

**Savings not recommended by Executive
at this budget round**

[Economic Development](#)

[Community Grants](#)

[Citizen's Advice](#)

[Community Alliance](#)

[Planning Enforcement](#)

[Blue Badge](#)

2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
£(000)	£(000)	£(000)	£(000)
(26)	(52)	(52)	(52)
(30)	(30)	(30)	(30)
(10)	(10)	(10)	(10)
(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
(176)	(176)	(176)	(176)
(60)	(60)	(60)	(60)
(303)	(329)	(329)	(329)

Service:	Economic Development			
Portfolio:	Vicky Glover- Ward, Executive Member for Planning and Growth			
LT Lead:	Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy			
Priority:				
Description of Service:				
<p>Economic development consists of an economic development officer (joint with North Herts), 0.5 FTE grade 8, contracts officer, 50% funded from ERDF and now UKSPF, 0.8 FTE, grade 8, and an economic development manager, 40% funded from the Launchpad (1.0 FTE, Grade 10). The team undertake all business support and liaison functions as well as contract and project management. Currently it has been agreed with North Herts that we will continue with the joint post for another year at least (until 31 March 2025). In addition the contract officer is part funded from UKSPF until 31 March 2025, hence no savings could be made until then.</p>				
Description of savings proposal:				
<p>Cease all economic development work. This would involve deletion of the economic development officer (net cost to the council £27,000 per year) and deletion of the contract officer (net cost to the council £23,000 per year). The manager role is subject to the senior manager (£500k) saving and therefore is out of scope</p> <p>In terms of the impact this would mean we have no capacity to undertake any economic development related activity. Specifically it would mean no project management or contract management for LEP activity (business support programmes and inward investment), Visit Herts (destination management), the Innovation Corridor, the Digital Innovation Zone and ad hoc smaller contracts such as Better Business for All and the county and local (BS and Buntingford) Chambers of Commerce. There would also be no capacity to undertake any town centre related work (e.g. liaison with the BS BID or dealing with issues such as bollards in Hertford by liaising with the town council and county council). There would also be no capacity to input into employment land discussions on strategic sites). We would also be unable to project manage any external funding schemes such as the UKSPF or prioritise writing bids for funding. The UKSPF is currently scheduled to finish on the 31 March 2025 in any case so this may not be an issue in terms of the contract officer. However, the scheme is likely to be continued or refined and we expect further details in late 2024</p>				
Value of proposal(s) per year (Estimated) £ (000)				
Savings must be shown as a negative figure, set up costs as a positive figure				
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	£(000)	£(000)	£(000)	£(000)
Revenue	(26)	(50)	(50)	(50)
Capital	0	0	0	0
Current budget £(000) (Net Revenue Costs or CAPEX only not financing)				
	Expenditure:	Income:	Net Budget:	
	50	0	50	

Equality Impact Assessment

<p>Does initial EQIA screening indicate any key issues? (If yes, list the issues)</p>	<p>Unlikely as function works with businesses as opposed to members of the public to deliver a discretionary service.</p>
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<p>Will a full EQIA be required?</p>	<p>No</p>
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Key issues/Risks/Impacts of proposal

Include here any potential negative public or media reaction and proposed lines to take with media messaging

Issues/Risks/Impacts	Mitigations and Media Messaging
<p>Risk are captured above in terms of work that would no longer be undertaken. Although small the service has a good reputation particularly with those businesses that have benefitted from grant funding and direct support</p>	<p>Challenge would be around communicating that the council is business friendly if it ceases discretionary support functions leaving only regulatory functions (business rates' collection, licensing and environmental health).</p>

Consultation requirements:

Some consultation with stakeholders required (business infrastructure organisations such as the chambers and BID). Consultation with staff affected required

Thematic Assessment

(these themes will be replaced with Corporate Plan Priorities once agreed)

Net Zero, climate change and sustainability	Communities (how it affects the people in the district)	Place (how it affects the district as a place)	Value for money services that are digital by design

