

Portfolio Regeneration, Highways and Transportation	HOS Nigel Hebden	Budget Major Projects
Budget Code	ER076	
Description of service or information required	Return of Major Development Powers from DC	
Accountable cost	£600,031 (net annual budget 12/13)	
Growth 13/14	120k	
Implications	<p>In April 2012, the planning powers of the Thurrock Development Corporation (TDC) were transferred back to the Council. As this is a statutory (i.e. non-discretionary) duty most of the planning team from TDC were transferred to the Council under TUPE.</p> <p>As part of the transition arrangements CLG provided funding of £xxxxx (for planning and delivery functions) to cover staffing and other costs . This has covered the year 12/13 but only partly accounts for 13/14. The sum of £120,000 makes up the shortfall.</p> <p>The Team provides specialist pre-application advice and processes submitted applications on major and complex proposals and so contributes towards the delivery of major regeneration projects such as London Gateway and Lakeside extensions.</p>	

Portfolio Regeneration, Highways and Transportation	HOS Andrew Millard	Budget Traffic Management Act
Budget Code	ER042 – 2104	
Description of service or information required	<p>Traffic Management Plan (TMP) The Council is required to operate a TMP as a statutory requirement under the Traffic Management Act 2008. The TMP seeks to ensure the provision of a safe and free-flowing highway network. The budget covers the development of the Council's TMP and the measures identified within the plan.</p>	
Accountable cost	£85k	
Growth 13/14	0	
Implications	<p>The planned work on the TMP has been reviewed in an attempt to keep it within the existing £85k budget. On balance, it is considered that we can work within the existing budget without the need for growth on the proviso that any underspends can be carried forward to following years.</p>	

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Portfolio Regeneration, Highways and Transportation	HOS Andrew Millard	Budget Transport Asset Management Plan
Budget Code	ER043	
Description of service or information required	<p>TAMP Infrastructure Audit From 2013-14 a TAMP will be required to meet the Government's requirements for financial reporting. By 2014-15 a TAMP will be required to enable the Council to continue to receive annual block funding from the Government. A TAMP is also required as part of the Council's corporate requirement for asset management. This budget is used to develop and operate a TAMP for the Council.</p>	
Accountable cost	£100,000	
Savings 13/14	0	
Implications	<p>Since the publication of the MTFF we have examined further the lower cost of "Symology" option for the TAMP (an appropriate system to meet the DfT's accounting requirements).</p> <p>With this change of direction we can just cover the work with the existing level of revenue (£100k) and no longer require the additional funding. Thus, the growth is no longer required on the proviso that any underspend can be carried forward to following years.</p>	

Portfolio Regeneration, Highways and Transportation	HOS Andrew Millard	Budget Off street car parking
Budget Code	EH015	
Description of service or information required	<p>Loss of Morrison Car Park Contract</p> <p>This is the amount that the Morrison's car park contract for enforcement is worth to the Council. Morrison's are considering terminating the contract but may not make a decision until January 2013. If they do decide to terminate the contract it is likely to cease at the end of March 2013.</p>	
Accountable cost		
Growth 13/14	41k	
Implications	<p>If the Contract is ended and the growth not provided we may have to revisit other proposals such as introducing free residents parking and free parking at other times such as Christmas, to ensure the parking services budget does not go into deficit.</p>	

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Portfolio Regeneration, Highways and Transportation	HOS Nigel Hebden	Budget Major Projects
Budget Code	ER076	
Description of service or information required	Professional fees	
Accountable cost	£300,000	
Savings 13/14	£150,000	
Implications	<p>The sum was in part intended to be a contingency in the event that planning decisions made by the Dev Corp were subject to appeal.</p> <p>The period for lodging such appeals has expired, however there is still a need retain some funds for possible appeals as well as legal and other costs associated with the making of the London gateway LDO.</p>	

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Portfolio Regeneration, Highways and Transportation	HOS Andrew Millard	Budget ER 031 2600
Budget Code	To be confirmed	
Description of service or information required	<p>SERT (as part of the wider Transport Scheme Development budget)</p> <p>This budget covers the preparation of schemes including those necessary to enable the Council to make bids for external funding. It also covers feasibility studies to be taken Borough wide.</p>	
Accountable cost	£110k	
Savings 13/14	£60k	
Implications	<p>The £60k saving was identified at a time when announcement on the SERT scheme was delayed by DfT. The project has now been abandoned.</p>	

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Portfolio Regeneration, Highways and Transportation	HOS Andrew Millard	Budget Local Transport Plan
Budget Code	ER033 – 2600	
Description of service or information required	<p>Local Transport Plan (LTP) The Local Transport Act 2008 places a duty on each Local Transport Authority to produce an LTP and an implementation plan. In addition the Transport Strategy, which forms part of the LTP, requires an annual refresh to ensure it is up to date in terms of the Borough's Priorities and Regional and National policies and strategies.</p>	
Accountable cost	£30k	
Savings 13/14	£20k	
Implications	<p>For 13/14 a saving of £20k could be taken leaving just £10k to enable monitoring and Strategy re-fresh work. It is likely that more substantial work will be required in 14/15 and beyond and, therefore, this can only be taken as an in-year saving.</p>	

