCTV Net Expenditure	151,120	168,000	182,510	198,450
Community Net Expenditure	1,172,220	1,205,810	1,233,220	1,270,320

Community PortfolioVariation Statement 2024/2025 to 2026/2027

	2024/2025 Indicative	Real Terms / Efficiency Variations	2024/2025 Budget	2025/2026 Indicative	Real Terms / Efficiency Variations	2025/2026 Budget	Inflation	Real Terms / Efficiency Variations	2026/2027 Budget
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Employee Costs	628	416	1,044	641	425	1,066	21	1	1,088
Premises Related Costs	102	17	119	105	16	121	4	1	126
Transport Related Costs	9	12	21	9	12	21	-	-	21
Supplies and Services	321	125	446	324	125	449	5	-	454
Third Party	100	38	138	102	50	152	3	12	167
Total Expenditure	1,160	608	1,768	1,181	628	1,809	33	14	1,856
Income	- 96	- 466	- 562	- 97	- 479	- 576	- 1	- 9	- 586
Net Expenditure	1,064	142	1,206	1,084	149	1,233	32	5	1,270
Less Portfolio transfers	130			133					
Original budget totals	934			951					

Community Portfolio**Proposed Real Terms / Efficiency Variations****2024/25 Change**

	£'000	£'000
<u>Real Term Variations</u>		
Pay award and staffing variations		27
Increased utility charges		11
DFG in house service		
Employees	391	
Transport	12	
Supplies	7	
Income (capital and contribution from south staffs)	<u>-410</u>	-
CCTV contract increase		14
Zero based budget review		7
Homelessness		
Supplies	120	
Income	<u>-60</u>	60
Budget savings reinstated		
More efficient CCTV monitoring aligned to night time economy	<u>24</u>	24
Minor variations		-1
		<u><u>142</u></u>

2025/26 Change

	£'000	£'000
<u>Real Term Variations</u>		
Pay award and staffing variations		22
Increased utility charges		12
DFG in house service		
Employees	391	
Transport	12	
Supplies	7	
Income (capital and contribution from south staffs)	<u>-410</u>	-
CCTV contract increase		26
Zero based budget review		7
Homelessness		
Supplies	120	
Income	<u>-60</u>	60
Budget savings reinstated		
More efficient CCTV monitoring aligned to night time economy	<u>24</u>	24
Minor variations		-2
		<u><u>149</u></u>

2026/27 Change

	£'000	£'000
<u>Real Term Variations</u>		
Increase in pension costs		2
CCTV contract		12
DFG income in house service		-9
		<u>5</u>

Economic Development and Planning

	Outturn 2023-2024 £	Budget 2024-2025 £	Budget 2025-2026 £	Budget 2026-2027 £
1 Management and Support				
Employee Expenses	216,440	261,230	268,820	274,440
Supplies & Services	83,020	41,150	41,150	41,150
Total Expenditure	299,460	302,380	309,970	315,590
Income	(29,080)	(28,530)	(29,000)	(29,460)
Total Income	(29,080)	(28,530)	(29,000)	(29,460)
Management and Support Net Expenditure	270,380	273,850	280,970	286,130
2 Building Control				
Supplies & Services	2,180	500	500	500
Third Party Payments	208,110	231,640	243,090	251,330
Total Expenditure	210,290	232,140	243,590	251,830
Building Control Net Expenditure	210,290	232,140	243,590	251,830
3 Development Management				
Employee Expenses	1,454,850	1,135,600	1,169,800	1,193,960
Transport Related Expenditure	20,210	24,690	24,690	24,690
Supplies & Services	249,860	201,140	201,140	201,140
Total Expenditure	1,724,920	1,361,430	1,395,630	1,419,790
Income	(980,600)	(798,880)	(800,000)	(800,520)
Total Income	(980,600)	(798,880)	(800,000)	(800,520)
Development Management Net Expenditure	744,320	562,550	595,630	619,270
4 Forward Planning				
Employee Expenses	270,150	301,950	310,980	317,400
Transport Related Expenditure	10,420	6,520	6,520	6,520
Supplies & Services	61,900	146,090	194,770	168,750
Total Expenditure	342,470	454,560	512,270	492,670
Income	(6,260)	(94,730)	(143,410)	(117,390)
Total Income	(6,260)	(94,730)	(143,410)	(117,390)
Forward Planning Net Expenditure	336,210	359,830	368,860	375,280
5 Land Charges - Local Searches				
Employee Expenses	57,410	59,770	61,610	62,930
Supplies & Services	75,260	23,080	23,080	23,080
Total Expenditure	132,670	82,850	84,690	86,010
Income	(131,840)	(97,840)	(97,840)	(97,840)
Total Income	(131,840)	(97,840)	(97,840)	(97,840)
Land Charges - Local Searches Net Expenditure	830	(14,990)	(13,150)	(11,830)

Economic Development and Planning

	Outturn 2023-2024	Budget 2024-2025	Budget 2025-2026	Budget 2026-2027
	£	£	£	£
6 Land & Properties				
Premises Related Expenditure	60,020	43,520	44,420	45,340
Supplies & Services	12,360	1,590	1,590	1,590
Total Expenditure	72,380	45,110	46,010	46,930
Income	(36,290)	(50,490)	(51,070)	(51,690)
Total Income	(36,290)	(50,490)	(51,070)	(51,690)
Land & Properties Net Expenditure	36,090	(5,380)	(5,060)	(4,760)
7 Economic Growth and Strategic Projects				
Employee Expenses	341,540	385,060	396,020	403,930
Premises Related Expenditure	38,260	36,060	36,840	37,640
Transport Related Expenditure	2,500	1,600	1,600	1,600
Supplies & Services	88,860	33,210	33,210	33,210
Total Expenditure	471,160	455,930	467,670	476,380
Economic Growth and Strategic Projects Net Expenditure	471,160	455,930	467,670	476,380
8 Borough Tourism				
Supplies & Services	16,640	20,640	20,640	20,640
Total Expenditure	16,640	20,640	20,640	20,640
Borough Tourism Net Expenditure	16,640	20,640	20,640	20,640
Economic Development and Planning Net Expenditure	2,085,920	1,884,570	1,959,150	2,012,940

Economic Development and Planning Portfolio

Variation Statement 2024/2025 to 2026/2027

	2024/2025 Indicative	Real Terms / Efficiency Variations	2024/2025 Budget	2025/2026 Indicative	Real Terms / Efficiency Variations	2025/2026 Budget	Inflation	Real Terms / Efficiency Variations	2026/2027 Budget
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Employee Costs	2,151	- 8	2,143	2,195	12	2,207	41	5	2,253
Premises Related Costs	107	- 27	80	108	- 27	81	2	-	83
Transport Related Costs	45	- 12	33	45	- 12	33	-	-	33
Supplies and Services	550	- 83	467	433	83	516	-	- 26	490
Third Party Payments	184	48	232	189	54	243	5	3	251
Total Expenditure	3,037	- 82	2,955	2,970	110	3,080	48	- 18	3,110
Income	- 1,223	153	- 1,070	- 1,107	- 14	- 1,121	- 1	25	- 1,097
Net Expenditure	1,814	71	1,885	1,863	96	1,959	47	7	2,013
Portfolio transfer	-724			-680					
Original budget	1,090			1,183					

Planning and Regeneration Portfolio

Proposed Real Terms / Efficiency Variations

2024/25 Change

	£'000	£'000
<u>Real Term Variations</u>		
Pay award and staffing variations		-37
Increased utility charges		-3
Reduced rates		-19
Leased Car		-10
Local Plan Expenditure & Rephasing		
Supplies	-29	
Income	29	-
Building Control Shared Service Adjustment		47
Zero based budget review		-36
Reduced parking income		67
Budget savings reinstated		
Development support efficiencies	26	
New planning fees	31	57
minor variations		5
		71

2025/26 Change

	£'000	£'000
<u>Real Term Variations</u>		
Pay award and staffing variations		-18
Increased utility charges		-3
Reduced rates		-20
Leased Car		-11
Local Plan Expenditure & Rephasing		
Supplies	138	
Income	-138	-
Building Control Shared Service Adjustment		55
Zero based budget review		-36
Reduced parking income		67
Budget savings reinstated		
Development support efficiencies	26	
New planning fees	31	57
minor variations		5
		96