Service:	Community Grants			
Portfolio:	Cllr Alex Daar, Executive Member for Communities			
LT Lead:	Head of Housing and Health			
Priority:				
Description of Service:				
<p>The council gives grants to community groups, voluntary groups, town and parish councils and individuals through an application process underpinned by a set of priorities, eligibility criteria and an assessment process approved by Council on an annual basis. In 2023/24, the total pot available is £40k. This itself represents a reduction on the previous year's total of £94k although much of the difference has been made up by £40k of UK Shared Prosperity Fund monies used for cultural activities and environmental sustainability grants.</p>				
Description of savings proposal:				
<p>The maximum saving proposed is £30k. This would reduce the community grants pot to £10k which is the amount funded from the council's income from the East Herts Lottery. Alternatively, a lower reduction of, say, £20k or £10k could be made. Of note, in 2024/25, there will be grant funding from the UKSPF of at least £20k for environmental sustainability projects and upwards of £60k for cultural activities, particularly those linked to proposed Arts Showcase. Therefore, even with the largest reduction to the community grants pot, the combined community grants, environmental sustainability and cultural activities grants are likely to total more in 2024/25 than in 2023/24, that is, £90k vs £80k this year.</p>				
Value of proposal(s) per year (Estimated) £ (000)				
Savings must be shown as a negative figure, set up costs as a positive figure				
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	£(000)	£(000)	£(000)	£(000)
Revenue	30	30	30	30
Capital	0	0	0	0
Current budget £(000) (Net Revenue Costs or CAPEX only not financing)				
	Expenditure:	Income:	Net Budget:	
	40	0	40	

Equality Impact Assessment

Does initial EQIA screening indicate any key issues? (If yes, list the issues)	Possibly, in that community grant applications are prioritised when they are focused on areas of relative deprivation and harder-to-reach groups. Therefore, a reduction in funding could adversely affect at least some groups with protected characteristics. That said, the likely increase in the overall grants pot (community grants, environmental sustainability and cultural activities) would, to some extent, ameliorate any negative impacts.
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Will a full EQIA be required?	Yes	
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Key issues/Risks/Impacts of proposal

Include here any potential negative public or media reaction and proposed lines to take with media messaging

Issues/Risks/Impacts	Mitigations and Media Messaging
(a) Reputational risk - the council could be seen to be reducing support for community groups working with people with less access to services at a time of cost of living pressures. (b) Although individual grants are relatively small (in a range from £300 to £3,000), fewer such grants could exacerbate things such as social isolation and poor mental or physical health and thus put increased pressure on statutory care and/or health services.	(a) The increase in UKSPF-funded grants in 2024/25 would mitigate a reduction in community grants, albeit in that year alone. (b) Funding of the Arts Showcase in 2024/25 through the UKSPF includes facilitating the establishment of a steering group with fund-raising skills to enable future annual Showcase events. The council could work with this new steering group to facilitate a stream of grants to community groups which could potentially supplant the council's community grants from 2025/26 onwards. (c) The council will continue to promote the East Herts Lottery as a way for local groups to fund raise.

Consultation requirements:

None. The community grants programme is a discretionary programme, the continuation and degree of funding of which, the council reviews on an annual basis.

Thematic Assessment

(these themes will be replaced with Corporate Plan Priorities once agreed)

Net Zero, climate change and sustainability	Communities (how it affects the people in the district)	Place (how it affects the district as a place)	Value for money services that are digital by design
	The reduction in grants could adversely impact this theme, however, mitigations have been identified.		

Service:	Citizens' Advice Bureau			
Portfolio:	Cllr Sarah Hopewell, Executive Member for Wellbeing			
LT Lead:	Head of Housing and Health			
Priority:				
Description of Service:				
<p>The council has given an annual grant to Citizens Advice East Herts for a considerable number of years. In return, as specified in an SLA, Citizens Advice support residents in the district facing financial, legal, housing, employment and similar issues. The annual grant has gradually reduced over around the last five years. In 2023/24, the base grant was £99k. In addition, the council pays Citizens Advice a grant other c£20k from its Homelessness Prevention Grant from the government for them to provide debt advice to homeless clients of the council. Note: the proposal here only relates to the base grant from the council's budget; it is proposed to continue with the Homelessness Prevention Grant funded grant at the same level.</p>				
Description of savings proposal:				
<p>As part of an overall proposal to reduce council grants to external bodies by 10%, it is proposed to reduce the Citizens Advice grant from 2024/25 onwards by £10k to £89k. It is worth noting that Cllr Hopewell and Jonathan Geall have recently commenced work with three voluntary sector organisations, including Citizens Advice, with a view to drawing up a joint bid for National Lottery funding. If successful, this could offset a reduction in council funding.</p>				
Value of proposal(s) per year (Estimated) £ (000)				
Savings must be shown as a negative figure, set up costs as a positive figure				
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	£(000)	£(000)	£(000)	£(000)
Revenue	(10)	(10)	(10)	(10)
Capital	0	0	0	0
Current budget £(000) (Net Revenue Costs or CAPEX only not financing)				
	Expenditure:	Income:	Net Budget:	
	99	0	99	

Equality Impact Assessment

Does initial EQIA screening indicate any key issues? (If yes, list the issues)	It is to be expected that Citizens Advice's clients will experience more hardship than most residents. Those with protected characteristics can be over-represented among those experiencing disadvantage. That said, a reduction in grant from £99k to £89k would, in all probability, not lead to a wholesale withdrawal of client-facing services.
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Will a full EQIA be required?	No	
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Key issues/Risks/Impacts of proposal

