



POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 15 February 2023

REPORT TITLE:	CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2023-28
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF FINANCE (S151 OFFICER)

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides Committee with the draft Capital Programme 2023-28 for consideration and referral to Council for approval. It also includes information regarding the revenue implications of this Programme and an update on the latest forecast for capital receipts.

The 2023-28 Capital Programme represents a combination of schemes originally approved as part of the 2022-27 Programme, updated through the Capital Monitoring reports in 2022-23 and new bids for inclusion as detailed in this report.

The report supports the delivery of the Wirral Plan 2021-26 as the Capital Programme contributes towards projects that support all five Wirral Plan priorities.

This matter affects all Wards within the Borough.

The decisions in this report are key decisions.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Policy and Resources Committee recommends to Council:

- 1 the approval of the new bids as detailed in Appendix B to this report requiring £17.69 million of funding for inclusion in the Capital Programme.
- 2 the approval of any new bids supported by grant funding do not commence until written confirmation has been received from the granting authority.
- 3 the approval of the Capital Programme 2023-28 as detailed in Appendix C to this report.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The purpose of the Capital Programme is to transform the way it operates in the medium to long term by taking opportunities from investment in digitalisation, assistive technology and a modern and efficient asset portfolio. This will enable the Council to prioritise and effectively deliver capital investment that contributes to the achievement of Council objectives.
- 1.2 Links to the revenue budget ensure that revenue funding is provided to meet the financing costs, and any running costs, as a result of the Capital Programme investment.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 For a scheme to be included in the Capital Programme it must be supported by a Business Case which includes consideration of alternative options and has been reviewed by the Investment & Change Board (ICB).

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

CAPITAL STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Capital Strategy is a key document that sets out the Council's medium to long term ambition. As the Medium-Term Financial Strategy sets out the plans for revenue, the capital strategy describes the strategic plan for economic growth, digitalisation and the use of assets and how these will support the Council to achieve its objectives.
- 3.2 An extensive and long-term capital programme is the key to better run services and a reduced revenue commitment over time. Significant investment in assets will enable those assets to be used more efficiently and effectively in the delivery of services and may, as a beneficial by-product, generate a revenue return to support the revenue budget.
- 3.3 The Council's 'Digital, Data and Technology' strategy is written and will shortly be going through the Council's strategy approval process. The strategy provides the framework for the transformation of processes through Digitalisation and Automation, modernisation of the Customer Experience, and improvements in our Data Analytics. The 'Digital, Data and Technology' strategy also focussed on increasing digital inclusion across the borough.
- 3.4 The largest proportion of this Capital Programme is within the Regeneration & Place directorate. Asset Management and Housing are both contained within this directorate, but the largest funding is associated with the Regeneration focus. Wirral's Regeneration Programme is set against a backdrop of longstanding economic challenges and regional underinvestment. It is envisaged that successful regeneration will deliver much needed housing delivery and be a fundamental driver of economic growth, creating an inclusive

place where people can live and prosper. As well as promoting a portfolio of place-based regeneration schemes, the vision includes significant infrastructure delivery requirements necessary to boost accessibility and connectivity across the neighbourhoods. As developments start to take shape, further income will be realised from new homes and new businesses in council tax and business rates which in turn will be re-invested to grow the local economy. Capital funding is the catalyst to making this happen.

3.5 The Capital Strategy does not stand alone. It is intrinsically linked to a suite of other documents which together will enable the achievement of the Council's long-term strategic ambition. These are:

- The Asset Strategy, which was approved by Policy & Resources Committee on 9 November 2022. The strategy will set the high-level framework for managing Wirral's Public Sector land and property for the future. It is developed to guide the collective strategic asset decisions of all partners and seeks to maximise efficiencies through a collaborative approach to the use and management of the whole asset portfolio.
- The Economic Strategy sets out the ambition for growing a strong economy in the Borough in conjunction with support from the Liverpool City Region. The strategy was approved by the Economy Regeneration & Development Committee on the 22 November 2021.
- The Treasury Management Strategy which is concerned with keeping sufficient but not excessive cash available to meet the Council's spending needs, while managing the risks involved.
- The Medium-Term Financial Strategy in supporting the Council to remain financial sustainable by investing in cost saving and income generating projects to avoid high-cost reactive activity in future years

INVESTMENT AND CHANGE BOARD (ICB)

3.6 The role of the ICB is to ensure alignment of investments against corporate priorities giving due consideration to risk. Amongst its functions are:

- the development, monitoring and review of the capital investment appraisal system, providing guidance when bids are submitted.
- To assess, recommend, acceptance or rejection of capital bids to Members in accordance with the above appraisal system.
- Ensure that all bids for capital funding are aligned to the Council strategies and the Wirral Plan.

