

REPORT TO ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE BUDGET 2027/28

Report Reference ET-26-11
Meeting Date 7th September 2026
Agenda Item 10
Prepared by A Keppel-Green, Town Clerk



1.0 BACKGROUND

Each committee is required to set a draft budget for the financial year commencing 1st April 2027. All draft budgets will then be amalgamated and presented to a meeting of the Finance Committee in December where the committee will agree a recommendation to Full Council for a budget and precept. As per last year, the council will publish a draft budget for consultation and engagement ahead of the Finance Committee meeting.

The draft budget is split into three sections covering the previous (2025/26) financial year, current financial year and the next financial year. The 2025 column shows actual spend against budget. The 2026 column shows the current budget (total), actual spend year to date, projected spend by year end and commitments. The 2027 column shows agreed (i.e. draft) budget; the ERM and carried forward columns are not ordinarily used.

This report provides a summary of the changes within the cost centres. Inflationary increases have been applied to various budget lines as appropriate.

2.0 COST CENTRE COMMENTARY

301 TOWN PLANTING AND IN BLOOM

This centre covers the costs of the town's planting schemes and grant to Knutsford in Bloom. The budget makes allowance for planned replacement of old planters in partnership with Knutsford in Bloom or other floriculture infrastructure.

The budget for Knutsford in Bloom has been increased as outlined in a separate item.

The budget for horticulture / planting has been increased to allow for the purchase of larger plants for summer planters. To date, the plants bought have been cell grown and required more growing on, which can only be done after the frosts as the council does not have a greenhouse/similar.

310 HERITAGE

The advertising/print budgets are to cover the production of the conservation area guidance leaflets with the objective of producing the Legh Road leaflet during the current financial year. Production of further guidance leaflets would be subject to the new appraisals being approved by Cheshire East Council.

315 TIDY TOWN VOLUNTEERING

This centre has been created to account for costs involved in the volunteer maintenance sessions. Current year expenditure has been drawn from other budget areas. Most equipment was bought this year, but a modest budget is provided for future costs.

330 ENVIRONMENT PROJECTS

The professional fees line for the current year is the cost of the Dog Wood cycle path design work, which is currently being undertaken.

The Street Furniture budget was increased in the current financial year with carry-forwards from previous year underspends (for funds agreed for Red Cow Yard). The Cycling Projects expenditure to date was the installation of the Silk Mill Street cycle shelter and the projected is the Revolution route signage. Operation Costs covers the cost of dog poo bags for dispensers, and potential replacement of defibrillator pads for the Woodland Drive defibrillator.

The 2027/28 budget is modelled on the current year budget and provides £9,500 for projects that may be determined by the committee during the year (under External Contractors/Street Furniture). There is also a budget based on the action plan under the Active Travel Infrastructure Plan.

335 OPEN SPACE, CLIMATE AND NATURE

Unspent but agreed funds from the previous year were carried forward into the current year budget. The budget covers the Nature Action Plan projects, and activity/projects arising from the Green Space Strategy.

3.0 DECISION REQUIRED

The committee should agree a draft budget.