Include here any potential negative public or media reaction and proposed lines to take with media messaging

Issues/Risks/Impacts	Mitigations and Media Messaging
<p>(a) Reputational risk - the council could be accused of reducing support for Citizens Advice at a time when some residents are still struggling to cope with the cost of living crisis.</p> <p>(b) Previous reductions in the Citizens Advice grant have led to representations to senior members by Citizens Advice outlining how damaging the reductions were.</p> <p>(c) Although the reduction on the face of it appears to be relatively small in comparison with Citizens Advice's overall funding, any resulting reduction in their service could potentially put increased pressure on statutory care and/or health services.</p>	<p>(a) The council would continue to provide a not insignificant grant to the organisation. Of note, neighbouring Broxbourne Council cut all its funding to their local Citizens Advice around three years ago.</p> <p>(b) The council would continue to provide a grant of c£20k from its Homelessness Prevention Grant.</p> <p>(c) The Portfolio Holder and Head of Service's work with three voluntary sector organisations, including Citizens Advice, to draw up a joint bid for National Lottery funding would, if successful, more than offset a £10k reduction in council funding.</p>

Consultation requirements:

It would be reasonable to discuss the proposal with Citizens Advice and, in doing so, explore any non-financial ways the council could further support the organisation to offset the reduction.

Thematic Assessment

(these themes will be replaced with Corporate Plan Priorities once agreed)

Net Zero, climate change and sustainability	Communities (how it affects the people in the district)	Place (how it affects the district as a place)	Value for money services that are digital by design
	<p>The reduction in the grant could adversely impact this theme, however, mitigations have been proposed, notably the potential to support a joint bid to the National Lottery Fund.</p>		

Service:	Community Alliance			
Portfolio:	Cllr Sarah Hopewell, Executive Member for Wellbeing			
LT Lead:	Head of Housing and Health			
Priority:				
Description of Service:				
<p>The council has given an annual grant to Community Alliance Broxbourne and East Herts (previously known as the CVS) for a considerable number of years. In return, as specified in an SLA, Community Alliance support local voluntary and community groups in the district to establish themselves and grow, including for example, advising on fund-raising. The annual grant has gradually reduced over around the last five years. In 2023/24, the base grant was £13k.</p>				
Description of savings proposal:				
<p>As part of an overall proposal to reduce council grants to external bodies by 10%, it is proposed to reduce the Community Alliance grant from 2024/25 onwards by £1k to £12k. It is worth noting that Cllr Hopewell and Jonathan Geall have recently commenced work with three voluntary sector organisations, including Community Alliance, with a view to drawing up a joint bid for National Lottery funding. If successful, this could offset a reduction in council funding.</p>				
Value of proposal(s) per year (Estimated) £ (000)				
Savings must be shown as a negative figure, set up costs as a positive figure				
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	£(000)	£(000)	£(000)	£(000)
Revenue	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
Capital	0	0	0	0
Current budget £(000) (Net Revenue Costs or CAPEX only not financing)				
	Expenditure:	Income:	Net Budget:	
	13	0	13	

Equality Impact Assessment

Does initial EQIA screening indicate any key issues? (If yes, list the issues)	It is to be expected that Community Alliance's clients include groups working with residents experiencing more hardship than most. Those with protected characteristics can be over-represented among those experiencing disadvantage. That said, a reduction in grant from £13k to £12k would, in all probability, not lead to a wholesale withdrawal of client-facing services.
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Will a full EQIA be required?	No	
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Key issues/Risks/Impacts of proposal

Include here any potential negative public or media reaction and proposed lines to take with media messaging

Issues/Risks/Impacts	Mitigations and Media Messaging
<p>(a) Reputational risk - the council could be accused of reducing support for Community Alliance at a time when community groups need to support residents who are still struggling to cope with the cost of living crisis.</p> <p>(b) Although the reduction on the face of it appears to be relatively small in comparison with Community Alliance's overall funding, any resulting reduction in their service could potentially put increased pressure on statutory care and/or health services.</p>	<p>(a) The council would continue to provide a very similar level of grant to the organisation as in 2023/24.</p> <p>(b) The Executive Member and Head of Service's work with three voluntary sector organisations, including Community Alliance, to draw up a joint bid for National Lottery funding would, if successful, more than offset a £1k reduction in council funding.</p>

Consultation requirements:

It would be reasonable to discuss the proposal with Community Alliance and, in doing so, explore any non-financial ways the council could further support the organisation to offset the reduction.