CAPITAL PROGRAMME

3.7 The Capital Programme details the schemes being undertaken over the medium term which help the Council achieve its objectives. It is aligned to the

Wirral Plan and Medium-Term Financial Strategy. It is reviewed, updated and considered by Council each year as part of the annual budget setting process.

- 3.8 Government announcements may include grant support for specific themes but grant acceptance as with other investment is based upon affordability over the whole asset life. Additional grant funding may be announced during the year. The inclusion of any schemes funded from new grant notifications will be reported through the capital monitoring process.
- 3.9 If an asset is sold then the proceeds, known as capital receipts, can be spent on new assets or to repay debt. In accordance with the capital receipts flexibilities introduced by the Government capital receipts generated can be used to support expenditure that is ‘Transformational’ in nature until 31 March 2025. Repayments of capital grants, loans and investments also generate capital receipts.
- 3.10 It is assumed that capital receipts achieved will be either used towards the repayment of the Capitalisation Directive relating to 2020/21 and 2021/22 and to finance new bids requiring Council funding. As above, the Council retains the ability to fund further transformation projects which have a benefit to the revenue budget until 31 March 2025.

NEW SUBMISSIONS

- 3.11 Each scheme should be supported by a business case which enables an assessment to be undertaken to ensure that it is either targeted to Council priority areas or fulfils statutory obligations. Individual bids have been scrutinised by the ICB for review. Schemes that are deemed suitable for progression are then referred to Policy & Resources Committee before Council for full formal approval as per the requirements of the Council constitution.
- 3.12 Due to the restricted financial environment within which the Council must operate, ICB assess whether a proposed capital bid meets agreed criteria if it is to progress to Committee. This assessment considers whether the bid is for essential health and safety works, does the bid present an ‘invest to save’ opportunity, or is the scheme of significant strategic importance to the Council.
- 3.13 Wherever financially viable, a bidding department is instructed that the cost of financing the Capital investment is to be met from either their existing revenue budgets or via additional income/cost savings that result from the investment. This approach re-emphasises a key factor that Capital investment is not ‘free money.’ Any borrowing incurred as a result of Capital expenditure is ultimately repaid via the revenue budget.
- 3.14 Capital bids can be submitted throughout the financial year for consideration, rather than just having one fixed programme at the start of the year. This enables to Council to better react to changing service requirements or incidents as they occur. Likewise, this flexibility in bid submissions allows for the possibility of new bids or supplementary bids, should the resource requirements of an existing bid change after inception. There may also be new

opportunities for the Council to bid for external resource e.g., grants that become apparent during the year and the Council needs to be able to react to such potential.

- 3.15 As a consequence of adopting this flexible approach to allowing and assessing bids, the Capital Programme will evolve further as the financial year progresses. This will include new schemes that require funding in the current year as well as potentially funding in future years, along with schemes that then may require re-profiling in terms of their projected expenditure and timing.
- 3.16 The new capital submissions are included within Appendix A to this report, with a summary of the main bids below.

Birkenhead Market Construction

- 3.17 The funding of a Birkenhead Market is a key project for the redevelopment of Birkenhead Town centre. There is an assumed contribution of £14.3 million Future High Streets Fund (FHSF) grant within the existing programme towards the scheme. Policy and Resources agreed in November 2021 to the relocation of the market and for progression of design works. Following this, the bid seeks additional funding approval for the scheme. It is possible that further work on design and engineering and completion of business case may result in variation and if so this will be reported back to members.

IT Client Refreshment, Laptops, Desktops & Tablets

- 3.18 There is a need to update the ageing I.T equipment that the workforce rely on to carry out day to day operations and services. A large proportion of devices are now five years old and issues are arising with performance and reliability, with many devices out of warranty. As part of the proposed rollout of updated equipment, the requirements of the new office building in Birkenhead town centre will be included to enable a standard desk setup in the new premises. It is proposed that the cost of this scheme be met by the use of capital receipts.

2023/28 CAPITAL PROGRAMME

- 3.19 In forecasting a 5-year Programme it is recognised that there are many variables and factors that will impact on future requirements. The Programme will be subject to regular review to ensure the most effective use of resources whilst providing the opportunity to update agreed schemes, bring forward deferred schemes as necessary and add any new schemes which will arise as new funding is identified and delivery plans are developed along with Council partners.
- 3.20 The 2023/28 Capital Programme represents a combination of:
 - a) Schemes approved as part of the 2022/27 Programme and updated through the Capital Monitoring reports in 2022/23. The table below reflects the Quarter 3 position 2022/22.

