

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2024-28

Growth - Cabinet 15 January 2024	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	Total £000
Innovation and Change	71	0	0	0	71
Finance and Digital	250	0	0	0	250
Housing and Sustainable Development	505	0	0	0	505
Environment, Civic Pride and Climate	1,501	0	0	0	1,501
Children, Lifelong Learning, and Families	0	0	0	0	0
Adult Social Care, Integrated Care, and Public Health	0	0	0	0	0
Total Growth 2024-28	2,327	0	0	0	2,327
Cumulative Total	2,327	2,327	2,327	2,327	

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2024-28

INNOVATION AND CHANGE: GROWTH 2024-28

	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000
Information Governance Increasing establishment of team and attaching a market supplement to an existing post	71	0	0	0
Total : INNOVATION AND CHANGE Growth 2024-28	71	0	0	0
Cumulative Total	71	71	71	71

GROWTH CABINET 15 Jan.2024

GROWTH PROPOSALS 2024-28

DEPARTMENT: Innovation and Change

Panel	Ref	Description of growth		2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	Type of Growth (see key)
OSC	2024-25 ICG4	Service/Section	Legal and Governance	71				
		Description	Information Governance					
		Service Implication	Good Information Governance is a core requirement for all public bodies, and failure to discharge this responsibility effectively presents legal, financial, and reputational risk. Merton's IG function currently only has one post, which in order to fill it at the required level is subject to a market supplement, which is currently unbudgeted. This post provides growth in the Information Governance team to cover market factor pay, as well as an additional officer. Currently, the team only has one officer, which presents significant corporate risk around a key legal responsibility and a potential single point of failure. The new manager has made significant progress in clearing the backlogs of FOIs and SARS, and improving the overall performance of the organisation in creating a strong IG culture, however an additional officer is required to ensure progress is maintained, and to manage the risk of a single point of failure. The Council is under close scrutiny from the Information Commissioner's Office and risks fines if this area of work is not properly resourced.					
		Staffing Implications	Plus one FTE					
		Strategic Priorities implications	None					
		Impact on other departments	supports all departments in meeting their legal IG requirements					
		Equalities Implications	None					
		Total		71	0	0	0	

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2024-28

FINANCE AND DIGITAL: GROWTH 2024-28

	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000
IT Business Systems: Key systems re-procurement	250	0	0	0
Total : FINANCE AND DIGITAL Growth 2024-28	250	0	0	0
Cumulative Total	250	250	250	250

GROWTH CABINET 15 Jan.2024

GROWTH PROPOSALS 2024-28

DEPARTMENT: Finance and Digital

Panel	Ref	Description of growth		2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	Type of Growth (see key)
OSC	2024-25 FDG4	Service/Section	Business Systems Team	250				GNS1
		Description	Key systems re-procurement, new annual support & maintenance contracts costs likely to be greater than existing budget given the significantly inflated market prices					
		Service Implication	Improved, modern systems for service areas					
		Staffing Implications	N/A					
		Strategic Priorities implications	Prioritised projects					
		Impact on other departments	Business engagement required for configuration, training and testing.					
		Equalities Implications	None					
		Total		250	0	0	0	

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2024-28

HOUSING AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: GROWTH 2024-28

	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000
Facilities Management - Additional funding required in order to cover the cost of unachievable income targets	65	0	0	0
Housing Needs & Strategy - additional temporary accommodation visiting officer and upgrade existing officer	50	0	0	0
Development Management & Building Control - Planning Enforcement Restructure and recruitment	190	0	0	0
Development Management & Building Control - Development Management Recruitment and retention	200	0	0	0
Total : HOUSING AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT Growth 2024-28	505	0	0	0
Cumulative Total	505	505	505	505

