Appendix 6

Capital Programme 2025/26 to 2028/29 and Capital Strategy for 2025/26

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. Capital expenditure relates to spending on longer-term assets and infrastructure (such as property, equipment, vehicles, roads etc.). The Council's Capital Programme is therefore an important element of the Council's overall financial planning arrangements as appropriate investment can enable the transformation of service delivery and improve the quality of services to the local community. The schemes included in the Capital Programme need to be appropriate in meeting the Council's objectives, be affordable and represent value for money.
- 1.2. The Council must consider how capital expenditure is paid for and what the longterm financial implications are of undertaking this investment. The Council is permitted to borrow funds to finance the Capital Programme under the Local Government Act 2003. It needs to consider the impact on the revenue budget in relation to repayment of borrowing proposed, how it funds the repayment of this debt and the period over which it is repaid.
- 1.3. The Council operates a strict approach to considering and prioritising schemes for inclusion in the Capital Programme set against available resources including a technical review process, as set out in the Capital Strategy.
- 1.4. A review of the Council's Capital Programme has taken place in January 2025 and prior to setting the budget. This has involved the addition of new schemes and extending schemes deemed as Business as Usual in order to ensure the Capital Programme provides essential expenditure required to support the delivery of the Council's objectives and priorities.
- 1.5. This report sets the proposed Capital Programme for 2025/26 of **£74.798m**, with a total of **£170.290m** for the period 2025/26 to 2028/29, together with the financing statement as summarised in **Table 1**.
- 1.6. The Council's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) is the underlying need to borrow in relation to historical borrowing plus future planned borrowing to fund the Council's capital investment in assets. This is expected to increase to £310.197m by 2025/26. Further details can be found in the Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management Strategy 2025/26 report elsewhere on this agenda. A summary of the prudential indicators which regulate the Council's capital financing activities CFR, borrowing limits and planned borrowing, together with the revenue cost of borrowing is summarised in Table 5. This is an integral part of setting a balanced revenue budget and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for the Council.
- 1.7. The Capital Programme detailed in **Annex 1**, whilst affordable, must be managed strictly within budget in order to manage the revenue costs of servicing the historic external debt from previous financing decisions and future plans that are to be funded by borrowing.

- 1.8. The Capital Programme has been prioritised as follows:
 - Meeting statutory duties for example health and safety requirements
 - In progress schemes that cannot be stopped
 - Funding transformation that will deliver ongoing revenue expenditure savings on the basis of invest to save, for which an appropriate rate of return will be determined within the transformation programme.
 - Partially externally funded schemes that require Council to match resources where there is a robust business case that meets Council Plan objectives and is approved in accordance with constitutional delegations.
 - Repayment of borrowing to reduce revenue capital financing costs.
- 1.9. The governance arrangements for managing and monitoring the delivery of the programme to plan and to budget were strengthened during 2024/25. Future budget planning rounds will be subject to improved programme governance to ensure that new projects align to the priorities of the Council plan and available resources to ensure value for money and affordability.

2. Introduction

- 2.1. The Council Plan for Middlesbrough acknowledges that a sustainable Capital Programme, and the strategy and controls to shape and manage it, is a critical contributor to the future ambitions, overall service delivery, and financial position of the Council going forwards.
- 2.2. The Capital Strategy assists in the Council meeting its '*Recover, Rest and Deliver*' approach by ensuring:

• Capital investment is strictly prioritised and meets the Council's objectives within a set funding limits from within its revenue budget and MTFP.

• Investment meets the CIPFA criteria of being prudent, sustainable, affordable and value for money.

• The Council is appropriately responding to the statutory recommendations raised by its external auditor.

• The Capital Programme does not include any schemes that are not permitted under the HM Treasury's definition of commercial activity and using external debt to solely generate ongoing revenue income.

• Capital projects are delivered within budget and in a timely manner and meet the objectives of their business cases.

• Members and Senior Officers have a common understanding of the financial context the Council is operating in and the capital principles underpinning capital decisions within the Council.