2026/27 Change

	£'000	£'000
<u>Real Term Variations</u>		
Increase in pension costs		5
Local Plan Expenditure & Rephasing		
Supplies	-26	
Income	<u>26</u>	-
Building Control Shared Service Adjustment		4
Minor variations		-2
		<u><u>7</u></u>

Environment

	Outturn 2023-2024	Budget 2024-2025	Budget 2025-2026	Budget 2026-2027
	£	£	£	£
1 Management & Support				
Employee Expenses	213,040	258,080	265,670	271,120
Transport Related Expenditure	2,920	1,000	1,000	1,000
Supplies & Services	39,590	43,450	43,450	43,450
Total Expenditure	255,550	302,530	310,120	315,570
Management & Support Net Expenditure	255,550	302,530	310,120	315,570
2 Regulatory Services				
Employee Expenses	721,420	711,410	733,110	748,390
Premises Related Expenditure	12,650	9,260	9,450	9,640
Transport Related Expenditure	34,170	23,500	23,500	23,520
Supplies & Services	54,300	50,620	50,620	50,620
Total Expenditure	822,540	794,790	816,680	832,170
Income	(322,480)	(227,400)	(227,720)	(227,950)
Total Income	(322,480)	(227,400)	(227,720)	(227,950)
Regulatory Services Net Expenditure	500,060	567,390	588,960	604,220
3 Strategic Health Delivery				
Employee Expenses	48,850	60,680	62,540	63,850
Transport Related Expenditure	2,050	500	500	500
Supplies & Services	-	300	300	300
Total Expenditure	50,900	61,480	63,340	64,650
Strategic Health Delivery Net Expenditure	50,900	61,480	63,340	64,650
4 Partnerships Environmental Management				
Employee Expenses	52,990	50,160	51,700	52,760
Premises Related Expenditure	90	940	960	980
Transport Related Expenditure	190	960	960	960
Supplies & Services	58,560	19,750	19,750	19,750
Total Expenditure	111,830	71,810	73,370	74,450
Income	(49,880)	(10,080)	(10,280)	(10,490)
Total Income	(49,880)	(10,080)	(10,280)	(10,490)
Partnerships Environmental Management Net Expenditure	61,950	61,730	63,090	63,960

Environment

	Outturn 2023-2024 £	Budget 2024-2025 £	Budget 2025-2026 £	Budget 2026-2027 £
5 Waste & Recycling				
Employee Expenses	69,170	71,640	73,780	75,460
Premises Related Expenditure	1,500	-	-	-
Transport Related Expenditure	3,580	2,500	2,500	2,500
Supplies & Services	138,650	143,670	143,870	144,070
Third Party Payments	4,851,690	4,767,620	5,026,890	5,177,500
Total Expenditure	5,064,590	4,985,430	5,247,040	5,399,530
Income	(2,773,470)	(2,717,050)	(2,766,670)	(2,842,210)
Total Income	(2,773,470)	(2,717,050)	(2,766,670)	(2,842,210)
Waste & Recycling Net Expenditure	2,291,120	2,268,380	2,480,370	2,557,320
6 Bereavement Services				
Employee Expenses	269,770	292,750	299,290	305,010
Premises Related Expenditure	261,800	294,700	304,990	315,740
Transport Related Expenditure	5,960	5,870	5,870	5,870
Supplies & Services	304,390	324,390	325,710	326,750
Total Expenditure	841,920	917,710	935,860	953,370
Income	(1,908,350)	(1,983,190)	(2,042,610)	(2,083,380)
Total Income	(1,908,350)	(1,983,190)	(2,042,610)	(2,083,380)
Bereavement Services Net Expenditure	(1,066,430)	(1,065,480)	(1,106,750)	(1,130,010)
7 Misc Highways Functions (ex Planning)				
Premises Related Expenditure	51,280	52,020	54,100	56,210
Supplies & Services	630	-	-	-
Total Expenditure	51,910	52,020	54,100	56,210
Income	(5,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)
Total Income	(5,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)
Misc Highways Functions (ex Planning) Net Expenditure	46,910	47,020	49,100	51,210
8 Drainage Services				
Premises Related Expenditure	4,550	4,550	4,640	4,730
Supplies & Services	113,910	113,910	116,110	118,430
Total Expenditure	118,460	118,460	120,750	123,160
Drainage Services Net Expenditure	118,460	118,460	120,750	123,160

Environment

	Outturn 2023-2024 £	Budget 2024-2025 £	Budget 2025-2026 £	Budget 2026-2027 £
9 Street Scene				
Employee Expenses	2,123,270	2,184,940	2,249,350	2,293,820
Premises Related Expenditure	67,350	69,040	73,610	76,840
Transport Related Expenditure	307,300	309,740	315,800	321,970
Supplies & Services	456,460	430,460	432,490	434,560
Total Expenditure	2,954,380	2,994,180	3,071,250	3,127,190
Income	(768,210)	(768,210)	(782,720)	(797,510)
Total Income	(768,210)	(768,210)	(782,720)	(797,510)
Street Scene Net Expenditure	2,186,170	2,225,970	2,288,530	2,329,680
10 Cleansing Services				
Premises Related Expenditure	43,940	44,700	45,940	47,210
Supplies & Services	20,190	19,610	19,630	19,640
Total Expenditure	64,130	64,310	65,570	66,850
Income	(360)	-	-	-
Total Income	(360)	-	-	-
Cleansing Services Net Expenditure	63,770	64,310	65,570	66,850
11 Pest Control				
Employee Expenses	180,580	210,470	216,820	221,430
Transport Related Expenditure	13,820	10,220	10,420	10,630
Supplies & Services	41,470	43,870	43,870	43,870
Total Expenditure	235,870	264,560	271,110	275,930
Income	(166,180)	(177,480)	(181,030)	(184,660)
Total Income	(166,180)	(177,480)	(181,030)	(184,660)
Pest Control Net Expenditure	69,690	87,080	90,080	91,270
12 Dog Warden Service				
Transport Related Expenditure	1,300	2,510	2,510	2,560
Supplies & Services	4,370	3,920	3,920	3,920
Third Party Payments	4,460	6,360	6,490	6,620
Total Expenditure	10,130	12,790	12,920	13,100
Income	(10,520)	(9,000)	(9,230)	(9,420)
Total Income	(10,520)	(9,000)	(9,230)	(9,420)
Dog Warden Service Net Expenditure	(390)	3,790	3,690	3,680

Environment

	Outturn 2023-2024	Budget 2024-2025	Budget 2025-2026	Budget 2026-2027
	£	£	£	£
13 Off Street Parking Services				
Employee Expenses	80,770	84,000	86,600	88,440
Premises Related Expenditure	850,640	945,950	974,780	1,004,640
Transport Related Expenditure	1,140	2,300	2,300	2,300
Supplies & Services	137,870	105,830	106,030	106,040
Third Party Payments	475,470	494,050	513,810	524,080
Total Expenditure	1,545,890	1,632,130	1,683,520	1,725,500
Income	(2,716,360)	(2,464,200)	(2,465,800)	(2,465,840)
Total Income	(2,716,360)	(2,464,200)	(2,465,800)	(2,465,840)
Off Street Parking Services Net Expenditure	(1,170,470)	(832,070)	(782,280)	(740,340)
14 Borough Markets				
Employee Expenses	74,260	101,170	104,290	106,520
Premises Related Expenditure	161,080	174,750	181,780	189,170
Transport Related Expenditure	850	100	100	100
Supplies & Services	62,320	71,960	72,270	72,580
Total Expenditure	298,510	347,980	358,440	368,370
Income	(164,080)	(183,220)	(183,670)	(184,130)
Total Income	(164,080)	(183,220)	(183,670)	(184,130)
Borough Markets Net Expenditure	134,430	164,760	174,770	184,240
Environment Net Expenditure	3,541,720	4,075,350	4,409,340	4,585,460