Thematic Assessment

(these themes will be replaced with Corporate Plan Priorities once agreed)

Net Zero, climate change and sustainability	Communities (how it affects the people in the district)	Place (how it affects the district as a place)	Value for money services that are digital by design
	<p>The reduction in the grant could adversely impact this theme, however, mitigations have been proposed, notably the potential to support a joint bid to the National Lottery Fund.</p>		

Service:	Planning and Building Control			
Portfolio:	Vicky Glover- Ward, Executive Member for Planning and Growth			
LT Lead:	Sara Saunders, Head of Planning and Building Control			
Priority:				
Description of Service:				
<p>Planning enforcement is the investigation of alleged breaches of planning control and, where a breach of planning control is identified, the aim is to resolve these using the most appropriate action. It is not a statutory service and it is not legally incumbent on the Council to investigate all matters that are alleged as a breach of planning control.</p>				
Description of savings proposal:				
<p>The maximum savings proposed is £176k which would limited the planning enforcement resource to compliance only.</p> <p>Alternatively, a lower reduction could be made by reducing the enforcement officer resource from 3 to 1, saving £106k. This would retain the Planning Enforcement Team Leader post.</p> <p>Equally, a lower reduction could be made by reducing the enforcement officer resource from 3 to 2, saving £55k. This would retain the Planning Enforcement Team Leader post, and 1 Planning Enforcement Officer post.</p> <p>Both of these options could only work if the backlog of open enforcement cases is reduced and the Planning Enforcement Plan is refreshed to reflect a reduction in officer resource and ability of the Council to positively deal with breaches in planning control. Compliance would be retained in all options at 0.8 FTE.</p>				
Value of proposal(s) per year (Estimated) £ (000)				
Savings must be shown as a negative figure, set up costs as a positive figure				
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	£(000)	£(000)	£(000)	£(000)
Revenue	(176)	(176)	(176)	(176)
Capital	0	0	0	0
Current budget £(000) (Net Revenue Costs or CAPEX only not financing)				
	Expenditure:	Income:	Net Budget:	
	0	0	0	

Equality Impact Assessment

Does initial EQIA screening indicate any key issues? (If yes, list the issues)

An equalities impact assessment will be required as the number of allegations of breaches of planning control are disproportionately about a group with protected characteristics.

Will a full EQIA be required?

Yes

Key issues/Risks/Impacts of proposal

Include here any potential negative public or media reaction and proposed lines to take with media messaging

Issues/Risks/Impacts

Whilst not a statutory service, planning enforcement is considered to be important function by which the Council seeks to ensure that the amenity and character of the district is maintained in the public interest, and is of high importance to the public, Members, Town and Parish Councils and other interest groups. Any reduction would limit the Council's ability to take enforcement action and positively respond to resolving breaches in planning control. This in turn could undermine public confidence in the Council.

Mitigations and Media Messaging

Retention of the compliance officer post would provide some limited support for the implementation of strategic sites and major developments.

Consultation requirements:

Thematic Assessment

(these themes will be replaced with Corporate Plan Priorities once agreed)

Net Zero, climate change and sustainability	Communities (how it affects the people in the district)	Place (how it affects the district as a place)	Value for money services that are digital by design

Service:	Blue Badge OFF STREET Parking only			
Portfolio:	Cllr Tim Hoskin Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability			
LT Lead:	Head of Operations			
Priority:				
Description of Service:				
Disabled persons with a Blue Badge can park free of charge on street and off street. The majority of local authorities do not provide concessions for off street parking.				
Description of savings proposal:				
Remove concession in OFF STREET car parks so disabled customers will be required to pay for parking. ON STREET car parking to remain free.				
Value of proposal(s) per year (Estimated) £ (000)				
Savings must be shown as a negative figure, set up costs as a positive figure				
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	£(000)	£(000)	£(000)	£(000)
Revenue	(60)	(60)	(60)	(60)
Capital	0	0	0	0
Current budget £(000) (Net Revenue Costs or CAPEX only not financing)				
	Expenditure:	Income:	Net Budget:	
	0	0	0	

Equality Impact Assessment

Does initial EQIA screening indicate any key issues? (If yes, list the issues)

Full EQIA will be required to ensure On Street provision is adequate

Will a full EQIA be required?

Yes

Key issues/Risks/Impacts of proposal

Include here any potential negative public or media reaction and proposed lines to take with media messaging

Issues/Risks/Impacts

Mitigations and Media Messaging

Consultation requirements:

Thematic Assessment

(these themes will be replaced with Corporate Plan Priorities once agreed)

Net Zero, climate change and sustainability	Communities (how it affects the people in the district)	Place (how it affects the district as a place)	Value for money services that are digital by design