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GROWTH PROPOSALS 2024-28

DEPARTMENT: Housing and Sustainable Development

Panel	Ref	Description of growth		2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	Type of Growth (see key)
OSC	I&T 02	Service/Section Description	Facilities Management Additional funding is required in order to cover the cost of unachievable income targets set in the facilities management team. The £65,000 is to cover unachievable income from the facilities management trading account, specifically income for printing, which has not been achievable since the pandemic and changes to usage. This will rectify ongoing structural overspends, and allow the time for a comprehensive, evidence based review of our printing services to be put in place over the coming year which will look to bring forward some efficiencies in future years.	65				GI1
		Strategic Priorities implications	None					
		Impact on other departments	None					
		Equalities Implications	None					
SC	HSD 2024-25 01	Service/Section Description	Housing Needs & strategy additional temporary accommodation visiting officer and increase existing officer to team leader	50				GS1
		Service Implication	The temporary accommodation team is currently 1FTE temporary accommodation visiting officer at ME10 and one ME7 admin officer. This staffing compliment has been in place since 2010. Since 2010 the number of households in temporary accommodation has increased from 76 to 391 (June 23) with a 52% increase in the last year. As a result it is increasingly difficult to visit all temporary properties to confirm they are in use, but also to check that property safety standards are met. The addition of an additional officer and increase of the existing visiting officer to team leader will increase the capacity of the team to inspect properties, improve standards and provide greater focus on efficient temporary accommodation. Both posts do have a role in accommodation cost recovery and this will increase the ability of the team to tackle non-payment.					
		Staffing Implications	1FTE at ME10, increase existing visiting officer to team leader from ME10 to ME11					
		Strategic Priorities implications	improving the quality and safety of temporary accommodation, increasing income and reducing non-use. Current trends suggest continuing rises in the use of temporary accommodation across London and these points will reduce risks for the Council					
		Impact on other departments	none					
		Equalities Implications	none					

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GROWTH PROPOSALS 2024-28

DEPARTMENT: Housing and Sustainable Development

Panel	Ref	Description of growth		2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	Type of Growth (see key)
SC	HSD 2024-25 02	Service/Section	Development Management & Building Control - Planning Enforcement	190				GS1
		Description	Restructure and recruitment drive for the Planning Enforcement, following a Full Council motion to improve the service. The 22/23 staffing budget provision was £180,860. This needs to increase to £370,836 for a full year to maintain a level of service without significant backlogs, which requires a £190,000 growth bid. This level of staffing is already in place with temporary staff as an establishment overspend to provide the required levels of service.					
		Service Implication	A reduction in the high dependency on agency staff, the establishment of a more stabilised team and continuous improvement in the performance and responsiveness of the service.					
		Staffing Implications	1 new permanent Planning Enforcement Team Manager; Replacement of Deputy Team Leader with 1 new permanent Principal Enforcement Officer; 2 new permanent Enforcement Officer; 1 new permanent Principal Tree and Landscape Officer, and loss of 3 current Agency posts. All of these new posts are currently in place and occupied, taking the service over budget.					
		Strategic Priorities implications	Merton Council has previously stated that it recognises the importance of good town planning and understands local residents want planning applications which are approved to be adhered to and properly enforced. The enforcement of planning control is a key area of priority for the Council and its stakeholders.					
		Impact on other departments	Potential greater support and stronger working with Greenspaces/Street Trees					
		Equalities Implications						

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GROWTH PROPOSALS 2024-28

DEPARTMENT: Housing and Sustainable Development

Panel	Ref	Description of growth		2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	Type of Growth (see key)
SC	HSD 2024-25 03	Service/Section	Development Management & Building Control - Development Management	200				GS1
		Description Service Implication Staffing Implications Strategic Priorities implications Impact on other departments Equalities Implications	<p>Recruitment and retention of planning officers and admin staff.</p> <p>To enable staff to process planning submissions to meet statutory targets and to ensure there is a high performing service in response to pre-application enquiries and to meet Planning Performance Agreements. Creation of a more stabilised team with reduced costs. The current service is over budget and establishment, using agency staff in order to provide the levels of service required in terms of statutory deadlines</p> <p>3 new permanent planning officer roles, plus market supplements to principal planners, which have to be and are already being paid to ensure retention and competition with other local authorities. This growth can mostly be paid for through an increase in pre application and PPA fees, but without the resources this income cannot be achieved (especially in PPA fees as if service levels are not met, then income will not be paid).</p> <p>To meet the statutory requirements of the Local Planning Authority and secure the sustainable growth of the Borough.</p>					
		Total Housing and Sustainable Development Growth Proposals		505	0	0	0	0

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2024-28

ENVIRONMENT, CIVIC PRIDE AND CLIMATE: GROWTH 2024-28

	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000
Parking Income - to right size budget following sustained fall in parking income	800	0	0	0
Public Space: Removal of Transport Revenue Income Budget for additional Community Transport activities	336	0	0	0
Public Protection: Safer Merton- CCTV team	365	0	0	0
Total : ENVIRONMENT, CIVIC PRIDE AND CLIMATE Growth 2024-28	1,501	0	0	0
Cumulative Total	1,501	1,501	1,501	1,501

