

REVENUE BUDGET SAVINGS AND INVESTMENTS

New Revenue Efficiency Proposals and Savings Identified

Ref No	Service Directorate	Description of Proposal	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2028/29 £'000	2029/30 £'000
E1	Customers	Careline service income. Due to variations in health services and political boundaries, Careline's alarm monitoring and reassurance services outside of Hertfordshire are experiencing steady growth. Currently, referrals are bringing in approximately three new clients per week. A business case is in development, and should Careline choose to actively promote and expand this service, both the client base and potential income could see substantial growth. However, this would also entail a proportionate increase in associated costs.	(35)	(35)	(35)	(35)	(35)
E2	Enterprise	Rental income associated with the letting of the former meltax office and WC's in Royston. Achievement of the efficiency is subject to the approval of the corresponding capital investment proposal. Efficiency value allows for initial rent free period and stepped rent, with the ongoing annual rent of £5,000 pa subject to upward only rent reviews.	-	-	-	(3)	(5)
E3	Enterprise	Premises cost savings from the early surrender of the lease for Brotherhood Hall, Letchworth. This property is leased from Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation under a 99 year full repairing lease which ends June 2027. A decision has been taken, in principal, not to renew the lease and potentially to agree an early surrender with LGCHF, subject to terms and dilapidations, and LGCHF securing a suitable tenant. Value for 25/26 includes estimated cost of a financial settlement with landlord for dilapidations, a schedule of which the landlord's surveyor is currently preparing.	25	(11)	(11)	(11)	(11)
E4	Housing & Environmental Health	Environmental Health Commercial Team income. Estimated additional income from an increase in Environmental Health Commercial Team fees to bring them into line with fees charged by neighbouring authorities.	(6)	(6)	(6)	(6)	(6)
E5	Place	Recycling credit income from Herts County Council. Increase in eligible credit income is anticipated following the waste and recycling service changes from August 2025. Additional income value based on the collection of an additional 300 tonnes of soft plastic and 200 tonnes of additional recycling.	(48)	(48)	(48)	(48)	(48)
E6	Regulatory	Car Parking income. Review the opportunities with regard to parking charges, for example evening / weekend / Sunday / Bank Holiday charging, on-street charging and issuing special permits. To ensure that all users pay towards the cost of provision and to manage demand.	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
E7	Place	Garden waste income. Increase in charges to reflect charges by other Local Councils and increase in costs under the new contract.	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
E8	Place	Solar for Business. The income generated will at least off-set the cost of capital but may be higher depending what is negotiated with the businesses.	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
E9	Place	Proposal that our leisure provider moves to acting as our agent in running our leisure centres. This is expected to allow more VAT on expenditure to be recovered, which lowers the overall running costs. The benefit of this would be shared.	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Total Net Budget Reduction from new efficiency proposals			(64)	(100)	(100)	(103)	(105)

New Revenue Pressures and Investment Proposals

Ref No	Service Directorate	Description of Proposal	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2028/29 £'000	2029/30 £'000
R1	Customers	Careline Service staffing costs. Increase in management and administrative capacity through the replacement of provision for two admin officer roles with provision for two senior administrator posts. The investment will both enhance business resilience and facilitate the expansion of the service as it takes on new clients from outside of Hertfordshire, with the associated additional administration involved.	16	16	16	16	16
R2	Customers	Maintenance and support costs associated with the capital proposal to purchase 25 laptops that are outside of the Windows environment for disaster recovery (DR) purposes. This may be replaced by an option to lease the equipment if a DR event that affects IT access takes place.	11	11	11	11	11
R3	Enterprise	Economic Development Officer. Budget is requested for the shared post with East Herts District Council to continue in 2025/26 to deliver work associated with the new Commercial Strategy, which aims to support economic growth and engagement across the District, and the oversight of the Shared Prosperity Funding stream.	27	-	-	-	-