Table 1: Capital Programme - per Quarter 3 22/23 Monitoring Report

Analysis of Capital Programme	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Adult Care & Health	1,248	3,285	1,015	-
Children, Families & Education	7,402	14,293	2,500	-
Corporate Schemes	3,780	-	-	-
Neighbourhoods	27,685	11,278	4,898	605
Regeneration & Place	40,643	93,561	20,094	2,555
Resources	5,544	6,977	-	-
Total Expenditure	86,302	129,394	28,507	3,160
Financing				
Borrowing	32,149	45,526	15,501	42
Capital Receipts	3,580	-	-	-
Grants	50,028	83,741	13,006	3,118
Revenue/Reserve Contribution	545	127	-	-
Total Financing	86,302	129,394	28,507	3,160

- b) New bids for consideration at this meeting. The emphasis has been to ensure that the bids support the delivery of the Wirral Plan and the priorities within. Appendix A to this report provides a brief description of each scheme. Appendix B to this report provides details of the borrowing requirement and revenue implications of funding each scheme.

Table 2: New bids for funding for inclusion in the Programme

Service Area	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Children, Families & Education	-	-	-	-	-
Corporate Schemes	-	-	-	-	-
Neighbourhoods	160	-	-	-	-
Regeneration & Place	-	13,950	-	-	-
Resources	2,685	895	-	-	-
Total	2,845	14,845	-	-	-

- 3.21 The bid submission process allows bids to be presented throughout the year, rather than at one deadline for inclusion in this programme setting report. There are new bids are seeking Council approval via the Quarter 3 2022/23 Capital Monitoring report. This would allow works on successful bids to commence in 2022/23 rather than having to wait for 2023/24.
- 3.22 Given the severe financial circumstances the Council is facing, there has been a strict approach to accepting new bids, with no surplus revenue budget readily available to finance new bids only bids which can self-finance the associated capital financing costs and or are vital and strategically important can be considered for inclusion.

- 3.23 The proposed Capital Programme combines Tables 1 and 2 together with an estimate for continued grant to be received for Schools Modernisation of £2.5 million through to 2027/28 and also the inclusion of Highways Maintenance allocation of £0.563 million in 2026/27. Included in the estimate of 2024/25 is the potential for a food waste scheme, although at this time this scheme is deferred pending a full review once complete full details will be presented for approval. The detail of the programme can be found in Appendix C to this report.

Table 3: Proposed Capital Programme 2023/28

Analysis of Capital Programme	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Adult Care & Health	3,285	1,015	-	-	-
Children, Families & Education	14,293	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500
Corporate Schemes	-	-	-	-	-
Neighbourhoods	11,874	4,898	605	563	-
Regeneration & Place	93,125	34,044	2,555	-	-
Resources	9,662	895	-	-	-
Total Expenditure	132,239	43,352	5,660	3,063	2,500
Financing					
Borrowing	45,686	15,501	42	-	-
Capital Receipts	2,685	7,795	-	-	-
Grants/External Contributions	83,741	20,056	5,618	3,063	2,500
Revenue/Reserve Contributions	127	-	-	-	-
Total Financing	132,239	43,352	5,660	3,063	2,500

CAPITAL RECEIPTS

- 3.24 The available balance for general use in the Capital Receipts Reserve at 1 April 2022 was £1.4million This is after accounting for capital accounting adjustments and ringfenced receipts arising for example from the sale of school playing fields and which must be spend in a prescribed manner. With regards to future receipts that may be achieved, there is much uncertainty and external factors such as the economic landscape will affect the level of receipts received. Longer term projections can be updated as and when more information becomes available.
- 3.25 In accordance with the Capital Receipts flexibilities introduced by the Government capital receipts generated can be used to support expenditure that is 'Transformational' in nature until 31 March 2025.
- 3.26 All Council assets will be reviewed to assess which are not essential to the delivery of Council services with a view to disposal where appropriate.

Table 4: Projected Capital Receipt Generation

	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000
Anticipated receipts	4,300	3,350	11,480	1,120	3,105	5,675

Note: The estimated value of receipts to be achieved and their utilisation, for later years will be updated through the Capital monitoring procedures.

GRANT FUNDING

- 3.27 Wherever possible the Council will continue to seek grant funding to either replace a known borrowing requirement or to enable Capital schemes to take place or be continued. In the event of any notable grant awards being achieved in the future, the relevant schemes will be introduced into the capital programme via the regular monitoring reports.