3. Capital Programme 2025/26 to 2028/29

3.1. **Table 1** summarises the proposed Capital Programme by Directorate and an upper financial limit within which Transformation and redundancy costs will need to be delivered (£26.7m from 2024/25 to 2028/29). It also shows the level of capital receipts over the MTFP period. A further report will be submitted to Executive in April 2025 updating on progress on the Transformation Programme together with the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy for 2025/26 which will referred to Council for consideration and approval and incorporation into the Budget and Policy Framework.

Capital Programme By Directorate	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Regeneration	32.716	36.791	3.330	3.070	75.907
Environment and Community Services	20.198	10.938	5.048	7.196	43.380
Public Health	0.779	-	- 0.0	-	0.779
Education and Partnerships	7.553	0.996	-	-	8.549
Children's Care	0.550	3.253	-	-	3.803
Adult Social Care	3.701	1.669	1.050	1.120	7.540
Legal and Governance Services	1.610		2.185	2.185	8.202
Finance	0.191	0.389	-	-	0.580
Total All Directorates	67.298	56.258	11.613	13.571	148.740
Transformation Programme:					
Transformation	2.500	2.500	2.000	0.750	7.750
Subject Matter Expertise	1.000	1.000	1.000	-	3.000
Redundancy	1.750	1.000	1.000	-	3.750
ICT	1.500	1.500	1.500	-	4.500
Contingency	0.750	0.750	0.750	0.300	2.550
Total Transformation	7.500	6.750	6.250	1.050	21.550
TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	74.798	63.008	17.863	14.621	170.290
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Funded by					
Borrowing	17.085	28.180	-	-	45.265
Capital Receipts	6.000	6.000	11.613	13.571	37.184
Flexible Use of Capital Receipts	7.500	6.750	6.250	1.050	21.550
Grants	43.230	15.558	-	-	58.788
Contributions	0.983	6.520	-	-	7.503
TOTAL FUNDING	74.798	63.008	17.863	14.621	170.290

Table 1: Summary of Capital Programme 2025/26 To 2028/29

Council

Funding

£m

33.043

<u>31.3</u>31

0.779

0.646 3.803 4.065

8.202 0.580 **82.449**

> 7.750 3.000 3.750

> 4.500

2.550 **21.550**

103.999

Council

Funding £m

> 45.265 37.184

> 21.550

103.999

-

External

Funding

£m

42.864

12.049

7.903

3.475

66.291

-

_

-

66.291

External Funding

£m

_

58.788

7.503

66.291

Capital Receipts Memo	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m
Capital Receipts carried forward from previous year	12.212	15.712	22.962	6.899
Total Capital Receipts expected in-year	17.000	20.000	1.800	9.650
Total Available Capital Receipts available in-year	29.212	35.712	24.762	16.549
Capital Receipts to finance above programme	(6.000)	(6.000)	(11.613)	(13.571)
Flexible Receipts to finance Transformation	(7.500)	(6.750)	(6.250)	(1.050)
Capital Receipts to carry forward	15.712	22.962	6.899	1.928

3.2. Annex 1 details the proposed Capital Programme for approval, incorporating the capital budgets for 2025/26 to 2028/29. The capital budget is aligned to the Capital Strategy. It presents in financial terms, the Council's plan for meeting the costs of Transformation and Redundancies together with investment related to the purchasing, building and improvement of capital assets, together with the implications of any major capital projects or investments within the Middlesbrough boundary. It also provides a framework for ensuring the programme is affordable within the current medium term financial plan.