Environment Portfolio**Variation Statement 2024/2025 to 2026/2027**

	2024/2025 Indicative	Real Terms / Efficiency Variations	2024/2025 Budget	2025/2026 Indicative	Real Terms / Efficiency Variations	2025/2026 Budget	Inflation	Real Terms / Efficiency Variations	2026/2027 Budget
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Employee Costs	4,017	8	4,025	4,100	43	4,143	75	9	4,227
Premises Related Costs	1,533	63	1,596	1,581	69	1,650	55	-	1,705
Transport Related Costs	374	- 15	359	380	- 14	366	6	-	372
Supplies and Services	1,303	69	1,372	1,307	71	1,378	6	-	1,384
Third Party Payments	5,396	- 128	5,268	5,549	- 2	5,547	109	52	5,708
Total Expenditure	12,623	- 3	12,620	12,917	167	13,084	251	61	13,396
Income	- 9,041	496	- 8,545	- 9,168	493	- 8,675	- 126	- 10	- 8,811
Net Expenditure	3,582	493	4,075	3,749	660	4,409	125	51	4,585
Less Portfolio transfers	-837			-795					
Original budget totals	4,419			4,544					

Environment Portfolio**Proposed Real Terms / Efficiency Variations****2024/25 Change**

	£'000	£'000
<u>Real Term Variations</u>		
Pay award and Staffing variations		-14
Increased utility charges		32
Rates revaluation		11
Reduction leased cars		-16
Waste		
Contract	16	
Dry recycling gate fees - changes in prices and glass provision	100	
Green gate fees - assumed transfer to SCC	-256	
Reduced recycling credits - tonnage and minimal green waste income	364	
Sale of dry recycling materials - price changes	69	293
Garden waste income - assumed properties		56
Parking contract		18
Zero based budget review		37
Reduced markets income		18
Bereavement		
Expenditure	50	
Income	-89	-39
Additional parking income		-63
Budget savings reinstated		
Reduce energy costs through LED lighting	30	
Efficiencies in Pest Control Service	20	
Reduced cleaning specification	10	
Lease car park concessions	80	
Optimise bus shelter advertising to fund maintenance	20	160
minor variations		-
		<u>493</u>

2025/26 Change

	£'000	£'000
<u>Real Term Variations</u>		
Pay award and Staffing variations		22
Increased utility charges		41
Rates revaluation		11
Reduction leased cars		-16
Waste		
Contract	109	
Dry recycling gate fees - changes in prices and glass provision	122	
Green gate fees - assumed transfer to SCC	-261	
Reduced recycling credits - tonnage and minimal green waste income	390	
Sale of dry recycling materials - price changes	69	429
Garden waste income - assumed properties		51
Parking contract		27
Zero based budget review		38
Reduced markets income		18
Bereavement		
Expenditure	50	
Income	-114	-64
Additional parking income		-63
Budget savings reinstated		
Reduce energy costs through LED lighting	30	
Efficiencies in Pest Control Service	20	
Reduced cleaning specification	10	
Lease car park concessions	80	
Optimise bus shelter advertising to fund maintenance	20	160
minor variations		6
		<u>660</u>

2026/27 Change

	£'000	£'000
<u>Real Term Variations</u>		
Increase in pension costs		10
Waste		
Property growth	42	
Dry recycling gate fees	11	
Recycling credits	-8	45
Minor variation		-4
		<u>51</u>

Leisure and Culture

	Outturn 2023-2024 £	Budget 2024-2025 £	Budget 2025-2026 £	Budget 2026-2027 £
1 Leisure Section				
Employee Expenses	107,450	113,520	116,970	119,430
Transport Related Expenditure	3,180	2,250	2,250	2,250
Supplies & Services	10,960	4,610	4,610	4,610
Total Expenditure	121,590	120,380	123,830	126,290
Income	(31,560)	-	-	-
Total Income	(31,560)	-	-	-
Leisure Section Net Expenditure	90,030	120,380	123,830	126,290
2 Allotments				
Premises Related Expenditure	4,510	4,280	4,370	4,460
Supplies & Services	14,400	14,770	14,770	14,770
Total Expenditure	18,910	19,050	19,140	19,230
Income	(1,200)	(830)	(830)	(830)
Total Income	(1,200)	(830)		(830)
Allotments Net Expenditure	17,710	18,220	18,310	18,400
3 Ancient High House				
Premises Related Expenditure	10,330	10,330	10,540	10,750
Total Expenditure	10,330	10,330	10,540	10,750
Ancient High House Net Expenditure	10,330	10,330	10,540	10,750
4 Broadeye Windmill				
Premises Related Expenditure	1,640	2,950	3,050	3,150
Supplies & Services	70	70	70	70
Total Expenditure	1,710	3,020	3,120	3,220
Broadeye Windmill Net Expenditure	1,710	3,020	3,120	3,220
5 Izaak Walton Cottage				
Premises Related Expenditure	8,310	8,310	8,480	8,650
Total Expenditure	8,310	8,310	8,480	8,650
Izaak Walton Cottage Net Expenditure	8,310	8,310	8,480	8,650
6 Stafford Castle				
Premises Related Expenditure	12,690	12,690	12,940	13,200
Total Expenditure	12,690	12,690	12,940	13,200
Stafford Castle Net Expenditure	12,690	12,690	12,940	13,200

Leisure and Culture

	Outturn 2023-2024	Budget 2024-2025	Budget 2025-2026	Budget 2026-2027
	£	£	£	£
7 Leisure Management Contract				
Supplies & Services	277,630	377,210	441,470	575,440
Third Party Payments	681,550	607,650	580,970	513,160
Total Expenditure	959,180	984,860	1,022,440	1,088,600
Income	(145,170)	(159,370)	(185,330)	(260,040)
Total Income	(145,170)	(159,370)	(185,330)	(260,040)
Leisure Management Contract Net Expenditure	814,010	825,490	837,110	828,560
8 Leisure Strategy				
Employee Expenses	322,260	330,550	339,660	349,020
Premises Related Expenditure	4,950	4,950	5,050	5,150
Supplies & Services	90,230	89,630	89,630	89,630
Total Expenditure	417,440	425,130	434,340	443,800
Leisure Strategy Net Expenditure	417,440	425,130	434,340	443,800
9 Parks & Open Spaces				
Employee Expenses	249,150	269,580	276,300	281,770
Premises Related Expenditure	516,660	430,850	442,540	453,890
Transport Related Expenditure	3,730	5,010	5,120	5,230
Supplies & Services	146,260	107,120	107,110	107,120
Total Expenditure	915,800	812,560	831,070	848,010
Income	(263,630)	(95,570)	(97,490)	(99,410)
Total Income	(263,630)	(95,570)	(97,490)	(99,410)
Parks & Open Spaces Net Expenditure	652,170	716,990	733,580	748,600
Leisure and Culture Net Expenditure	2,024,400	2,140,560	2,182,250	2,201,470

Leisure PortfolioVariation Statement 2024/2025 to 2026/2027

	2024/2025 Indicative	Real Terms / Efficiency Variations	2024/2025 Budget	2025/2026 Indicative	Real Terms / Efficiency Variations	2025/2026 Budget	Inflation	Real Terms / Efficiency Variations	2026/2027 Budget
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Employee Costs	676	38	714	691	42	733	7	10	750
Premises Related Costs	481	- 7	474	492	- 5	487	12	-	499
Transport Related Costs	10	- 3	7	10	- 3	7	-	-	7
Supplies and Services	541	53	594	606	52	658	-	134	792
Third Party Payments	602	6	608	566	15	581	12	- 80	513
Total Expenditure	2,310	87	2,397	2,365	101	2,466	31	64	2,561
Income	- 296	40	- 256	- 324	40	- 284	- 2	- 74	- 360
Net Expenditure	2,014	127	2,141	2,041	141	2,182	29	- 10	2,201
Portfolio transfers	17			17					
Original budget totals	2,031			2,058					

Leisure Portfolio**Proposed Real Terms / Efficiency Variations****2024/25 Change**

