

MTFP Budget Saving Proposals

2024/25 to 2027/28

		2024/25 Saving £'000	2025/26 Saving £'000	2026/27 Saving £'000	2027/28 Saving £'000	FTE Impact	FTE Filled	FTE Vacant	Head Count	FEIA Required	Decision Point	Consultation Required
Savings												
Reference	Title											
02	To transform Malpas Court Mansion House into a new Community Learning Centre. To meet changing customer demand, develop Library community outreach whilst reducing the number of physical sites.	104	55	0	0	0.60	0.60	0.00	1.00	Yes	Cabinet	Yes

One off implementation costs

Revenue - redundancy / pension	30	0	0	0
Capital - building related	57	0	0	0
Other	10	0	0	0
Total implementation costs	97	0	0	0

Proposal Summary

Introduction:
 Through its asset rationalisation project, Newport City Council (NCC) is committed to making the best use of its buildings to ensure they are financially sustainable and meet the evidenced needs of the community. This proposal would reshape the Community Regeneration Service to make best use of community buildings, enhance NCC’s Adult Community Learning (ACL) service and deliver a library service tailored to post Covid demand and needs. Charges across Community Regeneration would rise by c.8%. The key aspects of the proposal are outlined below:

Adult Community Learning:
 ACL classes would move from their current location at St Julian’s Community Education Centre to Malpas Court Mansion House (MCMH), enabling NCC to offer a broader range of post 16 classes. It will locate Community Education in a Lower Super Output Area of evidenced need, and courses will be tailored as far as possible to unmet needs within those communities.

MCMH is underutilised by NCC, and the Malpas Court Social Enterprise (MCSE) are the only tenants currently onsite. MCSE run a community café onsite and undertake grounds maintenance on behalf of NCC. MCMH is not financially sustainable with unbudgeted running costs of £80k per year and a maintenance backlog of c.£500k. Without action these pressures will continue to grow.

This proposal will ensure that MCMH is financially viable by accessing capital to refurbish the building; transferring budget for St Julians; and taking building maintenance in-house. The contract with MCSE will be re-negotiated to maintain the Community Café. Together these measures will provide an additional financial benefit of £580k.

Library Service:
 Over the last 5 years, Library use in Newport has reduced and changed significantly with the Central Library and Virtual Service accounting for 69% of loans and 39% of issues. Excluding the CLM which was closed for refurbishment, the 3 Libraries with the most significant reductions in utilisation were Pillgwenlly, Ringland (East Hub), and St Julians. In contrast, use of virtual services has increased significantly with a 272% increase in issues and a combined total increase of 144% (the only positive figure). Participation at NCC’s community outreach events also increased significantly, as almost 45% more people attended community events in the 2023 summer program compared to 2019.

In response to changing patterns of use, NCC will transform its library service, placing a greater emphasis on community engagement by proactively delivering more events and activities which promote reading and improve literacy within Newport’s communities. This activity will be delivered by a new Community Librarian post working in community venues across the city. NCC will also adopt a “curating” approach to its Book Fund providing titles bespoke to the interests and needs of Newport Citizens, rather than using an external company to provide a generic offer. With fewer library sites, this new approach will allow NCC to reduce its book fund by £46k to £136k. As part of these changes, Bettws Library move will into the community centre preserving provision in the ward. Malpas Library will move into Malpas Court further enhancing the offer from this building. As two of the least utilised libraries Pill and St Julians will close. In mitigation, both sites will benefit from a bespoke and enhanced offer from the Community Librarian.

Buildings:

All the buildings vacated are being reviewed as part of the Asset Rationalisation Process. Options could include Community Asset Transfer to Community Groups, alternative use by the NCC or disposal for capital receipt.

Impact on staffing:

NCC require sufficient staffing to effectively engage with citizens and promote library stock. As such, we propose to delete 2 vacant Grade 5 professional posts, the VSS Officer and 1 x Operations Librarian and instead create the new role of Community/Outreach Librarian. One 0.6 Community librarian post working in the libraries which will be remodelled will be deleted.

Specific Links with the Corporate Plan including climate implications of the proposed work

This proposal will rationalise and enhance council buildings and strengthen the council's offer to families and individuals by providing more community based activities for families and individuals to live positive and healthy lives. The development of a new Adult Community Learning Centre will give residents the opportunity to achieve their potential and positively contribute to their communities. We will reduce the carbon footprint of the organisation by reducing the number of buildings we operate and by renovating Malpas Court Mansion House.

Specific Links with Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (WFG) Act

These workstreams support Wales' Well-being Goals from the Well-being and Future Generations Act of: 'A More Equal Wales', 'A Wales of Cohesive Communities', A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language and 'A Healthier Wales'. The work will meet the sustainable development principle established by the Act, including following the 5 ways of working, Long Term, Collaboration, Involvement, Integration and Prevention.

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Reference	Title											
03	Charge for replacement (residual waste) bins	42	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	Yes	Cabinet	Yes

One off implementation costs

Revenue - redundancy / pension	0	0	0	0
Capital - building related	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0
Total implementation costs	0	0	0	0

Proposal Summary

To charge residents that request replacement black wheeled bins a fee to contribute in part to the administration and delivery cost.

Specific Links with the Corporate Plan including climate implications of the proposed work

The change contributes towards delivery of the Newport City Council and WG waste strategies for a carbon neutral public sector by 2030 and net zero carbon by 2050.