3.3. The Capital Programme for 2025/26 to 2028/29 includes new Council funded schemes and additions to schemes that are within the current approved Capital Programme. Table 2 represents the new Council funded schemes added to the Capital Programme and additional funding to currently approved schemes where required, with further details of the new schemes being provided in paragraphs 3.4 to 3.15. The table excludes schemes which are deemed to be Business as Usual which are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 2: New Council Funded Schemes and additional funding to currentlyapproved schemes 2025/26 To 2028/29

Directorate	Scheme		2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total
		£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Regeneration	Cemetery Provision	1.051	0.877	0.360	0.100	2.388
Regeneration	Asset Management Block Budget	1.345	0.566	0.300	0.300	2.511
Regeneration	East Middlesbrough Community Hub	0.000	0.500	-	-	0.500
Regeneration	Nunthorpe Community Centre	0.000	0.500	-	-	0.500
Environment & Community Services	Bridges and Structures	-	-	2.650	4.798	7.448
Environment & Community Services	Carriageway Resurfacing Programme	0.187	0.687	-	-	0.874
Environment & Community Services	Footway Repairs Programme	0.100	0.500	-	-	0.600
Environment & Community Services	Regulatory Services ICT System	0.566	0.256	-	-	0.822
Public Health	Middlesbrough Sports Village Full Size 3G Pitch Repair	0.507	-	-	-	0.507
Public Health	Neptune Leisure Centre Boiler Replacement & Building Management System Upgrade	0.172	-	-	-	0.172
Public Health	Live Well West Building Works	0.100		-	-	0.100
Adult Social Care	Chronically Sick & Disabled Persons Act - Home Adaptations	0.250	0.325	0.390	0.460	1.425
Total New Council Funded Schem	es & Additional Council Funding To Current Schemes	4.278	4.211	3.700	5.658	17.847

3.4. Cemetery Provision - £2.388m

The current available space for burial plots is expected to be utilised within a year. The funding is therefore required to ensure the continued provision of burial plots through the expansion of Thorntree cemetery, creating an additional 2,310 plots. The requested funding includes an allocation for feasibility works at Acklam cemetery to understand if expansion there is possible.

3.5. Asset Management Block Budget - £2.511m

The Asset Management Block Budget has been provided £1.200m annually as part of Business as Usual allocations for a number of years. Due to inflationary cost increases and necessary essential works, the 2025/26 and 2026/27 allocations have been significantly brought forward to fund essential expenditure in 2024/25 and previous years, leaving the current allocation dangerously depleted. The additional funding will bring the annual budget up to £1.500m p.a., including the replenishment of the 2025/26 and 2026/27 allocations.

3.6. East Middlesbrough Community Hub - £0.500m

For various reasons there have been time delays since the original scheme budgets were agreed for the East Middlesbrough Community Hub. Construction costs have increased significantly during that period, meaning that the Community Centre cannot now be delivered within the approved budget. The Council has received the contractor tenders for the creation of the hub, and the costs submitted are considerably higher than the total funding available for the scheme, with an additional £1.000m being required after a value engineering exercise is undertaken. Middlesbrough Football Club Foundation are expected to fund 50% of this but this leaves the Council required to increase its own allocation by £0.500m to complete the scheme to the desired standard.

3.7. Nunthorpe Community Centre - £0.500m

The Nunthorpe Community Centre scheme has also experienced delays, which mean that the currently approved budget will not be sufficient to complete construction of the Centre. The additional £0.500m will ensure that there are enough available funds to complete the scheme.

3.8. Bridges and Structures - £7.448m

A four year programme has been developed and costed to prioritise critical works to the Council's network of bridges and structures, resulting in the need for the Council to add a further £7.448m to the pre-existing allocation. The additional funds bring the total allocation for the Bridges and Structures scheme to £12.628m during the course of the MTFP.

3.9. Carriageway Resurfacing Programme - £0.874m

The funds have been added to the Capital Programme to undertake high priority carriageway resurfacing works. These funds are in addition to previously approved Capital Programme funding of £5.150m Local Transport Plan – Highways Maintenance grant funded scheme and £1.626m of the Council funded Highways Infrastructure scheme, both of which can be spent on carriageway resurfacing, depending on priorities.