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION FREEPORT

- 3.28 Following government approval of the Liverpool City Region Freeport in January 2023, Wirral Waters is one of three designated Freeport Tax Sites in the city region which will support economic growth through a range of incentives for developers and businesses. One of the measures enables the Council to borrow and invest in projects against the predicted future growth in business rates over the next 25 years through tax increment financing. A separate report and detailed business case will shortly be presented to Members to consider the establishment of a Freeport Investment Fund to support the Council's tax site regeneration ambitions. Given that part of the Freeport site overlaps with the existing Enterprise Zone, this will also consider re-alignment of the similarly operated Wirral Waters Investment Fund to provide a single financial instrument. Early stage scenario modelling of development pipeline projections indicate a potential capital programme of £15m for the fund to invest over the next 5 years, supported by predicted future business rate growth which under the Freeport legislation attracts a guaranteed 25 year retention period.

WALLASEY TOWN HALL

- 3.29 The latest Condition survey completed in 2021 for Wallasey Town Hall indicated that there was £8m outstanding in recommended repairs and improvements over a period of 3, 5 and 10 years depending on the nature and urgency of the works identified; estimated costs include fees, access, preliminaries, contingencies, and inflation uplift.
- 3.30 The detailed condition survey has split the categories of building elements as follows:

- Building works – windows, flooring, roofing
 - Mechanical – ventilation, heating
 - Electrical – rewiring, fire alarms,
- 3.31 Due to the Grade 11 listed status of the building which was built in 1914 every effort must be made to preserve the asset in accordance with its listed status and for which planning permission is required. It would be the intention to address those elements of building and services improvements based on the detailed survey reports. Elements such as electrical and mechanical are best undertaken whilst the building is empty due to the disruptive nature of the works. Prior to undertaking improvements careful consideration would be given to feasibility studies being undertaken for future uses of the building.
- 3.32 A schedule of works will be drafted for the building, with budget already available in the existing Capital programme under the ‘Health & Safety – Conditions Surveys’ scheme.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Capital Programme is funded via a number of sources including Council borrowing, capital receipts, grants and revenue contributions. Where the Council finances capital expenditure by borrowing, it must put aside resources to repay that debt in later years. The amount charged to the revenue budget for the repayment of debt is known as Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). If the Capital Programme is delivered as forecast in this report, the Council will consequently require borrowing of £61.2m to finance the capital schemes covered by this report. This debt would be repaid via charges to the revenue budget over the lives of the assets created or enhanced. The revenue impact of the additional £61.2m of borrowing required to fund all forecast works in this programme is as follows:

Table 6 MRP Charges to Revenue Relating to 2023/28 Debt Funded Capital

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Additional revenue cost	1,370	1,854	1,929	2,003	2,080

Notes

- MRP repayments from revenue only start the year after the capital expenditure has taken place i.e., for spend incurred in 2023/24, the first MRP repayments will be charged in the 2024/24 revenue accounts.
 - The additional revenue costs in Table 5 are not cumulative, rather an annual comparison to the current MRP charges to be incurred.
- 4.2 It is estimated that these costs will peak in 2030/31 at £2.225 million reflecting the fact that the principal repayment associated with debt (the Minimum Revenue Provision) increases over the expected life of the asset funded from borrowing. These are the costs associated purely with the capital borrowing

detailed within this report, the Council will be subject to MRP charges associated with capital borrowing incurred prior to this programme.

- 4.3 Where a proposed bid includes the generation of additional income or cost saving as a result of the investment, a budget virement will be sought to the Treasury Management budget to offset the Capital repayments made via the revenue budget.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no legal issues arising directly from this report, should any such issues arise during an individual scheme, then these matters will be addressed.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 The Programme is about investment into the Council assets so does include schemes relating to IT and assets.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 The Programme will not be delivered as projected. This could see individual schemes progressing ahead of, or being behind, the projected timetable. The regular monitoring and reporting of the Programme allows action to be taken to manage the financial position.
- 7.2 Capital receipts are below the level estimated. Regular reporting to ICB on progress of asset disposals allows the Capital Programme to be reviewed should this eventuality arise.
- 7.3 Interest rates increase to a level greater than budgeted for. Regular monitoring of economic forecasts should assist in determining the best time to borrow to fund the Programme. Officers will also be assessing options to fix loan rates to lessen interest rate risk.
- 7.4 In terms of individual scheme specific risks, these are identified as part of the original business case application and any potential risks to deliverability should be flagged as part of the ongoing scheme review process.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 There has been no specific consultation with regards to this report. In terms of the delivery of schemes consultation will take place as part of the scheme development and implementation.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are none arising directly from this report as they will be identified as each scheme is progressed. Individual schemes within the Programme will have a direct impact upon groups for example the Aids and Adaptations

