

Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee

As a council we are supporting active travel networks that work for all, increased recycling and reduction in the overall collected general waste (non-recycling) per household. We are focused on increased our own energy efficiency in Council-owned buildings and look to increase in the number of wildflower verges in Wirral.

The council's budget situation means all services which are not legally required to be provided are being reviewed to find savings. It may be that not all the options being put forward will be taken up, but it is vital we look at everything we do to ensure the council is fit for the future.

OPTION	VALUE	NARRATIVE
Review of the Neighbourhood Services Directorate	£350,000	To carry out a fundamental review of the newly created Neighbourhood Services Directorate, to drive efficiencies and realign service provision and deliver the objectives of the Wirral Plan. The existing Directorate provides a wide range of services and functions, some of which are statutory. However, there is a need to bring services together in order to sharpen focus and develop a blended and combined approach to create and protect an environment our residents can be proud of. The review will generate better, more focused and aligned Neighbourhood Services to residents, as services are brought together to provide joined-up service provision. It is expected this could lead to a potential saving of £350,000.
Additional and increased parking charges: Whole scale car parking review	£1,000,000	It is vital the council maximises its income where possible to ensure frontline services can be delivered. Furthermore, parking charges can help control car use in busy locations, contributing to the council's climate emergency declaration outcomes by encouraging active travel and public transport alternative transport modes, and potentially help address inequality across the borough by not unduly benefitting car owners. It is proposed that a wide ranging and review of car parking charges looking at the options to increase parking charges and add charges where

		appropriate. It is anticipated this would provide additional income to the council of £1,000,000.
Stopping School Crossing Patrols	£276,300	The School Crossing Patrol Service is not a statutory council function – i.e. the council is not legally obliged to provide this service. By ceasing the School Crossing Patrol Service the council would save £276,300.
Reduction in grass cutting and maintenance of roadside verges and all Parks and Open Spaces	£250,000	A reduction in grass cutting and maintenance of roadside verges and all parks and open spaces would mean changes such as on roadside verges a reduction in the cutting and maintenance schedule, only edge cuts would be carried out at suitable grass panels/verges which are over 200sqm. Operators would only cut around pathways and alongside roads leaving the middle/centre to grow long. There would also be a significant enlargement of the wildflower meadows. For all parks and open spaces across the borough there would be reduction in the grass cutting frequencies and where appropriate and possible at the grass interface with suitable boundaries for example areas of woodland the grass would be allowed to grow and effectively re-wild or be cut at a much reduced capacity. This option could lead to a saving of £250,000.
Amenity space and grass verge maintenance cessation	£100,000	Ceasing maintenance (grass cutting and litter removal) at 45 amenity green spaces and 85 grass verge sites, possibly planting of trees, re-wilding or where appropriate creating new allotments. Sites have been identified where reduced maintenance would have the least impact on the local area. Stopping amenity space and grass verge maintenance could lead to savings of £100,000.
Closure of Public Conveniences	£142,000	The council maintains nine public convenience sites at mainly in coastal areas. These include Harrison Drive New Brighton, Moreton Common, Moreton Cross, West Kirby Marine Lake, West Kirby Concourse (outside), Parade Gardens Hoylake, Meols Parade, New Ferry and Thornton Hough. Closure of these would lead to a saving of £142,000.

3 weekly collection of general rubbish	£180,000	Reducing the collection frequency of green general rubbish bins from once every two weeks, to once every three weeks while maintaining the grey recycling bin collection at every two weeks. This proposal could lead to a requirement to collect additional packaging (e.g. plastic pots, tubs and trays, tetra pack type cartons and aerosol cans) to be permitted in the grey recycling bin and/or a separate food collection to deal with the reduction in general waste disposal capacity. The option could mean a saving of £180,000.
Contract Efficiency Savings with BIFFA	£75,000	The refuse collection and street cleansing contract the Council has with Biffa has been in place for over 10 years and following a contract extension will run until 2027. Over the course of the contract a significant amount of efficiencies have been taken, particularly at the time of the extension. However, a specific requirement of the terms of the extension was for both parties to pursue further efficiencies. It is estimated this could result in a saving of £75,000.
Income generated from establishing targeted and discretionary environmental enforcement	£150,000	The Council's Enforcement Policy was amended to remove the zero-tolerance approach but it is possible to re-establish this robust approach. Environmental crime has increased during the Covid-19 lockdown. The return to zero tolerance would involve education and engagement with residents and targeted to high profile locations where there has been significant anti-social behaviour and environmental crime. Establishing targeted and discretionary environmental enforcement could lead to an income of £150,000.