	£'000	£'000
<u>Real Term Variations</u>		
Pay award and Staffing variations		14
Utility charges		-7
Leisure Management Contract		
Third Party Payments - Inflation		5
Zero based budget review		38
Budget savings reinstated		
Streetscene efficiencies	75	75
minor variations		2
		<u>127</u>

2025/26 Change

	£'000	£'000
<u>Real Term Variations</u>		
Pay award and Staffing variations		17
Utility charges		-6
Leisure Management Contract		
Third Party Payments - Inflation		15
Zero based budget review		38
Budget savings reinstated		
Streetscene efficiencies	75	75
minor variations		2
		<u>141</u>

2026/27 Change

	£'000	£'000
<u>Real Term Variations</u>		
Increase in pension costs		10
Leisure management contract		
Base contract change	-80	
Equalisation reserve	134	
Equalisation reserve Income	-75	-21
minor variations		1
		<u>- 10</u>

Resources

	Outturn 2023-2024 £	Budget 2024-2025 £	Budget 2025-2026 £	Budget 2026-2027 £
1 Public Buildings				
Employee Expenses	72,530	80,360	82,650	84,070
Premises Related Expenditure	1,306,390	1,333,060	1,368,800	1,405,750
Transport Related Expenditure	30	-	-	-
Supplies & Services	132,850	122,530	126,450	128,650
Total Expenditure	1,511,800	1,535,950	1,577,900	1,618,470
Income	(568,120)	(549,420)	(558,150)	(558,150)
Total Income	(568,120)	(549,420)	(558,150)	(558,150)
Public Buildings Net Expenditure	943,680	986,530	1,019,750	1,060,320
2 Facilities Management				
Employee Expenses	225,840	239,990	248,260	253,230
Transport Related Expenditure	6,540	4,000	4,000	4,000
Supplies & Services	3,840	4,660	4,660	4,660
Total Expenditure	236,220	248,650	256,920	261,890
Facilities Management Net Expenditure	236,220	248,650	256,920	261,890
3 Executive Management				
Employee Expenses	882,920	1,061,440	1,100,340	1,125,770
Transport Related Expenditure	1,780	-	-	-
Supplies & Services	32,980	32,520	32,520	32,520
Total Expenditure	917,680	1,093,960	1,132,860	1,158,290
Income	(262,320)	(275,150)	(285,890)	(291,650)
Total Income	(262,320)	(275,150)	(285,890)	(291,650)
Executive Management Net Expenditure	655,360	818,810	846,970	866,640
4 Corporate Business and Partnerships				
Employee Expenses	276,500	354,130	364,870	372,650
Transport Related Expenditure	1,300	200	200	200
Supplies & Services	34,860	29,670	30,010	30,190
Total Expenditure	312,660	384,000	395,080	403,040
Corporate Business and Partnerships Net Expenditure	312,660	384,000	395,080	403,040
5 Communications				
Employee Expenses	149,850	155,830	161,570	166,350
Transport Related Expenditure	80	80	80	80
Supplies & Services	19,860	18,710	18,710	18,730
Total Expenditure	169,790	174,620	180,360	185,160
Communications Net Expenditure	169,790	174,620	180,360	185,160

Resources

	Outturn 2023-2024	Budget 2024-2025	Budget 2025-2026	Budget 2026-2027
	£	£	£	£
6 Customer Services				
Employee Expenses	348,780	373,130	382,090	389,070
Supplies & Services	11,800	11,530	11,530	11,530
Total Expenditure	360,580	384,660	393,620	400,600
Customer Services Net Expenditure	360,580	384,660	393,620	400,600
7 Out of Hours Service				
Supplies & Services	6,980	9,150	10,070	11,080
Total Expenditure	6,980	9,150	10,070	11,080
Out of Hours Service Net Expenditure	6,980	9,150	10,070	11,080
8 Law and Administration				
Employee Expenses	1,224,710	1,325,850	1,368,730	1,398,850
Premises Related Expenditure	2,360	2,360	2,410	2,460
Transport Related Expenditure	5,810	2,660	2,710	2,760
Supplies & Services	121,760	105,240	105,770	106,110
Third Party Payments	39,870	40,090	40,970	41,730
Total Expenditure	1,394,510	1,476,200	1,520,590	1,551,910
Income	(468,710)	(448,170)	(463,960)	(477,680)
Total Income	(468,710)	(448,170)	(463,960)	(477,680)
Law and Administration Net Expenditure	925,800	1,028,030	1,056,630	1,074,230
9 Finance				
Supplies & Services	1,560	1,350	1,350	1,350
Third Party Payments	667,860	843,000	863,850	879,290
Total Expenditure	669,420	844,350	865,200	880,640
Finance Net Expenditure	669,420	844,350	865,200	880,640
10 Human Resources Services				
Employee Expenses	628,280	635,580	658,770	674,950
Transport Related Expenditure	4,510	2,000	2,000	2,000
Supplies & Services	122,110	105,110	105,110	105,110
Total Expenditure	754,900	742,690	765,880	782,060
Income	(282,990)	(274,580)	(284,860)	(292,030)
Total Income	(282,990)	(274,580)	(284,860)	(292,030)
Human Resources Services Net Expenditure	471,910	468,110	481,020	490,030

Resources

	Outturn 2023-2024 £	Budget 2024-2025 £	Budget 2025-2026 £	Budget 2026-2027 £
11 Technology				
Employee Expenses	1,156,070	1,202,020	1,239,370	1,265,300
Transport Related Expenditure	17,660	8,800	8,800	8,800
Supplies & Services	662,990	662,050	662,500	662,500
Total Expenditure	1,836,720	1,872,870	1,910,670	1,936,600
Income	(884,820)	(909,530)	(931,380)	(946,940)
Total Income	(884,820)	(909,530)	(931,380)	(946,940)
Technology Net Expenditure	951,900	963,340	979,290	989,660
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	315,470	325,790	335,250	341,740
Total Expenditure	320,720	331,040	340,500	346,990
Members Services Net Expenditure	320,720	331,040	340,500	346,990
13 Revenues & Benefits				
Supplies & Services	81,820	94,850	94,850	94,850
Third Party Payments	1,584,040	1,641,080	1,690,210	1,730,960
Total Expenditure	1,665,860	1,735,930	1,785,060	1,825,810
Income	(848,560)	(848,560)	(848,560)	(848,560)
Total Income	(848,560)	(848,560)	(848,560)	(848,560)
Revenues & Benefits Net Expenditure	817,300	887,370	936,500	977,250
14 Housing Benefit Payments				
Supplies & Services	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Transfer Payments	17,059,610	15,956,270	14,633,100	13,418,430
Total Expenditure	17,069,610	15,966,270	14,643,100	13,428,430
Income	(17,169,610)	(16,066,270)	(14,843,100)	(13,628,430)
Total Income	(17,169,610)	(16,066,270)	(14,843,100)	(13,628,430)
Housing Benefit Payments Net Expenditure	(100,000)	(100,000)	(200,000)	(200,000)
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	277,160	278,730	281,260	283,870
Total Expenditure	277,160	278,730	281,260	283,870
Corporate and Democratic Core Net Expenditure	277,160	278,730	281,260	283,870