investment within Regeneration. Associated actions may need an Equality Impact Assessment and these will be done at the earliest possible time.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Capital bids are welcomed that support the Council's Climate Emergency Plan that was compiled following the declaration of a Climate Emergency by the Council in May 2019. Within the Capital programme there are elements within the projects that positively contribute to environmental issues such as 'The Tree Strategy,' 'The Urban Tree Challenge' and 'Energy Efficient Buildings.'

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The Community Wealth Building Strategy is a key part of how the Council will tackle economic, social and health inequalities across the borough and make a major contribution to improving the economic, social and health outcomes on the Wirral. Schemes contained within the Capital programme include several regeneration projects that look to improve the economic outlook for the borough, including job creation, training facilities and enhanced transport links. The Community Wealth Building implications are reported for each scheme separately to the relevant policy and service committee
- 11.2 The programme also includes projects that focus on environmental initiatives such as energy efficient buildings, sustainable and green travel infrastructure, energy efficient street lighting, urban tree planting etc.

REPORT AUTHOR: Gary Mitchell
Senior Finance Business Partner
telephone: 0151 666 3418
email: garymitchell@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Capital Bids for the 2023/28 Capital Programme

Appendix B – Financial Summary of Capital Bids

Appendix C – Proposed Capital Programme 2023/24 to 2027/28.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the UK 2021/22.

Local Government Act 2003 and subsequent amendments.

Local Government (Capital Finance and Accounting) Regulations 2008.

Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

This report is being considered by the Policy and Resources Committee in accordance with 1.2(a)(i) of the Policy and Resources Committee Terms of Reference:

formulate, co-ordinate and implement corporate policies and strategies and the medium-term financial plan (budget), which includes responsibility for any decision:

(i) that relates to such matters to the extent that they are not reserved to full Council.

Policy and Resources Committee is recommended to refer the decision to Council in accordance with 2(a)(i)(1) of the Functions Reserved to Council:

The Council reserves to itself the following functions (in accordance with the rules and procedures contained in this Constitution):

(i) The Budget – The approval or adoption of a plan or strategy for the control of the local authority's borrowing, investments, or capital expenditure or for determining the authority's minimum revenue provision, which includes the overarching annual: -

- (1) Capital programme
- (2) Capital Financing Strategy

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Council – 2019/20 Capital Monitoring Q3 Cabinet – 2019/20 Capital Outturn Report	1 March 2020 27 July 2020
Council – 2020/25 Capital Programme Council - 2020/21 Capital Strategy Report	1 March 2020 1 March 2020
Council – 2020/21 Capital Monitoring Q1 Council – 2020/21 Capital Monitoring Q2	19 October 2020 7 December 2020
Budget Council – 2020/21 Capital Monitoring Q3 Council - 2020/21 Capital Outturn Report	1 March 2021 6 September 2021
Budget Council – 2021/26 Capital Programme Budget Council - 2021/22 Capital Financing Strategy	1 March 2021 1 March 2021
Council – 2021/22 Capital Monitoring Q1 Council – 2021/22 Capital Monitoring Q2 Council – 2021/22 Capital Monitoring Q3 Council – 2021/22 Capital Outturn Report	18 October 2021 6 December 2021 28 February 2022 11 July 2022
Council – 2022/27 Capital Programme Council – 2022/27 Capital Financing Strategy Council – 2022/23 Capital Monitoring Q1 Council – 2022/23 Capital Monitoring Q2	28 February 2022 28 February 2022 10 October 2022 5 December 2022

APPENDIX A - Capital Bids for the 2023/28 Capital Programme

A1 Birkenhead Market Construction – Funding Required £28.250m* over a two year period (£14.3m of which is already contained within Future High Streets element of the Capital) Programme

The site of the former House of Fraser store is situated at the heart of Birkenhead town centre and forms a key site in respect of enabling any future redevelopment of the town centre which is an identified strategic priority for the Council.

In November 2021 the Council's P&R Committee approved the relocation of Birkenhead Market to a new facility (currently under design) which takes up a significant proportion of the House of Fraser site. This leaves the balance of the site (currently a surface level car park fronting onto Argyle Street) available for residential development.