3.10. Footway Repairs Programme - £0.600m

The funds have been allocated to the Capital Programme to undertake essential footway repairs. As per the Carriageway Resurfacing Programme, the allocation can be complimented by utilising pre-existing funds within the Local Transport Plan – Highways Maintenance and Highways Infrastructure schemes, depending upon priorities.

3.11. Regulatory Services ICT System - £0.822m

The funds are required to replace the current regulatory service ICT system, which would have required updating at a cost. The replacement system is both cheaper than the current system and has greater functionality.

3.12. Middlesbrough Sports Village Full Size 3G Pitch Repair - £0.507m

The pitch is in need of significant repairs. Under the terms of the leisure provision contract agreed between the Council and its leisure services delivery partner, SLM, it is the Council's responsibility to fund such repairs.

3.13. Neptune Centre Boiler Replacement & Building Management System Upgrade - £0.172m

The replacement of the boiler with a modern efficient version, combined with additional controls through a Building Management System, will bring a significant reduction in gas usage at the Centre, resulting in expected annual savings of ± 0.041 m. This saving will be a benefit to the Council through contractual negotiations with SLM. The additional funding can therefore be considered as a return on investment scheme.

3.14. Live Well West Building Works - £0.100m

The funds will enable reconfiguration works within the internal area, which will increase the consultation room space and consequently increase the number of service users who can be seen within the building.

3.15. Chronically Sick & Disabled Persons Act – Home Adaptations - £1.425m

The Council receives an annual Disabled Facilities capital grant from the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG). However, one of the conditions of the grant is that no more than £0.030m can be spent on adaptations to a single property. The additional Council funding can be used to top up this value where required to ensure that the necessary adaptations required are undertaken to ensure people can continue to live within their own homes. The funds will be added to the £0.610m provided annually as Business as Usual.

3.16. In addition to the above, **£7.913m** of Council resources have been added to the Capital Programme in each of the financial years 2027/28 and 2028/29 to extend schemes deemed Business as Usual. This continues allocations to these schemes as in previous years, and is required as the Capital Programme has been extended to cover the MTFP period to 2028/29. **Table 3** below shows the relevant schemes and the amount of funding provided.

Council Funding Provided to Schemes Deemed Business as Usual							
Directorate	Scheme	2027/28	2028/29	Total			
		£m	£m	£m			
Regeneration	Capitalisation Of Major Schemes Salaries	0.530	0.530	1.060			
Regeneration	Capitalisation of Planning Services Surveys	0.040	0.040	0.080			
Regeneration	Derisking Sites	0.500	0.500	1.000			
Regeneration	Property Services Building Investment	0.340	0.340	0.680			
Regeneration	Property Asset Investment Programme	1.200	1.200	2.400			
Regeneration	Members Small Schemes	0.060	0.060	0.120			
Environment & Community Services	Purchase of New Vehicles	1.200	1.200	2.400			
Environment & Community Services	Capitalisation of Wheeled Bin Replacement	0.100	0.100	0.200			
Environment & Community Services	Capitalisation of Street Furniture / Dog Fouling & Litter Bins	0.055	0.055	0.110			
Environment & Community Services	Capitalisation of Highways Maintenance	0.575	0.575	1.150			
Environment & Community Services	Street Lighting-Maintenance	0.468	0.468	0.936			
Adult Social Care	Chronically Sick & Disabled Persons Act - All schemes	0.610	0.610	1.220			
Adult Social Care	Capitalisation of Staying Put Salaries	0.050	0.050	0.100			
Legal & Governance Services	ICT Essential Refresh & Licensing	2.185	2.185	4.370			
Total Council Funding Provided to	o Schemes Deemed Business as Usual	7.913	7.913	15.826			

Table 3: Council funding provided to schemes deemed Business as Usual2027/28 and 2028/29