Specific Links with Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (WFG) Act

Integration – Providing containers for waste links to proposals to green our city, protecting and enhancing the environment.

Long Term – The proposal supports the delivery of waste reduction targets set by Welsh Government and supports work towards delivering Newport City Council waste strategy outcomes.

Prevention – Replacement bin charges support the longevity of services to residents at time when service costs are increasing.

Collaboration - Working together with residents, local and national government to achieve a consistent collection service. Replacement bins will help contain bags of waste that may otherwise be left on the street resulting in litter or fly tipping that needs removing by other departments. In preparing this proposal we have reviewed other local authority charges for replacement bins.

Involvement – The proposal will be subject to consultation as part of the MTFP process.

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Savings												
Reference	Title											
04	Highways fees and Charges - Increase of Fees by 8%	24	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	Yes	Cabinet	Yes

One off implementation costs

Revenue - redundancy / pension	0	0	0	0
Capital - building related	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0
Total implementation costs	0	0	0	0

Proposal Summary

The Council has a duty to control and administer a system for the authorised use of the highway and to permit stakeholders to utilise the highway for various purposes pursuant to legislation including the New Roads and Streetworks Act, the Highways Act, and the Traffic Management Act. To discharge this duty a suite of fees and charge are administered whereby utility and stakeholders make formal applications for approval to utilise the highway and submit a fee for the administration and supervision costs incurred by the Council. It also includes for penalty charges levied against companies or individuals who fail to comply with the formal applications process, or who use the highway for non legitimate purposes.

Specific Links with the Corporate Plan including climate implications of the proposed work

Enables the Council to achieve long term budget sustainability.

Specific Links with Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (WFG) Act

Long term - Provides for an appropriate level of fees and charges.

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Savings												
Reference	Title											
05	Reduction in Newport Live Management Fee	194	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	Yes	Cabinet	Yes

One off implementation costs

Revenue - redundancy / pension	0	0	0	0
Capital - building related	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0
Total implementation costs	0	0	0	0

Proposal Summary

Newport Live deliver leisure and arts services on behalf of the Council. A Funding and Management Agreement (FMA) was put in place in 2015 and requires a reduction in the subsidy paid to the Trust. In 2022/23, a 10% reduction in the subsidy payment was agreed by Cabinet. The subsidy payment to Newport Live in 2023/2024 is £1,944,032. A further 10% reduction is proposed for 2024/2025, equivalent to £194k.

Specific Links with the Corporate Plan including climate implications of the proposed work

The Corporate Plan Well-being Objective 1 around Economy Education and Skills commits to celebrating culture and delivering elite sporting events. Whilst Newport Live are not the only provider of elite sporting and arts/culture events in the city they are heavily involved in respect of specific sports which are hosted within their estate, including cycling and athletics. The implementation of this proposal may affect the provision of future events unless other sources of external funding are available.

Specific Links with Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (WFG) Act

The WFG Act lists 'A Healthier Wales' and 'A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language' as one of its well-being goals. A reduction in funding is not expected to see any significant withdrawal of access to health and culture facilities which are offered by Newport Live.

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Savings												
Reference	Title											
06	Reduced operating hours within the Civic Centre for up to two days a week, reducing costs of running the building	94	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	Yes	Cabinet	Yes

One off implementation costs

Revenue - redundancy / pension	0	0	0	0
Capital - building related	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0
Total implementation costs	0	0	0	0

Proposal Summary

This proposal is to reduce the opening hours of the Civic Centre by up to two days a week and recoup savings through reductions in utilities. Changes to work practices to more flexible models mean that many staff can work from home or other locations, although we need to consider an office environment for those who need it. It is appreciated that service redesign will be required for certain staff groups, CCTV, member meetings, social care and customer access through other buildings. Staff and union consultation will be required and careful consideration will need to be given to staff access and wellbeing, and to any contractual requirements of staff following consultation. There would also be an impact on democratic meetings held on these days.

Specific Links with the Corporate Plan including climate implications of the proposed work

This will have a direct impact on the Councils emissions and will go some way to achieving net zero. There are a range of factors that reduce the possibility and likelihood of the Civic Centre being retrofitted to become carbon neutral so to achieve net zero we will need to reduce emissions in the building while creating a credit elsewhere in the estate. The proposal also relates to the Corporate Plan commitment to rationalise our property and assets.

Specific Links with Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (WFG) Act

Any proposal that supports the Climate Change agenda will support the sustainable development principle. However staff wellbeing considerations will also be important.

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Savings												
Reference	Title											
07	Fraud prevention initiative	25	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	Yes	Cabinet	Yes

One off implementation costs

Revenue - redundancy / pension	0	0	0	0
Capital - building related	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0
Total implementation costs	0	0	0	0

Proposal Summary

Introduce penalties as part of our benefit anti-fraud measures, supported by an anti-fraud strategy which includes a framework for when penalties would apply.

Specific Links with the Corporate Plan including climate implications of the proposed work

AN INCLUSIVE, FAIR AND SUSTAINABLE COUNCIL - having a robust policy for deterring fraud and penalising those that breach the rules ensures that the public purse is protected and ensures fairness within the system.

Specific Links with Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (WFG) Act

Reducing fraud and deterring fraud within the council Tax Reduction system ensures that funds are distributed to those that needs them most and as a result the number of vulnerable households that can benefit is maximised from the funds that are available.