Resources

	Outturn 2023-2024 £	Budget 2024-2025 £	Budget 2025-2026 £	Budget 2026-2027 £
17 Non-Distributed Costs				
Employee Expenses	225,000	235,260	239,970	244,770
Third Party Payments	42,450	43,300	44,170	45,050
Total Expenditure	267,450	278,560	284,140	289,820
Non-Distributed Costs Net Expenditure	267,450	278,560	284,140	289,820
18 Asset Management/Energy Conservation				
Supplies & Services	44,140	44,120	44,120	44,120
Total Expenditure	44,140	44,120	44,120	44,120
Asset Management/Energy Conservation Net Expenditure	44,140	44,120	44,120	44,120
19 Electoral Registration				
Employee Expenses	2,150	2,150	2,150	2,150
Supplies & Services	41,050	40,590	40,590	40,590
Total Expenditure	43,200	42,740	42,740	42,740
Electoral Registration Net Expenditure	43,200	42,740	42,740	42,740
20 Elections				
Employee Expenses	153,490	-	-	-
Premises Related Expenditure	56,570	-	-	-
Supplies & Services	91,990	39,500	39,500	39,500
Total Expenditure	302,050	39,500	39,500	39,500
Income	(262,520)	-	-	-
Total Income	(262,520)	-	-	-
Elections Net Expenditure	39,530	39,500	39,500	39,500
21 Items to be Allocated				
Employee Expenses	(46,710)	(110,000)	(110,000)	(110,000)
Supplies & Services	(200,000)	(100,000)	(400,000)	(300,000)
Total Expenditure	(246,710)	(210,000)	(510,000)	(410,000)
Items to be Allocated Net Expenditure	(246,710)	(210,000)	(510,000)	(410,000)
22 Audit, Risk, Resilience and Procurement				
Supplies & Services	150	-	-	-
Third Party Payments	259,810	257,120	263,110	267,550
Total Expenditure	259,960	257,120	263,110	267,550
Audit, Risk, Resilience and Procurement Net Expenditure	259,960	257,120	263,110	267,550
23 Insurance Premiums				
Third Party Payments	186,670	190,400	194,210	198,090
Total Expenditure	186,670	190,400	194,210	198,090
Insurance Premiums Net Expenditure	186,670	190,400	194,210	198,090
Resources Net Expenditure	7,664,720	8,400,830	8,251,990	8,554,220

Resources Portfolio

Variation Statement 2024/2025 to 2026/2027

	2024/2025 Indicative	Real Terms / Efficiency Variations	2024/2025 Budget	2025/2026 Indicative	Real Terms / Efficiency Variations	2025/2026 Budget	Inflation	Real Terms / Efficiency Variations	2026/2027 Budget
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Employee Costs	4,809	751	5,560	4,905	838	5,743	108	20	5,871
Premises Related Costs	1,362	- 26	1,336	1,397	- 26	1,371	37	-	1,408
Transport Related Costs	47	- 28	19	48	- 29	19	-	-	19
Supplies and Services	1,649	238	1,887	1,664	- 59	1,605	9	104	1,718
Third Party Payments	2,872	143	3,015	2,932	165	3,097	62	3	3,162
Transfer Payments	13,838	2,118	15,956	12,691	1,942	14,633	-	- 1,214	13,419
Total Expenditure	24,577	3,196	27,773	23,637	2,831	26,468	216	- 1,087	25,597
Income	- 17,184	- 2,188	- 19,372	- 16,069	- 2,147	- 18,216	- 34	1,207	- 17,043
Net Expenditure	7,393	1,008	8,401	7,568	684	8,252	182	120	8,554

Resources Portfolio**Proposed Inflation/ Real Terms Efficiency Variations****2024/25 Change**

	£'000	£'000
<u>Real Term Variations</u>		
Pay award and Staffing variations	715	
Leadership team contribution from Cannock Chase District Council	-275	440
Reduced utility charges		-20
Reduced Civic Centre rental income		33
Reduced rates		-21
Contract cleaning		-5
Items to be allocated - contract provision		-200
Zero based budget review		-104
Shared Service Cost Rate Increase	-16	
Shared Service Rate Increase on Income	<u>22</u>	6
Housing benefits review of spend		
Expenditure	2,118	
Income	<u>-2018</u>	100
Bank charges		-10
Budget savings reinstated		
Reduction in printers / colour printing	19	
Leasing vacant areas of the Civic Centre	93	
Reduce energy costs through LED lighting	15	
Shared Service savings rephased	<u>400</u>	527
Budget pressure		
Finance	159	
Transformation	<u>100</u>	259
minor variations		3
		<u>1,008</u>

2025/26 Change

	£'000	£'000
<u>Real Term Variations</u>		
Pay award and Staffing variations	802	
Leadership team contribution from Cannock Chase District Council	-286	516
Reduced utility charges		-20
Reduced Civic Centre rental income		24
Reduced rates		-22
Contract cleaning		-4
Items to be allocated - contract provision		-100
Zero based budget review		-103
Shared Service Cost Rate Increase	5	
Shared Service Rate Increase on Income	9	14
Housing benefits review of spend		
Expenditure	1,942	
Income	-1942	-
Bank charges		-7
Budget savings reinstated		
Reduction in printers / colour printing	19	
Leasing vacant areas of the Civic Centre	93	
Reduce energy costs through LED lighting	15	127
Budget pressure		
Finance	159	
Transformation	100	259
minor variations		-
		<u>684</u>

2026/27 Change

	£'000	£'000
<u>Real Term Variations</u>		
Increase in pension changes, increments and staffing		17
Housing benefits review of spend following implementation of Universal Credit		
Expenditure	- 1,215	
Income	1,215	-
Contract provision		100
Shared services additional cost	7	
Shared Service additional income	- 1	6
Minor variations		-3
		<u>120</u>

Appendix 2

DRAFT GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2023/24 TO 2026/27					
	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Program but not allocated
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
ENVIRONMENT					
Streetscene equipment	-	66	-	-	101
Streetscene Fleet replacement	73	32	-	-	-
Waste Contract - replacement green containers	65	95	35	35	-
Waste Contract - replacement blue bins	38	28	11	11	-
Waste Contract - replacement waste containers	10	82	4	4	-
Eccleshall Road Cemetery Biodiversity	14	14	-	-	-
Total	200	317	50	50	101
COMMUNITY					
Disabled Facilities Grants	1,655	1,872	1,522	1,522	3,434
Private Sector Housing Assistance	30	85	-	-	-
Improvements at Glover St caravan site	5	-	-	-	-
Empty Homes	20	60	-	-	-
Rough Sleeper Accommodation	56	-	-	-	-
Total	1,766	2,017	1,522	1,522	3,434
LEISURE					
Stone Leisure Strategy Phase 2 (part s106)	1,806	450	-	-	-
Victoria Park Pedestrian Bridge	-	91	-	-	-
Castle - South Wall	-	-	-	-	16
Yarnfield Recreational Facilities	17	-	-	-	-
Houghton Play Area	20	-	-	-	-
Hixon Green Millennium Trust (HGMT)	27	-	-	-	-
Total	1,870	541	-	-	16
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING					
Growth Point capital	50	-	-	-	-
Stafford Town Centre Enhancement	19	-	-	-	-
Victoria Street Car Park Improvements	-	-	-	-	48
Station Gateway	-	-	-	-	3,500
Future High Streets Fund - Public Realm	1,693	-	-	-	-
Future High Streets Fund - Mixed Use	13,856	5,500	-	-	-
UK Shared Prosperity Hub	890	2,376	-	-	-
Rural England Prosperity Fund REPF	122	366	-	-	-
Replacement Parking Ticket Machines	60	-	-	-	-
Total	16,690	8,242	-	-	3,548
RESOURCES					
Corporate IT equipment	114	50	50	50	-
Contact Centre Phone system	-	-	-	-	30
Civic Centre Generator	-	-	-	-	50
Accommodation transformation & rationalisation	8	-	-	-	670
Total	122	50	50	50	750
TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME	20,648	11,167	1,622	1,622	7,849

