

HALLS, CEMETERIES & ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE

Date: Monday 6 November 2023

Title: Budget: Revenue Growth Items, Special Revenue Projects and Capital Projects

Contact Officer: Responsible Financial Officer

Background

The purpose of this report is to update Members on any revenue growth items, special revenue or capital projects in the current year and to request initial consideration of projects for inclusion in 2024-25.

Capital and special revenue projects – current year 2023-24

(a) Burwell Heating system

The heating improvements which benefit both the Burwell Hall and the attached changing rooms, were previously approved by the Council and were undertaken in September 2023.

The cost of the works was £29,333 to be funded from the earmarked reserves.

(b) Corn Exchange – decoration

The decoration of the Gallery Room, stairwell the bar area was completed earlier this year, the cost being £4,992, funded from the earmarked reserve.

(c) Corn Exchange – scheme for improved lighting up the buildings

This was agreed in principle but as yet the project has not been progressed. Members are requested to consider if they wish to be progressed. This project would be funded from the earmarked reserves.

(d) Corn Exchange – 160th Anniversary

A modest celebration took place earlier this year, the costs of which were met from the revenue budget.

Revenue Growth Items – 2024/25 one off

The proposal to increase the closed churchyard maintenance budget from £11,000 to £16,000, in accordance with the recommendation included on the report of the Operations Manager for essential repair/maintenance works (agenda item 13) is included in the budget.

Special Revenue & Capital Projects 2024/25

Members may wish to consider the following for inclusion in the budget:

(a) Burwell Hall Toilets Upgrade

The project for toilet improvements was previously deferred to 2024-25. The Council has an earmarked reserve of £12,000. If members wish the project to progress your officers will scope and report to a future meeting. For budget purposes it is suggested that an additional budget of £12,000 should be taken forward in the budget process.

(b) Langdale Hall – replacement glazing

At the last meeting it was agreed to explore options for replacement glazing at the Langdale Hall and its funding, in consultation with the tenants. It is suggested that the tenants would be in the best position to explore possible grant funding, with the Council providing funding from the earmarked reserve in relation to climate/biodiversity.

(c) Corn Exchange

The draft business plan includes a number of recommendations in relation to equipment, furniture and maintenance/ decoration as well as events and functions. Your officers will present costed proposals for consideration later in the budget cycle.

Environmental impact

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency at its Council meeting on 26 June 2019 – with this in mind Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

All the Council's Committees receive financial reports in order to fulfil their responsibilities. Members will need to consider additional spending proposals in the context of a challenging budget cycle and the Council's already busy programme of projects.

The RFO has approached the budget with prudence so as accurate budget as possible can be set at this early stage, although there may be some opportunities to make savings if required to balance the budget.

Financial implications

This report forms part of the Council's mechanisms for effective budgetary planning and control. Approval of new spending will need to be funded.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and consider the revised capital and special revenue projects budget for 2023/24 and the proposed capital and special revenue projects for 2024/25 and beyond – subject to any further adjustments necessary.