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<p>Portfolio Regeneration, Highways and Transportation</p>	<p>HOS Andrew Millard</p>	<p>Budget Admin group</p>
<p>Budget Code</p>	<p>ER001</p>	
<p>Description of service or information required</p>	<p>Central budgets, Planning and Transportation</p> <p>These savings are from the following budgets:</p> <p>ER001 – Centralised operational costs for all Planning and Transportation services, excluding Major Projects</p> <p>ER101 – Operational budget for the UNiform data recording system which is the main system supporting both Planning and Transportation and also Public Protection</p> <p>ER073 – Development Control Service</p>	
<p>Accountable cost</p>	<p>490k</p>	
<p>Savings 13/14</p>	<p>120k</p>	
<p>Implications</p>	<p>ER001 – The remaining budgets that support the day to day operation of the services will be at a level that could not contain any unexpected expenditure</p> <p>ER101 – There will be no capacity for further savings to be taken from this budget. If further savings were to be taken then this would jeopardise operation of the main data recording system for Planning & Transportation as well as Public Protection. There would also be a risk that wider transformation projects could not be delivered if further savings were to be taken.</p> <p>ER073 – This saving relates to a reorganisation that has already taken place and therefore there are no implications</p>	

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<p>Portfolio Regeneration, Highways and Transportation</p>	<p>HOS Andrew Millard</p>	<p>Budget Town planning Development Management</p>
<p>Budget Code</p>	<p>ER073</p>	
<p>Description of service or information required</p>	<p><i>(Development management / pre application charges)</i></p> <p>At present, a pre-application advice service is offered by Development Management and Major Projects whereby applicants can obtain advice and meet with Planning Officers ahead of submitting their planning application. The following levels and tariffs apply:</p> <p>Minor Developments (PMIN) : Fee charged: £300 (ex. Vat) Major Developments (PMAJ): Fee charged £600 (ex. Vat) Householder extensions (PH): No fee</p> <p>During the last financial year, 102 x PH, 40 x PMIN and 9 x PMAJ were submitted, representing an income of £17,400.</p> <p>A benchmarking exercise has been completed comparing Thurrock's pre-application charging schedule to other LPA's within Essex, including Barking and Dagenham. At present, it is considered Thurrock's pre-application advice charging schedule is broadly consistent with other LPA's, but could be raised slightly.</p>	
<p>Accountable cost</p>	<p>£247,416</p>	
<p>Savings 13/14</p>	<p>25k 5K</p>	
<p>Implications</p>	<p>There is scope to charge for pre-application advice requests for householder applications. Whilst most LPA's have resisted charging for such advice, four of the Essex LPA's have introduced charges at this</p>	

level.

By way of comparison, the Council's existing charging schedule is almost identical to Maldon Borough Council; Maldon do however charge £120 to provide pre-application advice in relation to householder applications.

However, consideration must be given to the cost of submitting a full planning application; the fee to submit a planning application is £150 (soon to increase to £185) which would likely deter applicants from paying £120 for informal advice.

A lower threshold could prove to be more appropriate. By way of related costs, at present there is a £25 fee to discharge conditions imposed on household planning permissions and an £85 fee to discharge conditions imposed on all other planning permissions. These fees are nationally set, and the Officer time spent dealing with PH inquiries is broadly similar (on average) to that which is spent discharging conditions (£85).

Alternatively, some LPA's (including B&D) have split their categories of development into small, medium, large and major scale developments and introduced a sliding scale of charges. It is common for LPA's to charge for follow up meetings; at present, there is no cap on the number or duration of meetings that the applicant can arrange with Officers. This has proved to be a good selling point when encouraging developers to seek pre-application advice.

In summary, whilst the Council's charging schedule is broadly consistent with other LPA's, there is scope for introducing charges for householder pre-application advice and for re-categorising development proposals with proportionate adjustments to the fee schedules.

Careful consideration would need to be given when introducing increasing charges; set too high, the fees would deter applicants from seeking pre-application advice which would likely result in an increase of applications being refused and appeals being lodged. Similarly, introducing charges for householder pre-application advice will be likely to have political consequences.

The following options are set out for consideration:

Option 1: To continue without introducing a new threshold for PH applications or raising the charging schedule.

Option 2: To introduce a charging regime for 'PH' inquiries. £85 is considered to be a reasonable fee for the level of work required.

Option 3: To introduce additional charges for follow up meetings.

Option 4: To investigate options to sub divide the existing categories of development, to create small scale, medium scale and large scale developments and adjust the charging schedule as necessary.