R4	Housing & Environmental Health	Reinstatement of the part time posts of Empty Homes Officer (0.5 FTE) and Housing Grants Officer (0.5FTE) and the full time Air Quality Officer position to the Council's permanent staffing establishment. These posts were deleted as part of a restructure in 2023/24 to release resource to meet other urgent staffing priorities. The requested reinstatement of these roles will enable the delivery of essential work to address empty homes in the district and to develop and support an air quality strategy in line with our climate emergency and the upcoming challenges to be faced regarding the proposed Luton Airport expansion.	77	77	77	77	77
R5	Housing & Environmental Health	Creation of a part-time (0.5 FTE) Private Water Supply Officer (PWSO) post for the Environmental Health Commercial Team. The PWSO would support the existing Private Water Supply Scientific Officer in delivering the increased workload caused by the imposed changes to statutory guidance and water quality requirements and would also increase service resilience in this area.	26	26	26	26	26

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			£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
R6	Housing & Environmental Health	Recruitment of an additional fully qualified Environmental Health Regulatory Officer into the Environmental Protection & Housing Team on a 4 year fixed-term contract to provide senior experience and higher competency whilst the technical officers progress through their training. The post will also provide cover/resilience for the other Senior Officer in this service in the event of unplanned additional work, as has been the case with the Baldock Industrial Estate fire, funeral homes inspections, and health and safety accidents/incidents.	64	64	64	64	-
R7	Housing & Environmental Health	Recruitment of an additional Senior Environmental Health / Food Officer in the Commercial Team, on a 4 year fixed-term contract, to accommodate the increased pro and reactive workload, including the additional food inspections required, and the additional Health & Safety interventions necessary for the service to achieve and maintain this legally required competency.	64	64	64	64	-
R8	Housing & Environmental Health	Permanent budget provision for an additional Environmental Health Regulatory Officer in the Commercial Team, initially at a junior level to support the senior officers in undertaking essential roles, including the food sampling programme and the assessment of those food businesses classed as lower concern. The officer would also provide advice to new businesses following the increase in new food registrations seen over recent years.	51	51	51	58	64
R9	Housing & Environmental Health	Year 4 funding for the Environmental Health Apprentice, which is a fixed term four-year post. Unspent salary budget (due to grant funding received) of £100k was identified at the end of 2023/24 and earmarked to cover the costs of the first three years of the apprenticeship. This request is for year 4 funding for the apprentice to complete the four year course.	-	-	-	35	-
R10	Housing & Environmental Health	Environmental Health service staffing costs. In light of recruitment issues in this service area and to facilitate the strategy agreed earlier this year, it is proposed to standardise the six existing technical officer posts to a career graded Environmental Health Regulatory Officer job profile. The plan is to recruit unqualified individuals and develop them into fully qualified officers over time. The additional investment reflects the higher than existing pay grades officers can progress through to as they complete their training and gain professional accreditation. While the maximum additional annual cost from this proposal is estimated at £86k, investment values reflect the anticipated additional cost over the next five years based on the current staffing position.	-	7	17	23	56
R11	Housing & Environmental Health	Environmental Health service training costs. To support the development of the proposed Environmental Health Regulatory Officers, the provision of additional dedicated training and development budget. The budget will cover annual training costs of approximately £3,000 per officer.	18	18	18	18	18
R12	Housing & Environmental Health	Housing Service staffing expenditure. Replacement of the existing fixed term contract for the Housing Register and Accommodation Officer (Refugee Support) with a permanent contract of employment, with the post added to the permanent staffing establishment. The balance held in the refugee project earmarked reserve can support this post for at least the next seven years, at which point the housing team structure will be reviewed. In the meantime this proposal will offer more security to both the employee and the housing team.	-	-	-	-	-
R13	Housing & Environmental Health	Community safety expenditure. Introduction of a crime prevention budget to contribute to, and attract, matched funding from community safety partnership partners such as the police, housing providers and the county council. It is anticipated that the resource will allow small scale, upstream interventions to prevent antisocial behaviour and crime from escalating.	10	10	10	10	10