Business Rates Retention - Retained Income				
		2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
		50% Scheme	50% Scheme	50% Scheme
		£	£	£
Business Rates Collection Fund				
Gross Rates		71,915,722	73,354,036	74,821,117
Less	Reliefs, Exemptions and Provisions			
	Mandatory relief	(8,264,570)	(8,429,861)	(8,598,459)
	Discretionary relief Council funded	(231,266)	(235,891)	(240,609)
	Discretionary relief Government funded	(4,417,256)	(4,505,601)	(4,595,713)
	Exemptions	(3,124,810)	(2,605,877)	(2,066,705)
	Cost Of Collection	(169,749)	(173,144)	(176,607)
	Losses on collection	(1,774,786)	(1,810,282)	(1,846,487)
Non Domestic Rating Income		53,933,285	55,593,380	57,296,537
Less	<u>amount due to</u>			
	Government	(26,966,640)	(27,796,690)	(28,648,270)
	County	(4,854,000)	(5,003,400)	(5,156,690)
	Fire	(539,330)	(555,930)	(572,970)
Net Business attributable to SBC		21,573,315	22,237,360	22,918,607
General Fund determination of retained Business Rates				
Net Business Rates attributable to SBC		21,573,315	22,237,360	22,918,607
Less	Tariff	(16,682,057)	(17,015,698)	(17,356,012)
	Reset	-	-	(1,049,579)
Core Funding		(3,061,279)	(3,122,504)	(3,184,954)
Growth		1,829,980	2,099,158	1,328,062
Plus	Small Business Rates relief & other Government reliefs	3,218,416	3,282,785	3,348,441
Amount subject to Pool Levy		5,048,397	5,381,942	4,676,503
	Pool Levy	(2,524,198)	(2,690,971)	(2,338,251)
Business Rates Growth		2,524,198	2,690,971	2,338,251
Business Rates Pool Distribution		1,009,679	1,076,388	935,301
Retained Business Rates				
	Baseline Core Funding	3,061,279	3,122,504	3,184,954
	Growth	2,524,198	2,690,971	2,338,251
	Business Rates Pool Distribution	1,009,679	1,076,388	935,301
	Business Rates Pool Agreement	277,353	282,900	288,558
		6,872,509	7,172,764	6,747,064

GENERAL FUND RESERVES & BALANCES AND CAPITAL RESOURCES 2023 - 2027

	01/04/2024	01/04/2025	01/04/2026	01/04/2027
	£	£	£	£
Contingency				
Revenue Surplus	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00
Revenue Surplus	1,586,396.00	1,665,445.00	1,651,229.00	1,323,663.00
Insurance Reserve	620,460.83	620,460.83	620,460.83	620,460.83
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	4,566,085.02
B rates Contingency	685,000.00	685,000.00	685,000.00	685,000.00
Leisure Equalization Reserve	- 771,700.00	- 553,860.00	- 297,720.00	17,680.00
	7,881,541.85	8,178,430.85	8,420,354.85	8,408,188.85
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	24,507.20	24,507.20	24,507.20	24,507.20
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	58,636.01	58,636.01	58,636.01	58,636.01
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	61,272.00	61,272.00	61,272.00	61,272.00
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	3.81	3.81	3.81	3.81
Eastgate Masterplan	5,309.00	5,309.00	5,309.00	5,309.00
Parks Improvement	21,153.00	21,153.00	21,153.00	21,153.00
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	171,528.68	171,528.68	171,528.68	171,528.68
Revs and Bens Grants	5,820.00	5,820.00	5,820.00	5,820.00
Council Tax Hardship Fund	106,784.00	106,784.00	106,784.00	106,784.00
Temporary Accommodation Grant	21,067.32	21,067.32	21,067.32	21,067.32
Covid Grants	234,789.00	234,789.00	234,789.00	234,789.00
Support for Vulnerable Renters	20,055.00	20,055.00	20,055.00	20,055.00
Safety of women at night	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
OPCC Safer Streets	4.81	4.81	4.81	4.81
Homelessness Prevention Grant 21-22	40,919.15	40,919.15	40,919.15	40,919.15
Homelessness Prevention Grant 22-23	18,273.87	18,273.87	18,273.87	18,273.87
RSI 22 23 Grant	- 0.00	- 0.00	- 0.00	- 0.00
Domestic Abuse Grant 22 23	10,703.00	10,703.00	10,703.00	10,703.00
Homeless Prevention Grant 23-24	55,200.00	55,200.00	55,200.00	55,200.00
Elections Voter accessibility	24,062.00	24,062.00	24,062.00	24,062.00
Council Tax Rebate	188,380.00	188,380.00	188,380.00	188,380.00
	1,668,402.33	1,668,402.33	1,668,402.33	1,668,402.33

	01/04/2024	01/04/2025	01/04/2026	01/04/2027
	£	£	£	£
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	102,763.80	102,763.80	102,763.80	102,763.80
IT Shared Service	211,073.95	211,073.95	211,073.95	211,073.95
Legal Shared Service	107,834.16	109,334.16	110,834.16	112,334.16
Shared Services Transformation	365,397.80	365,397.80	365,397.80	365,397.80
	787,069.71	788,569.71	790,069.71	791,569.71
Rolling Programme				
Housing Needs Survey	52,770.00	52,770.00	52,770.00	52,770.00
Elections	60,920.13	100,420.13	139,920.13	179,420.13
	113,690.13	153,190.13	192,690.13	232,190.13
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	9,403.45	9,403.45	9,403.45	9,403.45
Earned Autonomy Community safety	25,000.00	25,000.00	25,000.00	25,000.00
Empty Homes Officer	55,300.36	55,300.36	55,300.36	55,300.36
DFG Balance of Contributions	864.41	864.41	864.41	864.41
	134,864.22	134,864.22	134,864.22	134,864.22
Corporate				
Training	95,920.18	95,920.18	95,920.18	95,920.18
Budget support	1,662,100.43	1,662,100.43	1,662,100.43	1,662,100.43
Climate Change	24,228.00	274,228.00	274,228.00	274,228.00
Provision for Future Maintenance	43,129.84	43,129.84	43,129.84	43,129.84
Pensions Reserve	342,039.70	342,039.70	342,039.70	342,039.70
Rollovers 18-19	29,094.00	29,094.00	29,094.00	29,094.00
Covid 19 Reallocation	1,258,485.81	1,258,485.81	1,258,485.81	1,258,485.81
Corporate Pot	433,457.68	433,457.68	433,457.68	433,457.68
Anchor Org for Clinically Vulnerable	18,190.42	18,190.42	18,190.42	18,190.42
Building Maintenance	36,349.98	36,349.98	36,349.98	36,349.98
Rollovers 20-21	31,427.00	31,427.00	31,427.00	31,427.00
Unpresented cheques pre 2021-22	259,979.11	259,979.11	259,979.11	259,979.11
Contracts reserve	697,000.00	697,000.00	697,000.00	697,000.00
Partnerships FPN Income	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00
Partnerships Contrib to Shared				
Community Dev Post	12,140.00	12,140.00	12,140.00	12,140.00
Business Initiative	-	500,000.00	500,000.00	500,000.00
	4,943,637.15	5,693,637.15	5,693,637.15	5,693,637.15
Environment				
Streetscene Transformation	109,400.00	136,750.00	164,100.00	191,450.00
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	9,179.10	9,179.10	9,179.10	9,179.10
Streetscene Trading	168,424.93	168,424.93	168,424.93	168,424.93
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	29,411.81	29,411.81	29,411.81	29,411.81
	545,852.75	573,202.75	600,552.75	627,902.75

