

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 23 JANUARY 2024

Report Title	Development Control Committee Revenue Estimates – Revised 2023/24 and Original 2024/25			
Purpose of Report	To present to the committee the revised estimates for 2023/24 and original estimates for 2024/25.			
Decision(s)	The Committee RECOMMENDS to Strategy and Resources Committee that: a) The revised Development Control Committee revenue budget for 2023/24 and original 2024/25 revenue budget are approved. b) The Fees and Charges list as shown at Appendix A is approved.			
Consultation and Feedback	Consultation has been undertaken with residents and businesses. Feedback on the outcome of the consultation will be provided to members in January 2024.			
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Options	The Administration will be considering its budget options at the Strategy and Resources Committee meeting on 01 Feb 2024. Council will consider the overall budget position for 2024/25 on 22 February 2024.			
Background Papers	None			
Appendices	Appendix A – Fees & Charges			
Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	Yes	No	No	No

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Update report to Strategy and Resources Committee in October 2023 set out the way in which the Council would approach setting budgets for the forthcoming financial year.
- 1.2 Members will be aware from both the 2023/24 budget and MTFP (approved in February 2023) and the MTFP Update reports, the Council is facing a number of financial challenges in 2024/25 and future years. A budget deficit has been forecast due to anticipated reductions in the level of Government funding and inflationary/cost pressures across the Council's services.
- 1.3 The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) report to Strategy and Resources will set out a projection of General Fund expenditure over the medium term 2023/24 to 2026/27. This report sets out a more detailed analysis of the changes to the Environment Committee budget for 2023/24 (Revised Estimates) and 2024/25 (Original Estimates).

1.4 The Committee’s service revenue budgets have been prepared in accordance with the budget framework set out in the Budget Strategy report. They are presented in draft format and are subject to further change as the budget setting process progresses. Any subsequent changes will be included in the MTFP report to Strategy and Resources and Council.

1.5 **It would be helpful where members have questions on matters of detail if they could be referred to the report author or the appropriate service manager before the meeting.**

2. Summary

2.1 The original budget for the Development Control Committee was **£433k** (the base budget has subsequently been changed to **£443k**). The revised budget in 2023/24 has been updated with the following adjustments to reflect carry forwards and re-profiling of service budgets and the 2023/24 pay award (£1,925). This has been used as the base estimate 2024/25 budget.

2.2 The original estimate for Development Control Committee budget for 2024/25 is **£328k a decrease of (£115k)** on the base budget. This is largely due to the following budget changes, as outlined in table one below.

Summary of change from the 2023/24 Original Budget

	2023/24 Revised Estimate (000's)	2024/25 Original Estimate (000's)
Base Budget	433	443
Recurring changes:		
Pay increases	11	89
Fees and charges growth		(295)
Proposed budget adjustments		91
Net Service Budget	443	328

3. In year virements/adjustments

3.1 In year virements include carry forwards from prior year, MTFP adjustments, re-distribution of corporate maintenance budgets according to the proposed schedule of works within each Committee.

3.2 Inflation

3.3 Pay Inflation - £100k

This reflects the recently agreed 2023/24 pay award (£1,925) which is funded from reserves in 2023/24, as set aside by Strategy & Resources Committee, but will need to be funded going forward.

The 2024/25 salary budgets have been increased by an initial 5.6% in line with budget strategy.

3.4 Fees & Charges Growth – (£295k)

Fees and charges budgets have been inflated by 5% unless stated otherwise on the fees and charges appendix.

A full list of fees and charges for this committee is included in Appendix A.

3.5 Proposed Budget Adjustments – £91k

These adjustments relate to service pressures and budget re-profiling as detailed in the table 1 below.

Table 1 - Budget Pressures/Savings

PRESSURES	Para	2024/25 (£'000)
Increase in professional subscriptions		8
New Biodiversity Net Gain officer post	3.5.1	59
New Planning Enforcement officer post	3.5.2	43
General savings (below £20k threshold)		(19)
Total Development and Control		91

Pressures

3.5.1 New Biodiversity Net Gain officer post created to collaborate and complement the existing ecological specialists and the Strategic Lead Nature Recovery and Biodiversity.

3.5.2 New Planning Enforcement officer post created to enable the team to meet incoming enforcement referral demand and reduce the backlog.

4. IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial Implications

This report sets out the draft budget relating to the Committee for 2023/24. This will form part of the budget setting process to be considered by Strategy and Resources Committee in February 2024 and Council in February 2024.

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4.2 Legal Implications

There are no specific legal implications arising from the recommendations of the report.

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4.3 Equality Implications

There are not any specific changes to service delivery proposed within this decision.

4.4 Environmental Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.