R14	Legal & Community	Democratic Services staffing expenditure. Creation of permanent part-time (19 hours pw) post of Civic Secretary to Chair of the Council to provide a dedicated support to the Chair of Council (and Vice Chair when deputising) to enable the Chair to be more proactive. The role would be comparable to how some other neighbouring authorities provide this service. Central Bedfordshire Council has a part-time Chair's PA and Business Support Officer; Welwyn Hatfield has a PA and Mayor Support Officer; Stevenage Borough Council have 1.5 staff providing support to the Mayor and Councillors; Broxbourne has an Elections Officer/Mayor's Secretary; Hertsmere provides support as part of another post, St Albans has a Civic Officer, County Council has a full time officer providing support for the Lieutenancy and Councillors.	20	20	20	20	20
R15	Legal & Community	Healthy Hub project expenditure. Budget is requested to cover the shortfall on the salary cost of the Health & Wellbeing Hub Coordinator in 2025/26 and 2026/27 and to ensure effective community wellbeing interventions continue to be delivered across the district tackling food poverty, poor emotional wellbeing, low levels of physical activity, social isolation and loneliness. Herts County Council have part funded the North Herts Healthy Hub since 2019. The current MOU ends in March 2025 and HCC have announced £35k of funding for 25/26 and 26/27.	12	12	-	-	-
R16	Legal & Community	Introduction of a district wide grant budget. This budget would cover those grant applications that cut across all community forums and not solely focus on one geographic area. The centralised funding pot will reduce the resource implications for the applying organisations and for officers reviewing and approving for member consideration. This could allow for greater impact of and effectiveness of community forum grants to voluntary organisations to support the needs of NH residents. This could be considered as a pilot for 2025/26 with regular reviews to assess the effectiveness of this proposal.	10	-	-	-	-

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			£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
R17	Legal & Community	Introduction of a permanent career graded Policy and Strategy Officer post to replace the existing fixed term trainee role, which has to date been part funded from contributions from the Climate Change earmarked reserve. Grade progression would be dependent on completion of relevant training at first diploma and then degree level. The proposal will increase the scope, range, and ability of the Policy & Strategy team to support NHC officers, North Hertfordshire residents and district wide partnerships. The Team is becoming involved in more partnership work across the district (e.g., Herts Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership and associated subgroups, Equality and Diversity Networks) and corporate governance matters (the production of the Annual Governance Statement, associated Local Code of Governance and cumulative equality and environmental impact assessments). The permanence of this role will ensure that these obligations can be discharged to a consistent standard. Investment value reflects the maximum additional cost of this proposal and includes the removal of the budgeted contribution from reserve when the reserve balance reduces to zero.	7	11	16	16	16
R18	Managing Director	Leadership team restructure. Make permanent the seventh Service Director post, with realignment of responsibilities across the seven roles. This would be subject to consultation with affected staff and separate Full Council approval of the revised structure.	112	112	112	112	112
R19	Place	Permanent budget provision for the Climate Change and Sustainability Manager role, which is currently funded on a fixed term basis until September 2026. The post will be necessary to help the Council make progress on its sustainability priority and net zero targets in future years.	-	31	62	62	62
R20	Place	Swimming pool tiling repairs at North Herts Leisure Centre. Annual underwater pool surveys are carried out to identify repair works and ensure they meet current Health & Safety legislation. Recent surveys carried out by Everyone Active have identified extensive grout works within the pool tanks required to ensure they remain in good condition. Investment value reflects current estimated cost of repairs required.	17	-	-	-	-
R21	Place	Swimming pool tiling repairs at Hitchin Swim Centre. Annual underwater pool surveys are carried out to identify repair works and ensure they meet current Health & Safety legislation. Recent surveys carried out by Everyone Active have identified extensive grout works within the pool tanks required to ensure they remain in good condition. Investment value reflects current estimated cost of repairs required.	69	-	-	-	-