	01/04/2024	01/04/2025	01/04/2026	01/04/2027
	£	£	£	£
Leisure				
Football development fund	12,784.23	20,784.23	28,784.23	36,784.23
HLF Vict Park - equalisation reserve	51,183.39	51,183.39	51,183.39	51,183.39
Leisure Management Contract Reserve	198,296.00	198,296.00	198,296.00	198,296.00
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
	369,890.00	377,890.00	385,890.00	393,890.00
Planning				
LDF	247,795.13	185,565.13	74,655.13	5.13
CIL Reserve	- 20,250.00	- 20,250.00	- 20,250.00	- 20,250.00
Dev Mgmt. Equalisation	191,823.76	168,773.76	145,723.76	122,673.76
20% Planning Increase	376,427.13	502,657.13	628,887.13	755,117.13
Stafford TC Strategic Review	71,763.00	71,763.00	71,763.00	71,763.00
Station Gateway	95,984.96	95,984.96	95,984.96	95,984.96
Economic Growth Strategy	80,000.00	80,000.00	80,000.00	80,000.00
Future High Street Fund Revenue Funding	6.53	6.53	6.53	6.53
Stone Leisure Revenue Funding	76,830.00	76,830.00	76,830.00	76,830.00
Project Manager Salary Core Budget (Meecebrook)	40,195.84	40,195.84	40,195.84	40,195.84
	1,160,576.35	1,201,526.35	1,193,796.35	1,222,326.35
Resources				
Health & Safety	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00
HR future shared service development	48,277.64	48,277.64	48,277.64	48,277.64
Localisation of Council Tax Support	224,352.63	197,172.63	169,992.63	142,812.63
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
	370,630.27	343,450.27	316,270.27	289,090.27
Section 106				
Section 106 commuted sums	1,257,185.60	1,257,185.60	1,257,185.60	1,257,185.60
Cannock SAC contributions	434,199.35	434,199.35	434,199.35	434,199.35
S106 swimming pool	223,966.79	223,966.79	223,966.79	223,966.79
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	701,105.53	701,105.53	701,105.53	701,105.53
S106 Bowling Green Contribution	1,186.51	1,186.51	1,186.51	1,186.51
	3,019,421.04	3,019,421.04	3,019,421.04	3,019,421.04
Revenue	21,054,852.45	22,191,861.45	22,475,225.45	22,540,759.45
Capital Programme Funding				
RCCO GF	800,969.65	12,969.65	101,969.65	108,969.65
Investment Reserve	2,000,000.00	3,500,000.00	4,500,000.00	4,500,000.00
Revenue Surplus	14,209.17	14,209.17	14,209.17	14,209.17
Invest to Save	8,413.69	8,413.69	8,413.69	8,413.69
Budget support	115,961.00	15,961.00	15,961.00	15,961.00
New Homes Bonus	946,114.64	880,114.64	880,114.64	164,114.64
VAT Shelter	162,562.10	126,562.10	126,562.10	25,562.10
	4,048,230.25	4,558,230.25	5,647,230.25	4,837,230.25
Rollovers				
Rollovers 19-20	75,030.50	75,030.50	75,030.50	75,030.50
	75,030.50	75,030.50	75,030.50	75,030.50

	01/04/2024	01/04/2025	01/04/2026	01/04/2027
	£	£	£	£
Capital Contingency				
RCCO HSF/SG	3,772,781.00	3,483,781.00	3,483,781.00	-
Working Balance Transfer	2,549,000.00	-	-	-
New Homes Bonus	431.00	431.00	431.00	431.00
Economic Development	912,000.00	912,000.00	912,000.00	912,000.00
	7,234,212.00	4,396,212.00	4,396,212.00	912,431.00
Capital Sinking Fund				
Cremator Sinking Fund	800,000.00	850,000.00	900,000.00	950,000.00
Pest Control Vehicles	163,600.00	180,000.00	196,400.00	212,800.00
Sweepers Sinking Fund	859,999.00	929,999.00	999,999.00	1,069,999.00
Rowley Park 3G Pitch Sinking Fund	165,000.00	180,000.00	195,000.00	210,000.00
Riverway	150,000.00	175,000.00	200,000.00	225,000.00
Victoria Park Safety	80,000.00	80,000.00	80,000.00	80,000.00
Tenterbanks CP Budget Bid	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
	2,328,541.50	2,504,941.50	2,681,341.50	2,857,741.50
Capital	13,686,014.25	11,534,414.25	12,799,814.25	8,682,433.25
Earmarked	34,740,866.70	33,726,275.70	35,275,039.70	31,223,192.70

Band Equivalents

Parish	Tax Base Post LCTS 2023-24
Adbaston	227.17
Barlaston	1,052.58
Berkswich	788.53
Bradley	230.69
Brocton	558.54
Chebsey	253.59
Church Eaton	291.87
Colwich	1,922.40
Creswell	789.03
Doxey	918.91
Eccleshall	2,183.12
Ellenhall	63.57
Forton	144.59
Fradswell	84.70
Fulford	2,312.53
Gayton	80.58
Gnosall	2,027.11
Haughton	456.39
High Offley	396.62
Hilderstone	275.35
Hixon	750.45
Hopton & Coton	855.14
Hyde Lea	186.64
Ingestre	85.37
Marston	92.83
Milwich	200.31
Norbury	201.14
Ranton	184.44
Salt & Enson	187.02
Sandon & Burston	169.29
Seighford	771.02
Stafford	19,471.92
Standon	336.03
Stone	6,453.19
Stone Rural	748.85
Stowe-By-Chartley	197.81
Swynnerton	1,370.59
Tixall	133.31

Parish	Tax Base Post LCTS 2023-24
Weston	480.08
Whitgreave	89.95
Yarnfield and Cold Meece	822.68
Subtotal	48,845.93
MOD Class O	456.80
Total	49,302.73

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 2024-25, including the forecast outturn for 2023-24, 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 2024-25 has been constructed based upon the maintenance of existing level of service, adjusted for known changes in 2023-24. It is considered to accurately reflect likely expenditure in 2024-25, being based on historic information, experience of expenditure in previous years and latest projections where appropriate.

The indicative budgets for 2025-26 and 2026-27 are similarly based upon the best information available at this moment in time.

The full risk assessment of the Council's Budget 2024-25 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 early 2024. 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 £1,950k has been included within 2024-25 budgets. This has been based on current projections of bank rate which are anticipated to start to reduce towards the end of 2024-25 as the Bank of England actions have started to reduce the rate of inflation. 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 2024-25 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 £21.086 million at 31 March 2024 and £22.267 million at 31 March 2025. This includes S106 amounts of £3.019m at 31 March 2024 and the same amount as at the 31 March 2025.

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 2024-25 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 and S151 Officer

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.
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.
• Markets	High	Dependent on occupancy levels.
• Environmental services	Low	Licensing income dependent on renewals.
• Bereavement services	Medium	Some risk as it is a major source of income.
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. The proposed change in recycling arrangements with the county council taking the contract will result in a net cost to the council.
• 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.

Risk	Level of risk	Explanation of risk / justification for cover
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Levelling Up 	High	<p>The Future High Streets Fund is a major investment programme over a number of years with substantial Council contributions. It includes obligations to Government, requires engagement of partners and carries high expectations locally. It therefore represents a major financial risk.</p>
Funding Sources:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Homes Bonus 	High	<p>Although allocations for 2024-25 can be predicted accurately, the future level of funding is now not only dependent upon completions of new properties but what incentive scheme will exist instead of New Homes Bonus.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Rates Scheme and Resets 	High	<p>A reset of growth achieved under the current system is likely to take place around the end 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.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volatility in Business Rates 	High	<p>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.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding settlements from central government 	High	<p>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.</p>

New Car Park Charges

As part of the Westbridge Park redevelopment two new car parks have been created which we will charge to park on. Charges are as proposed below:

Stone Riverside Car Park

Charges apply between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday. No charge Saturday or Sunday.

Up to 2 Hours - Free

Up to 4 Hours - £1.50

No return 2 hours.

Stone Canalside Car Park

Charges apply between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday. No charge Saturday or Sunday.

Up to 2 Hours - Free

Up to 4 Hours - £1.50

No return 2 hours.

Weekly permit £15

Appendix 9

General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Programme 2023-26

Resources Scrutiny Committee - 9 January 2024

RSC16 General Fund Revenue Budget 2023-24 to 2026-27 and Capital Programme 2023-24 to 2026-27

The Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) introduced the report proposing the General Fund revenue budget for 2024-25, the updated Capital Programme 2024-27 and indicative budgets for 2025-26. Also to approve the introduction of the new car parking charges as set out in the report. Salient points of the report were highlighted and it was noted that one year settlements result in reactionary rather than strategic budget setting.

A lengthy discussion took place regarding Paragraph 5.9 and the £2m overall forecast outturn. The Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) explained the requirement to invest in resources within the Finance Department to deliver statutory processes.

The investment fund would require business cases which would be scrutinised by Resources Scrutiny Committee and therefore increase transparency.

Funding for staffing is being matched by CCDC as it is a shared service.

When questioned, Councillor R P Cooke, Resources Portfolio agreed that there needs to be more housing as part of the growth of the Borough.

Officers were again thanked for work done in the budget setting process.

RESOLVED:- that in exercise of the powers delegated to the Committee, the decision of the Cabinet as set out in Minute No CAB47, regarding the General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Programme 2023-26, be noted.

