STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Agenda Item:	Revenue Growth Items, Special Revenue Projects, and Capital Projects
Meeting Date:	Monday 16 November 2026
Contact Officer:	Responsible Financial Officer

The purpose of this report is to consider Revenue Growth Items, Special Revenue Projects, and Capital Projects in relation to this Committee's services for 2027-28 onwards.

Background

In line with the Council's Financial Regulations the purpose of this report is to enable Members to consider proposed works and projects discussed over the course of the year for potential inclusion in the budgets for 2027-28 and/or subsequent financial years.

Note that these matters are brought to this Committee for consideration but that revenue growth and capital projects are matters for recommendation by the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee at its meeting on 23rd November 2026. It will be for the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee to prioritise projects and recommend funding to the full Council.

Current Situation

2026-27 budget

During 2026-27 the capital budgets affecting the work of Stronger Communities Committee include the following and these will be reviewed by the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee when reviewing the capital programme:

- Bus shelters. A sum of £9,000 was included in current year budget. This has since been supplemented by additional sums from earmarked reserves and from an insurance claim in relation to replacement of a shelter at Oxford Hill.
- Digital signage. A sum of £1,200 was included in relation to the town centre shop. £1,120 spent.

2027-28 budget items for consideration

The following budget items for 2027-28 were discussed at the Stronger Communities Committee in September 2026 for further consideration in the budget cycle:

Minute SC453

"That, the replacement and upgrade of the **Burford Road bus shelter** be supported in principle, subject to funding opportunities and detailed costings being identified."

Typically a new bus shelter would cost c.£10,000.

Minute SC454

"Members considered **future infrastructure requirements** including bus shelters, grit bins and street furniture. A Member raised the issue of future maintenance responsibilities arising from the High Street improvement works and emphasised that any future budget provision should relate to ongoing maintenance rather than capital replacement or enhancement works. Members were reminded that Oxfordshire County Council would be expected to provide an appropriate commuted sum to support future maintenance when responsibility for street furniture was transferred to the Town Council. It was also noted that Oxfordshire County Council should continue to bear full responsibility for delivering and funding the proposed improvement scheme. "

Your officers will review the above, taking into account maintenance budgets across the Council and a figure will go to the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee.

Members also discussed the **annual provision for maintenance of the Church Clock** and noted that this should continue within future budgets. It was further noted that any repair project would be considered separately through the work of the Project Officer. Note that there is already a sum of £1,500 is allowed for in the revenue budget.

Minute SC455

Members also considered options for the provision of **lockable noticeboards at play areas and recreational facilities.** The Committee welcomed the proposal and unanimously supported the fourth example presented within the report. It was noted that three boards would be required and that £1,500 should be included within future budget discussions to allow for their purchase.

The budget bid was taken out by the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee but following clarification at Full Council on 12 October 2026 (Minute 514) that the proposal was that these were effectively information boards providing information for specific play areas rather than noticeboards for events etc, the Council retained this sum in the budget for further consideration during the budget cycle.

Minute SC457

That, provision of £1,000 be included within the 2027/28 budget process to **support an additional Play Day** associated with the event *(the proposed Big Lunch event).*

Minute SC459

That, provision of £750 be recommended for inclusion within the 2027/28 budget to support activities associated with the **RAF's 50th Anniversary of the Freedom of Witney.**

Corporate Strategy

The Council's Strategic Plan 2025–29 sets out the Council's long-term priorities and direction, supporting its mission to 'make Witney a great place to live, work and visit.' This report contributes to the delivery of the following strategic pillar of the plan:

1. A Forward Looking Town Council

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

a) Equality – no implications directly resulting from this report.
b) Biodiversity - no implications directly resulting from this report.
c) Crime & Disorder - no implications directly resulting from this report.
d) Environment & Climate Emergency - no implications directly resulting from this report.

Risk

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

The provision of regular financial reports is part of the Council's risk management system.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates. Social value is not quantified in the financial reports but clearly the creation of social value is dependent on setting adequate budgets to meet the Council's objectives.

Financial implications

This report forms part of the Council's due diligence and a process in line with its Financial Regulations. There are likely to be financial implications in relation to the previously agreed revenue growth items in relation to new and enhanced facilities.

With regard to the items suggested at the September meeting of this Committee the financial implications are:

This report forms part of the Council's mechanisms for budgetary control, as it enables income and expenditure incurred to be reviewed and to be compared with the Council's budgets.

Recommendations

Member are invited to note the report.

- It should be noted that the existing revenue growth items and special revenue/capital projects will be considered by the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee later in the budget cycle.
- The Committee is requested to consider the items suggested at the September meeting of this Committee and whether they should be included in the budget for 2027-28.