The Vision for the market is to be one of the best markets in the UK and to provide a key attraction for the borough through the following outcomes:

- creation of excellent customer experiences,
- profitable and sustainable
- become a destination for culture and community events
- become a centre of established and aspiring independent entrepreneurs
- become a key focal attraction and destination for residents and tourists
- become the community at the heart of the town.

Achieving this vision will enable Birkenhead Market to function as an important 'anchor' for the town centre. The new market will act as a focal point for the whole town drawing movement into the town from North (Europa), West (Grange Rd), plus East (Birkenhead Centre plus Haymarket) and South (Borough Rd).

The objectives to help achieve this vision are to:

- increase new customers to the market
- increase animation with footfall driving events
- increase frequency and dwell time of customers' visits
- increase income through new lets and business expansions
- increase the range of and value for money of goods, services, and fresh produce
- alignment to the Town Centre Neighbourhood plan and master planning principles

- to achieve the vision and the Council's objectives requires that we move to a more commercially orientated operation.

In the short term it is vital that the Council continue to make improvements, so the market is best placed to take advantage of significant longer-term changes of the wider masterplan.

Both the Council and traders are taking steps to increase footfall by broadening the demographic of the customer base in order to increase business viability and transaction value.

*Final cost will be dependent upon finalisation of design and value engineering options and of the business case. There may be further cost variation as the scheme progresses. The current Capital Programme assumes allocation £14.3 million from the Future High Streets Birkenhead grant funding (of which £1.0 million is allocated for spend in 2022/23). It is intended that further funding will be allocated from recycled Wirral Growth Company development surplus and Wirral Growth Company related Capital receipts.

A2 IT Client Refreshment, Laptops, Desktops & Tablets - Funding Required £3.58m over a two year period

The last major refresh of IT client devices (laptops and desktops) was back in 2017 meaning a significant percentage of devices are now 5 years old. Devices are now out of warranty and beginning to fail.

Technology has also moved on and the client devices are now struggling to run the new applications leading to poor performance and devices crashing.

As can be seen from the different desk setups in Cheshire Lines Building (CLB), Surface Pros have different connections to laptops meaning there is not a standard desk setup. With the move to the new office building in 2024, a client refresh now would enable a standard desk setup.

Windows 10 also goes end of life in October 2025, and as part of the client refresh the new Windows 11 will be deployed.

The capital bid is to purchase new client hardware to refresh all devices across the Council, running the new Windows 11 and providing a standard desk setup in the new Council buildings.

It is proposed that this bid is funded via the generation of capital receipts.

A3 Catering Units - Funding Required £0.160m

It is requested that funding be approved to allow the purchase and installation of catering units at certain football pitches within the Borough. The provision of food and beverages will enhance the facilities available to those who use the sites along with any spectators.

The units will also generate additional income to the Council, an option that has been submitted as part of the wider revenue savings target that Members must consider.

The units are to be situated at the following locations, which have been identified as having significant footfall:

- Arrove Park Playing Fields
- Levers Playing Fields
- Plymyard Playing Fields

The Neighbourhood's directorate has committed to covering the MRP repayments associated with this scheme from their revenue budget.

A4 Flaybrick Cemetery Pathways - Funding Required £0.200m

The pathways within Flaybrick Cemetery are unsafe and present a health and safety hazard to cemetery users. Over a period of time the surfaces have been worn away, contain large potholes and in some places are irregular, uneven, potentially dangerous and too narrow. Most access routes are unsafe and not fit for purpose with drainage issues.

Flaybrick Cemetery is one of the most important Victorian Garden Cemeteries in England. The cemetery is a conservation area, one of only two Grade II* listed in the NW of England and contains seven listed structures that attract large numbers of visitors. This work is needed to provide access for the users of the cemetery, including access for people with disabilities. The work seeks to mitigate the health and safety risks from uneven, unsafe pathways and roadways.

Funds to be re-purposed from the Health & Safety – Condition Surveys

A5 Grange Cemetery Access Improvement - Funding Required £0.045m

Grange Cemetery is a frequently used public greenspace which is directly adjacent to two other greenspaces - Grange Community Park, and Grange Hill.

The cemetery is still used for burials in pre purchased graves and a new cremated remains sections was opened in April 2022 to provide a local burial area for cremated remains. This has led to an increase in visitors and an increase in families wishing to purchase additional memorials within the cemetery including benches and memorial trees.

The improvement of the access routes within the cemetery will

- Prevent further decline in the cemetery.

- Provide a welcoming and safe cemetery where families would wish to bury their loved ones and invest in the cemetery via the purchase of memorial benches and memorial trees.