Agenda Item 5c(ii)

Revenues and Benefits Collection Report - Quarter 2

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	18 January 2024
Report of:	Deputy Chief Executive - Resources
Portfolio:	Resources Portfolio

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet of the performance of the Revenues and Benefits Service as regards:
- collection of Council Tax during the first half of the 2023/2024 financial year.
 - collection of Business Rates during the first half of the 2023/2024 financial year.
 - the recovery of overpaid Housing Benefit during the first half of the 2023/2024 financial year.
- 1.2 To seek approval to the write off of the arrears listed in the **CONFIDENTIAL APPENDICES**.

2 Reason(s) for Report being part 'Not for Publication'

- 2.1 In accordance with the provisions of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the report is considered part 'not for publication' under the following categories of exemption:
- Exempt Paragraph 1 - Information relating to any individual.
 - Exempt Paragraph 2 - Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
 - Exempt Paragraph 3 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council).

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 That the information regarding collections be noted.
- 3.2 That the arrears listed in the **CONFIDENTIAL APPENDICES** be written off.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 Efficient collection of the Council's revenues is of major importance to the funding of Council services and those provided by our preceptors.
- 3.2 Whilst our collection rates are traditionally good, regrettably not all of the monies owed to the Council can be collected and this report contains a recommendation to write off bad debts which cannot be recovered.

4 Key Issues

- 4.1 Council Tax due for the 2023/2024 year amounts to £99.2M of which some **56.0%** was collected by the end of September. This is slightly better than last year's performance in the same period (55.4%).
- 4.2 Business Rates due for the current year amounts to £50M of which some **60.4%** was collected by the end of September, showing an increase on the previous year (55.7%).

5 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 5.1 Not Applicable

6 Report Detail

Council Tax

- 6.1 Council Tax is collected on behalf of the District Council, Parish Councils and our Major Preceptors (Staffordshire County Council and Commissioner for Police, Crime, Fire and Rescue). The effect of the Collection fund arrangements means that Stafford Borough Council retains around 10% of the council tax collected.
- 6.2 Council Tax due for the current year amounted to £99.2M and we have collected 56.0% of this within the half of the year. This shows an improvement on last year's performance, though is lower than pre-pandemic levels (56.7% in the first half of 2019/20) and would seem to indicate that the temporary changes to our Local Council Tax reduction and the recovery action taken by the team have had a positive effect.
- 6.3 In accordance with the Council's approved policies, all reasonable and lawful attempts are made to recover all amounts due. In the first instance this involves the issue of bills, reminders and final notices, followed by Summonses in the Magistrates Court where the warning notices are not effective. At all stages of this process, debtors are encouraged to engage in voluntary arrangements to repay their arrears, to prevent the need for formal action.

Where necessary and when Liability Orders are granted by Magistrates, the Council uses its powers to make deductions from earnings and benefits of

debtors, where it can, and instructs Enforcement Agents where such deductions are not possible or appropriate.

In the most severe cases and for debts exceeding £5,000, the Council will consider personal bankruptcy action against individuals.

- 6.4 The recovery powers available to the Council are considerable but not completely infallible. There are occasions when bills are not paid and the debts cannot be recovered.
- 6.5 Statutory safeguards such as Debt Relief Orders, Individual's Voluntary Arrangements exist to protect debtors suffering hardship, to attempt to the expensive, stressful and sometimes ineffective process of personal bankruptcy. Where a debt is included in such an instrument, or when a debtor is bankrupt, our ordinary recovery powers cannot be used.
- 6.6 For any of our powers to be effective we need to know the whereabouts of a debtor, and this is not always the case. Where debtors abscond, we will use all reasonable endeavours to trace them and are often successful in doing so. Unfortunately, on occasions this is not so and we must submit a debt for write off.

Our trace procedures include:

- Checking our internal Council systems and following any information which may help us to trace the debtor.
- Use of credit reference agency data.
- Trace and collect facilities offered by our Enforcement Agencies
- Visits to the last known address by the Council's Property Inspector and use of external tracing agents.

Unfortunately, legislation does not currently permit access to DWP or HMRC records to trace Council Tax debtors or their employers, though a Cabinet Office project is currently reviewing this.

Data protection legislation allows us to receive information as to a debtor's whereabouts, but we cannot disclose information to other creditors. Reciprocal arrangements with utility companies and similar are not therefore workable.

- 6.7 9 Irrecoverable council tax debt in the sum of £35,364.75 are listed in the **CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX** to this report.

Business Rates

- 6.8 Business Rates due for the current year amounts to £50M of which some **60.4%** was collected by the end of September. This compares to 55.7% collected in the same period last year and so would appear to reflect some upturn in the economy following the pandemic.
- 6.9 The recovery powers available to us are again contained in the Council's approved policies and are used in full. Those powers and our procedures are

similar to the council tax powers described above, with the exception that deductions from individuals' benefits and earnings are not permissible, even if the debtor is an individual.

- 6.10 Where rates are owed by an individual, similar safeguards exist for the debtors and trace facilities are used by the Council for absconding debtors, as described above.
- 6.11 Additionally, in the case of business rates, as has been reported to Cabinet previously, our collection efforts are sometimes frustrated by weaknesses in legislation. Rates are due from the occupiers rather than the owners of property and where the occupier is a company, we can only recover from that company. Some proprietors will strip a company of its assets, or dissolve the company before we have had an opportunity to implement our recovery procedures. A new company is then formed in a similar style, to trade from the same premises.

Central Government has previously undertaken to review the loopholes that exist in rating and company legislation, though no changes have yet been received. Officers continue to actively monitor these issues.

- 6.12 14 irrecoverable business rate debts in the sum of £107,069.26 are listed in the **CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX** to this report.

Housing Benefit Overpayments

- 6.13 The Council manages the Housing Benefit scheme on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions, who fund the cost of benefits paid to claimants.
- 6.14 Sometimes a claimant will be paid too much Housing Benefit, for example when the Council does not become aware of a change of circumstances until after the claimant has been paid the benefit. This is called an Overpayment of Housing Benefit. The Council is expected to recover these overpayments from the claimant in all but a few limited circumstances. DWP will fund only 40% of benefit which is overpaid as a result of claimant error or fraud.
- 6.15 Where an overpayment occurs as a result of a local authority error, DWP will provide 100% funding provided our error rate remains below a threshold of 0.48% of benefit paid, as it has routinely done for many years.
- 6.16 Recovery of overpaid Housing Benefit continues to progress well, with some £113,548.48 being collected in the first half of the financial year, compared to the £67,442.37 of new overpayments that were raised.
- 6.17 There are 10 irrecoverable Benefit Overpayment debts totalling £60,896.11 in the **CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX** to this report.

7 Implications

7.1 Financial

Council Tax write offs are losses to the Collection Fund and, as such, form part of the cost of collection incurred by this Council. The Council Tax write offs on this report total £35,364.75. This represents 0.04% of the outstanding collectable debit for the current year.

The amounts being recommended are well below the value of the bad debt provision, which the Council includes within its accounts in expectation that some amounts owed will not be paid and cannot be recovered.

The cost of collecting the debts has been considered as part of the decision to put them forward for write off. If further information does come forward about the whereabouts of any of the individual debtors the Council will pursue recovery action.

Cabinet are asked to write off the debts as they are considered to be irrecoverable for the reasons given in the appendices. The debts remain legally due to the Council and should the circumstances causing the write off in any particular case, subsequently change, recovery action may be recommended.

7.2 Legal

Cabinet are asked to write off the debts as they are considered to be irrecoverable for the reasons given in the appendices. The debts remain legally due to the Council and should the circumstances causing the write off in any particular case, subsequently change, recovery action may be recommended.

7.3 Human Resources

None

7.4 Risk Management

None

7.5 Equalities and Diversity

None

7.6 Health

None

7.7 Climate Change

None

8 Appendices

Appendix 1: Council Tax to be considered for Write Off

Appendix 2: Business Rates to be considered for Write Off

Appendix 3: Housing Benefit Overpayments to be considered for Write Off

9 Previous Consideration

None

10 Background Papers

None

Contact Officer:	Rob Wolfe
Telephone Number:	01543 464 397
Ward Interest:	None
Report Track:	Cabinet 18 January 2024 (Only)
Key Decision:	No