R22	Place	Swimming pool tiling repairs at Royston Leisure Centre. Annual underwater pool surveys are carried out to identify repair works and ensure they meet current Health & Safety legislation. Recent surveys carried out by Everyone Active have identified extensive grout works within the pool tanks required to ensure they remain in good condition. Investment value reflects current estimated cost of repairs required.	34	-	-	-	-
R23	Place	Repairs and maintenance at Ransoms Rec, Hitchin. Following receipt of a number of complaints about the lighting and condition of this busy footway, repairs to the lighting and footpaths are required to ensure continued public safety.	25	-	-	-	-
R24	Place	Repair and maintenance of Letchworth War Memorial. Current condition of the existing memorial is tired and in need of refurbishment.	15	-	-	-	-
R25	Place	Repair of the balancing pond at Purwell Meadows, Hitchin. The balancing pond on the local nature reserve is now silted up and does not function as it should.	20	-	-	-	-
R26	Place	Waste contract client team staffing expenditure. Net cost of recruitment of two temporary full-time Mobilisation Contract Officers (one of which will be funded by East Herts DC) to support the mobilisation of the new waste and recycling services for up to 6 months, as originally proposed in the report to Cabinet in October 2022.	16	-	-	-	-
R27	Place	Addition of a new part-time (0.5 FTE) Commercial Waste Officer post to the Council's permanent staffing establishment. As originally proposed in the report to Cabinet in October 2022, the new role would support the implementation of Commercial Food Waste Collections, commercial clinical waste collections and evolve and develop the Commercial Waste and Recycling business. Half of the cost of the post will be funded by East Herts, with the aim for this post to be self-funding within 3 years.	9	7	5	-	-
R28	Place	Net cost (after East Herts 50% contribution) of recruitment to a six month temporary full time post that will be responsible for fixing issues which arise with containers, as detailed in the report to Cabinet in December 2023. This staff member would be issued with a van and would assist with container swaps, delivery of ad hoc missing containers, stickering containers and resident run throughs to help residents adjusting to the change. Investment estimate includes box van vehicle hire costs for 4 months.	13	-	-	-	-
R29	Place	Provision of Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil (HVO) fuel for the waste, recycling and street cleansing service vehicles. Based on the annual requirement for 280,000 litres, the additional cost is anticipated to be 12% higher than diesel and this cost is outside the provision of the waste contract. The use of HVO reduces CO2 emissions by approximately 90% in comparison to diesel, thus significantly reducing the carbon impact of the service. Investment value is based on the provision of 100% HVO, but HVO can be blended in proportions of 10% increments with diesel and this provides directly proportionate cost impacts and carbon savings (e.g. opting for 50% HVO would halve both the investment value and the carbon emission saving).	40	40	40	40	40
R30	Place	Commissioning of a waste compositional analysis (WCA). The last was completed in 2021 and is periodically completed to inform the Council of the effectiveness of recycling services. WCA will be a requirement of the data provision from Extended Producer Responsibility Funding (EPR) and undertaking a composition in late 25/26 will allow us to assess the effectiveness of the new services in comparison to the previous composition in 2021. The Hertfordshire Waste Partnership will collectively procure on behalf of the districts and boroughs to provider a wider Hertfordshire analysis for comparison.	20	-	-	-	-

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R31	Place	Provision of a comprehensive communications plan to support the roll out of waste and recycling service changes, as detailed in the previous Cabinet report of 9 July 2024. Costs are estimates and will vary depending on the number of collection day changes and the confirmation of costs following procurement.	100	-	-	-	-
R32	Place	Provision of a mobile application for residents to support the waste and recycling service provision. The app would provide service and collection updates via push notifications to those residents subscribed to the app, as well as look up functionality regarding collection days and options for recycling. The additional 'reporting' functionality via the app would also support the CRM. The app would have capabilities to be expanded to a wider range of council services including planning.	25	20	20	20	20
R33	Place	Storage of wheeled bins during mobilisation of new waste and recycling services. This will be required for a period of around 3 months. Site security and or rental may be required during this period once a site has been identified.	5	-	-	-	-