GROWTH CABINET 15 Jan.2024

GROWTH PROPOSALS 2024-28

DIRECTORATE: Environment, Civic Pride & Climate

Panel	Ref		Description of growth	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	Type of Growth (see key)
SC	2024-25 ECPC G04	Service/Section	Parking Income	800				GI1
		Description	Whilst efforts have been made to achieve additional income it has become apparent that the budgeted parking income targets are unrealistic and unachievable, even after accounting for the previously agreed inflationary increases to parking charges due to be implemented this financial year.					
		Service Implication	None					
		Staffing Implications	None					
		Strategic Priorities implications	None					
		Impact on other departments	None					
		Equalities Implications	None					
		Total		800	0	0	0	

GROWTH CABINET 15 Jan.2024

REVENUE GROWTH PROPOSALS 2024-28

DIRECTORATE: Environment, Civic Pride & Climate.

DIVISION: Public Space

Panel	Ref	Description of growth	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	Type of Growth (see key)
SC	2024-25 ECPC G07	<p>Service/Section Public Space Passenger Transport</p> <p>Description Removal of Transport Revenue Income Budget for additional Community Transport activities: Prior to covid, the Transport Section ran a "paid for" community transport service for mid day and excursions outside of the provision for schools. This service has never recovered post-covid. With the ageing fleet, it is not possible to continue with this service sustainably and to be able to meet the current projected income targets (current shortfall of £336K per anum). The service is running under resourced from a staffing perspective, and has been since the pandemic. Due to the part-time nature of the role, the service is struggling to recruit new staff and the staff we currently have are aging and nearing retirement. The service is currently in no position to be able to provide any additional work at this point in time. This bid is to request the reduction in the revenue income budget to allow the service to run core services sustainably.</p> <p>Service Implication This will remove the pressure to provide an unsustainable service with an aging fleet. It will mean that focus can be placed on core service delivery to improve the customer experience and meet targets while focussing on the sustainable replacement of fleet within achievable timescales.</p> <p>Staffing Implications None</p> <p>Strategic Priorities implications Creating a Sustainable Future, Improving the Customer Experience</p> <p>Impact on other departments The proposal will have no impact on the local community and voluntary groups - the services have not run since before the Covid-19 pandemic. It will benefit core service users by freeing up resource to support the sustainable replacement of the current fleet as well as improving customer service.</p> <p>Equalities Implications Possible perceived negative impacts across the community & voluntary sectors due to the removal of an additional day time service, however, this has not run since the covid-19 pandemic, and the current fleet does not allow for the service to be re-introduced.</p>	336	0	0	0	G12
TOTAL			336	0	0	0	

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GROWTH PROPOSALS 2024-28

DIRECTORATE: Environment, Civic Pride and Climate

Panel	Ref	Description of growth		2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	Type of Growth (see key)
SC	2024-25 ECPC G08	Service/section	Safer Merton- CCTV team					GS1
		Description	Strengthen the funding for critical and essential services by increasing core funding to enable us to grow our permanent staff levels to maintain a 24hr service. This will provide resilience in the team and reducing the reliance on overtime. The current budget funds 7 operators and there needs to be 8, and there is no middle management. This would also allow us to have a more robust staffing and management structure to enable the service to operate at a high standard, work closely with partners and build on the good work and outcomes the service has had. It will allow for focus on the CCTV upgrade and generating income opportunities with wider partners, using the SLA we have with Clarion as a good example of the benefits of a 24/7 CCTV service. The council is investing in a significant upgrade of the CCTV cameras which will provide one of the best for London and provides opportunities for income if the service maintains 24/7. Without growth the service will struggle to 24/7 coverage and hours will need to be reduced with a focus on providing out of hours coverage during busier times such as Thurs-Saturday nights.	365	0	0	0	
		Service Implication	There are not enough operators or effective management structure within the service which is impacting on core delivery and there have been regular occasions where we are relying on overtime to fill gaps and had to procure an external provider to provide additional staff.					
		Staffing Implications	Additional staff.					
		Strategic Priorities implications Impact on other departments Equalities Implications	The council have invested in upgrading the CCTV cameras and keeping Merton safe is a strategic priority CCTV supports and works with a range of internal teams and monitors those cameras. without the necessary none.					
Total				365	0	0	0	
Cumulative Total				365	365	365	365	

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