

Business Infrastructure and Growth Committee

5 December 2024



Title	<i>Business, Infrastructure & Growth - Budget, Fees and Charges, and Revenue Growth Bids for 2025/26</i>
Purpose of the report	To make a decision and recommendation to 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	Resilience
Recommendations	<p>Committee is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the Budget, <i>Fees and Charges, and Revenue Growth Bids for Business, Infrastructure & Growth Committee</i> 2. Approve the Budget, Fees and Charges, and Growth Bid proposals for Business, Infrastructure and Growth Committee. 3. Recommend to Corporate Policy & Resources Committee that the approve the proposed Budget, Fees and Charges, and Growth Bid proposals for Business, Infrastructure and Growth 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 the Committee will need to be 	<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 2024 and must be completed and approved by Council in February 2025.

identified, and that Committees will be asked to address this in the January/February cycle	
This is what we want to do about it	These are the next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee reviews and agrees revenue growth bids and fees & charges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That this Committee review the proposed Budget, Fees and Charges and Growth Bid proposals • Approve the proposed Budget, Fees and Charges, and Growth Bids • Recommend that Corporate Policy & Resources Committee approve the proposed Fees and Charges, and Growth Bids for 2025-2026.

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

2. Key issues

2.1 The attached appendixes give full detail of the Budget, Fees and Charges, Capital bids, Revenue Growth and Savings proposed.

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. Of particular note property fees are increasing, market pitching fees are frozen.

Revenue Growth and savings bids

2.3 No revenue savings proposed. The Jobs & Skills Hub and the Innovation Centre have carried out a zero-based budget exercise (branded within Spelthorne Delivery Based Budgeting) and present the whole of their budgets as a revenue growth request. Of note is the one-off £40k revenue growth bid for a potential Ashford Business Improvement District.

Capital Bids

2.4 No capital growth bids requested.

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

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 n/a

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, Revenue Growth and Savings 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 proposed 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 – Business, Infrastructure & Growth - Revenue Growth at 15.11.24

Appendix 2 – Business, Infrastructure & Growth - Fees and Charges 8.11.24