Scheduled works would include resurfacing works to the main roadway and adjacent to gating areas, the installation of some fencing, the removal and replacement of former flagged footpaths and concrete paving with tarmac.

Funds to be re-purposed from the Health & Safety – Condition Surveys

A6 Churchyard Boundary Structural Works- Funding Required £0.056m

Wirral Council has the statutory responsibility for the ongoing maintenance (and the legal liabilities which accompany such maintenance responsibilities) of the following closed churchyards within the Wirral.

These churchyards have been transferred to the council by Order in Council following application by the Parish Church Council (PCC) to the Ministry of Justice. Whilst the ownership of the churchyard and other proprietary rights remains with the relevant church authority, it is purely the transfer of a long-term and onerous maintenance obligation with a specific obligation for the local authority to keep the closed churchyard in decent order and its walls and fences in good repair.

Works are required within St Marys Churchyard in Eastham to the retaining wall facing Church Lane. Areas of the wall are deemed dangerous and require a complete rebuild as soon as possible.

To enable an application of works to be submitted to the Diocese of Chester for a faculty to progress with the works, Wirral Council have been required to work in partnership with the church's architects.

Funds to be re-purposed from the Health & Safety – Condition Surveys

A7 Parks Workshop & Machinery- Funding Required £0.135m

The Parks and Countryside Engineering Workshop at Ebenezer Street is responsible for repairs and maintenance of all horticultural and turf care machinery and equipment owned and used by the Council.

Parks & Countryside have a statutory duty to repair/maintain horticultural machinery for its parks and open spaces. The provision to replace specialist machinery is required. The current workshop machinery has been in place for over 10 years and have deteriorated to the point where they need to be replaced, as their failure represents a significant health and safety concern.

Funds to be re-purposed from the Health & Safety – Condition Surveys

APPENDIX B - Financial Summary of Capital Bids

Scheme Ref	Scheme	Total Funding Required	Borrowing Required	Revenue Cost 2023/24	Revenue Cost 2024/25	Revenue Cost 2025/26	Revenue Cost 2026/27	Revenue Cost 2027/28
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
A1	Birkenhead Market Construction	27,250	-	-	-	-	-	-
	IT Client Refreshment, Laptops,							
A2	Desktops & Tablets	3,580	-	-	-	-	-	-
A3	Catering Units	160	160	7	21	21	22	22
A4	Flaybrick Cemetery Pathways	200	200	9	26	27	27	28
A5	Grange Cemetery Access Improvement	45	45	2	6	6	6	6
A6	Churchyard Boundary Structural Works	56	56	3	4	4	5	5
A7	Parks Workshop & Machinery	135	135	6	17	18	18	19
Total		31,426	596	27	74	76	78	80

Notes to Appendix B:

The estimated revenue costs factor in both the repayment of capital, via the Minimum Revenue Provision and the estimated interest cost associated with the borrowing required.

Revenue costs will increase year on year due to the nature of the Minimum Revenue Repayment (MRP) repayment calculation, which is based on an annuity repayment profile.

Where a proposed bid includes the generation of additional income or cost saving as a result of the investment, a budget adjustment will be sought to the Treasury Management budget to offset the Capital repayments made via the revenue budget.

If a scheme is funded via a repurposing of previously approved budget, the revenue costs indicated above will already be included within capital financing charges to the revenue budget.

APPENDIX C - Proposed Capital Programme 2023/24 to 2027/28

In Detail:

	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000
Adult Care and Health					
Extra Care Housing	1,645	691	-	-	-
Telecare & Telehealth Ecosystem	1,640	324	-	-	-
Total Adult Care and Health	3,285	1,015	-	-	-
Children, Families & Education					
Basic Needs	527	-	-	-	-
Children's System Development	794	-	-	-	-
School Condition/Modernisation Allocation	8,157	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500
Family support	157	-	-	-	-
High Needs Provision Capital	4,010	-	-	-	-
PFI	49	-	-	-	-
Special Educational Needs & Disabilities	599	-	-	-	-
Total Children, Families & Education	14,293	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500
Neighbourhoods Schemes					
Allotment Sites Expansion	64	-	-	-	-
Ashton Park Lake	147	-	-	-	-
Birkenhead Park World Heritage Project Team	85	-	-	-	-
Bridges excluding Dock Bridge	260	-	-	-	-
Catering Units	160	-	-	-	-
Cemetery Extension & Improvements (Frankby)	142	-	-	-	-
Churchyard Boundary Structural Works	56	-	-	-	-