R34	Regulatory	Permanent budget provision for the Principal Planning Officer and career graded planning officer posts. Fixed term budget provision of five years for these posts was previously approved by Council to lead and support work on the Local Plan review. Cabinet resolved in January 2024 that the review of the Local Plan should be undertaken and initial work is ongoing. A further report to Cabinet in January 2025 will set out a proposed timetable for the key stages. Following the change of Government there is uncertainty over the regulatory framework and timeframe over which the Review will be undertaken. It is already anticipated that it will extend beyond the period for which these posts are funded, with funding for the Principle Planning officer ending in June 2027 and the funding for the Planning Officer post ending in July 2028. These posts are also involved in delivering a range of other planning activities which will continue regardless of, and beyond, the Review programme including Neighbourhood Planning, monitoring, supporting strategies, the Chilterns National Landscape Review and joint strategic planning work with neighbouring authorities.	-	-	53	112	133
R35	Regulatory	Planning service staffing expenditure. Increase in management and oversight capacity through the uplifting of one existing post into a team leader role. There are currently 46 planning posts arranged under three service managers and five team leader / principal roles. Some team leaders are now responsible for a large number of staff working across a wide range of disciplines, complex professional projects and / or substantial case loads.	9	9	9	9	9
R36	Regulatory	Recruitment of an additional Transport Officer for a fixed term of five years to; assist the Senior Transport Officer with the delivery of various transport projects emerging from the adopted Local Plan, the Growth Transport Plan and the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan; to assist with the review of transport policies relating to the Local Plan review; to allow the Senior Transport officer to lead and input on transport initiatives associated with masterplanning for strategic site allocations in the Local Plan and to focus on key strategic transport projects working together with Herts County Council.	56	56	56	56	56
R37	Regulatory	Planning Control IT expenditure. The procurement of Agile AI, an Artificial Intelligence Planning Validator System which operates as an interface between the national Planning Portal and Council IT systems to reduce the manual workload with the checking and validation of planning applications. It reduces validation timescales by up to 65% leaving officer time to concentrate on other matters and improve planning performance. County-wide procurement currently being investigated under the guidance of HIPP and the Growth Board. Costs may be recoverable through planning fees if there was the ability to set fees at a break-even level.	25	5	5	5	5
R38	Regulatory	Planning Control IT expenditure. The installation of Idox Insights, a Uniform add-on that allows real-time access to information that would enable the Development & Conservation Manager to view performance to ensure alignment with performance targets for applications and appeals and gain access to data to enable more reliable and insightful decision-making. It will enable Team Leaders to review in real time the caseload and capacity of officers, easily identify bottlenecks that require attention and thereby improve performance. It allows case officers to prioritise effectively and handle workload efficiently through reducing the burden of administration. Costs may be recoverable through planning fees if there was the ability to set fees at a break-even level.	20	5	5	5	5
R39	Regulatory	Additional budget provision for specialist planning advice. The planning service requires specialist, qualified technical advice on key disciplines to inform decisions, the assessment of heritage impacts of development relating to matters such as archaeology, scheduled monuments and other heritage assets as well as reviews of conservation areas. The advice might take the form of an additional establishment post and most of the funding would come from the overspend that has already been reported from increase in fees from HCC to undertake some of this work.	6	6	6	6	6
R40	Customers	Two factor authentication to allow access to Staff and Councillors to access our IT environment. Previously a capital cost but has been moved to revenue as amount is now much lower.	-	3	-	3	-
R41	Place	Mobilisation of the new waste contract. All tenders were asked to provide separate costs for the mobilisation of the contract and implementation of service changes. These were evaluated as part of the contract award. These costs will be met from the waste reserve, so no General Fund impact. The remainder of the reserve will be a contribution towards the vehicle costs.	-	-	-	-	-
R42	Place	The leisure centre decarbonisation project will require some closures during the works, which will mean a reduction in the magement fee that we receive.	TBC	-	-	-	-
Total Net Budget Increase from new pressures and investment proposals			1,049	681	763	868	762