

Environment and Sustainability Committee

3rd December 2024



Title	<i>Environment & Sustainability - Budget, Fees and Charges, Capital bids, Revenue Growth and Savings for 2025/26</i>
Purpose of the report	To make a decision and recommendation to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee
Report Author	<i>Mahmud Rogers Joint Financial Services Manager</i>
Ward(s) Affected	All Wards
Exempt	No
Exemption Reason	<i>n/a</i>
Corporate Priority	Environment Resilience Service Delivery
Recommendations	Committee is asked to: 1. Review the 2025/26 Budget, Fees and Charges, Capital Bids, Revenue Growth and Savings proposals for Environment and Sustainability Committee. 2. Approve the 2025/26 Budget, Fees and Charges, Capital Bids, Revenue Growth and Savings proposals for Environment and Sustainability Committee. 3. Recommend to Corporate Policy and Resources Committee that they approve the proposed 2025/26 Budget, Fees and Charges, Capital Bids, Revenue Growth and Savings proposals for Environment and Sustainability Committee.
Reason for Recommendation	<i>Councils have a statutory duty to balance their budgets. It is important that we take a medium-term approach in ensuring that we can take action sufficiently early to ensure the Council's Revenue Budget remains financially sustainable.</i>

1. Summary of the report

What is the situation	Why we want to do something
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A robust budget planning process helps organisations to manage their resources with economy, efficiency and effectiveness Once the Outline Budget has been considered by Corporate Policy and Resources Committee in December it is anticipated that further savings across 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To have a robust and sustainable 2025/26 budget that meets the needs of the service and provides a resilient financial position to the Council as a whole. The 2025/26 Budget planning process commenced in May

<p>the Committee will need to be identified and that Committees will be asked to address this in the January/February cycle</p>	<p>2024 and must be completed and approved by Council in February 2025.</p>
<p>This is what we want to do about it</p>	<p>These are the next steps</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee reviews and agrees revenue and capital growth & savings bids, fees & charges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That this Committee review the proposed Budget, Fees and Charges, Capital Bids, Revenue Growth and Savings proposals • Approve the proposed Budget, Fees and Charges, Capital Bids, Revenue Growth and Savings proposals • Recommend that Corporate Policy & Resources Committee approve at this stage the proposed Budget, Fees and Charges, Capital Bids, Revenue Growth and Savings proposals • Subject to review of the outline budget by Corporate Policy and Resources Committee, it is anticipated that further savings across this Committee will need to be identified and that Committee will be asked to address this in 2025.

1.1 This report seeks to present the Budget, Fees and charges, Capital, and Savings plan for Environment & Sustainability. The purpose is give the Committee an early opportunity to comment and shape the Budget before it is further refined after Christmas

2. Key issues

2.1 See the attached appendixes. The Committee has the opportunity to comment on any of the fees and charges, savings or growth items.

Fees and Charges

2.2 A general uplift in discretionary fees and charges of 4% has been applied as the default, except where managers have undertaken benchmarking and provided a rationale for a different uplift, with figures rounded as per the direction from February 2023 Corporate Policy and Resources. Some

discretionary fees are increasing but parking charges are not showing an increase, although the possibility exists to increase them mid-year.

Revenue Growth and Savings Bids

- 2.3 Revenue savings include new lettings and increased use of the Garden Waste service. Major revenue growth items relate to the expected early review of the Local Plan (assuming it is agreed by the inspector and adopted) £315k is required in 25/26 with £210k required in 26/27 to ensure we have an up to date evidence base. There is also £110k to upgrade and make full use of GeoEnviron, plus staff time and training for the Pollution Control Team funded from reserves, and £180.2k maintenance costs for Refuse lease vehicles.

Capital

- 2.4 Of particular note is £248k replacement machinery for parks maintenance, and £70k for two electric vans for the Joint Enforcement Team.

3. Options analysis and proposal

- 3.1 The Committee has the opportunity to comment on any of the fees and charges, savings or growth items

4. Financial management comments

- 4.1 The higher the proportion of growth items accepted at this stage and the lower the proportion of savings items accepted at this initial stage of the Budget the more savings are likely to be asked of the Committee in the January cycle. Equally if the proposed fees and charges are trimmed back more income or savings will need to be found elsewhere.

5. Risk management comments

- 5.1 When considering savings proposals, we need to consider the risk of any adverse impact on service delivery capacity.

6. Procurement comments

- 6.1 n/a

7. Legal comments

- 7.1 n/a

8. Other considerations

- 8.1 Changes to parking fees are implemented by way of an amendment to the current parking order, the process includes the need to carry out a public consultation exercise before reporting back to committee. In setting charges, we are required to have regard to the need to cover the costs of providing the service.

9. Equality and Diversity

- 9.1 When savings involve reductions to service appropriate Equality Impact Assessments need to be undertaken

10. Sustainability/Climate Change Implications

- 10.1 n/a

11. Timetable for implementation

- 11.1 An aggregated report of all the Committees approved Budget, Fees and Charges, Capital bids, Revenue Growth and Savings for 2025/26 will be sent to Corporate Policy and Resources Committee for final approval before a report recommending the 2025-26 Budget, Fees and Charges, Revenue Growth and Savings is sent to Council for their approval at the 27 February 2025 Council meeting.
- 11.2 Once agreed by Council, the fees and charges are to be implemented from 1 April 2025.

12. Contact

- 12.1 Mahmud Rogers, Joint Financial Services Manager
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Background papers: There are none.

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 – E&S - Fees and Charges 8.11.24
- Appendix 2 - E&S - Revenue Growth at 15.11.24
- Appendix 3 - E&S – Revenue Savings 15.11.24
- Appendix 4 - E&S - Capital Growths Bids 15.11.24