	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000
Neighbourhoods (continued)					
Coastal Defence - Meols Feasibility Study	70	-	-	-	-
Combined Authority Transport Plan (CATP)	1,354	-	-	-	-
Flaybrick Cemetery Pathway	200	-	-	-	-
Food Waste	-	3,200	-	-	-
Future Golf - Project 1.1	187	187	-	-	-
Grange Cemetery	45	-	-	-	-
Highway Maintenance	563	563	563	563	-
Key Route Network CRSTS 22-23	500	-	-	-	-
Library Radio Frequency Identification Kiosks	80	-	-	-	-
Moreton Sandbrook Drainage	180	-	-	-	-
New Ferry Rangers Community Clubhouse	500	-	-	-	-
Parks Machinery	2,136	499	-	-	-
Parks Vehicles	580	449	42	-	-
Parks Workshop & Machinery	135	-	-	-	-
Play Area Improvements	127	-	-	-	-
Plymyard Cemetery Roadways	20	-	-	-	-
Plymyard Playing Field	127	-	-	-	-
Street Lighting Column - Replacement or Upgrade	200	-	-	-	-
Traffic Signal LED Upgrade	655	-	-	-	-
Tree Strategy	34	-	-	-	-
Wallasey Embankment Toe Reinforcement	608	-	-	-	-

	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000
Neighbourhoods (continued)					
Wirral Tennis Centre - 3G Pitch	900				
Wirral Way Widening	9				
Woodchurch Sports Pavillion	1,750				
Total Neighbourhoods	11,874	4,898	605	563	0

Regeneration & Place

Aids, Adaptations and Disabled Facility Grants	2,889	-	-	-	-
Arrowe Country Park - New Machine Shed & Wash Bay	108	-	-	-	-
Arrowe Country Park Depot: Re-Surfacing, Material Bays	26	-	-	-	-
Bebington Oval Facility Upgrade	685	-	-	-	-
Birkenhead Market Construction	13,300	13,950	-	-	-
Birkenhead Regeneration Delivery Fund	15,024	-	-	-	-
Birkenhead Town Centre Masterplanning & Housing Delivery	265	-	-	-	-
Business Investment Fund	585	-	-	-	-
Capitalisation of Regen Salaries	1,000	984	-	-	-
Changing Places Toilets	20	-	-	-	-
Clearance	191	194	-	-	-
Consolidated Library Works Fund	279	-	-	-	-
Demolitions	1,380	-	-	-	-
Empty Property Grant Scheme	419	310	-	-	-
Energy Efficient Buildings	370	370	-	-	-

	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000
Regeneration & Place (continued)					
Future High Streets - New Ferry	2,685	-	-	-	-
Floral Pavilion	75	-	-	-	-
Future High Streets - Birkenhead	9,579	-	-	-	-
Health & Safety - Condition Surveys	1,614	2,500	-	-	-
Heswall Day Centre (part only)	50	-	-	-	-
Landican Chapels	40	-	-	-	-
Leisure Capital Improvement Programme	600	-	-	-	-
Lever Sports Pavilion	-	80	-	-	-
Major Infrastructure Development & Strategic Transport	200	-	-	-	-
Maritime Knowledge Hub	12,351	10,650	-	-	-
Moreton Youth Club & Library	500	-	-	-	-
New Brighton Masterplan for Marine Promenade	40	-	-	-	-
New Ferry Regeneration Strategic Acquisitions	118	-	-	-	-
Office Quarter Building Fit-Out	4,613	-	-	-	-
Parks and Countryside DDA	420	-	-	-	-
Property Pooled Plus I.T System	11	-	-	-	-
Strategic Acquisition Fund	3,600	-	-	-	-
Town Deal Fund - Birkenhead	12,491	4,620	2,555	-	-
UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)	109	386	-	-	-
West Kirby Concourse/Guinea Gap Reception	351	-	-	-	-
West Kirby Marine Lake/Sailing Centre	127	-	-	-	-

	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000
Regeneration & Place (continued)					
West Kirby Masterplan	10	-	-	-	-
Wirral Waters Investment Fund	7,000	-	-	-	-
Total Regeneration & Place	93,125	34,044	2,555	-	-
Resources					
Creative & Digital Team - Specialist Software and Hardware	5	-	-	-	-
Customer Experience Improvements Project	572	-	-	-	-
Digital Foundations Programme	900	-	-	-	-
Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)	5,500	-	-	-	-
IT Client Refreshment, Laptops, Desktops & Tablets	2,685	895	-	-	-
Total Resources	9,662	895	-	-	-
TOTAL PROGRAMME	132,239	43,352	5,660	3,063	2,500