- 3.17. The Capital Programme was reviewed and revised during the first half of 2024/25 and again in Quarter Three of 2024/25. The review was particularly focussed on ensuring that scheme funding was profiled correctly within the financial years. This resulted in significant re-profiling of funds to future years, particularly from 2024/25 to 2025/26 and 2026/27. Full details of this were provided in the Revenue and Capital Budget Forecast Year end Outturn position as at Quarter Three 2024/25,
- 3.18. The forecast budgets for 2025/26 and 2026/27 contained in Appendix 10 of the Quarter Three 2024/25 report have been reviewed as part of this revised Capital Programme. Further reprofiling of expenditure has now taken place from 2026/27 to 2027/28 and 2028/29 now that the Capital Programme has been extended to 2028/29, and this along with the addition of new schemes (Table 2) and extensions to existing Business as Usual schemes (Table 3) has formed the basis of the revised Capital Programme for 2025/26 to 2028/29
- 3.19. **Table 4** shows how the budgets for 2025/26 to 2028/29 have changed since the Quarter Three 2024/25 report.

Table 4: Movement of Capital Programme from that reported at Quarter 3 2024/25 to proposed revised Capital Programme

	Forecast Expenditure					
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	TOTAL	
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	
Budget as per Quarter 3 2024/25 budget monitoring report	70.520	66.097	-	-	136.617	
					-	
New Council Funded Schemes and additional funding to	4,278	4 211	3 700	5.658	17.847	
currently approved schemes 2025/26 To 2028/29 (Table 2)	4.210	4.211	5.700	5.050	11.047	
Council funding provided to schemes deemed Business as			7.913	7,913	15.826	
Usual 2027/28 and 2028/29 (Table 3)	-	-	1.915	1.515	13.020	
Further reprofiling of expenditure	-	(7.300)	6.250	1.050	-	
Revised budget for proposed revised Capital Programme	74.798	63.008	17.863	14.621	170.290	

3.20. In total the proposed Capital Programme sets out investment of **£170.290m** from 2025/26 to 2028/29, in support of delivering the Council's objectives and priorities.

4. Financing approach for the Capital Programme

- 4.1. All capital expenditure has to be financed, from either external sources (government grants and other contributions), the Council's own resources (revenue budget, reserves or capital receipts) or debt (borrowing or leasing).
- 4.2. In terms of affordability, receiving capital funding from a partner organisation in the form of a contribution or from central government via an approved grant is always the Council's preferred route of financing. There is no initial cost of the capital investment, with only the ongoing revenue consequences to consider.
- 4.3. When the Council puts its own funding into a capital project, there is an opportunity cost of this investment. If it sells a capital asset to generate a receipt, it releases the asset and possibly revenue income that is generated. If it uses prudential borrowing, there is an ongoing revenue costs of principal and interest of between 8% 10% per annum over the estimates useful life of the asset being financed. The final option of funding from the revenue budget has not been used in recent years due to the pressures on the revenue budget position and the low level of revenue reserves currently. The Council would therefore prioritise its own financing resource as capital receipts first, prudential borrowing last. Direct revenue financing is not recommended within the period of this MTFP.
- 4.4. In addition, there would be restrictions on the level of capital receipts in any financial year, based on the availability of buyers for specific assets, the need to demonstrate best value on any sale and the legal processes required for any sale. The amount of prudential borrowing will be restricted by the impact on the revenue budget of servicing the debt costs of principal (minimum revenue provision) and interest (on any loans drawn down to finance the asset).

- 4.5. The Council must ensure that any approach to financing the Capital Programme is affordable, sustainable, and prudent in line with the requirements of the CIPFA Prudential Code on Capital Finance. It does this by setting and monitoring a set of prudential indicators each year. These are key metrics for the Director of Finance and for elected members when setting a budget for each financial year and when considering any changes that may occur during the financial year.
- 4.6. More details on this can be seen with reference to the Council's Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management Strategy 2025/26 as included elsewhere on this agenda. Some key Prudential Indicator values on the current position of the Council are shown in **Table 5** below for reference purpose.
- 4.7. It should be noted that whilst Middlesbrough's debt related indicators are increasing over the medium term, it is not an outlier in terms of its levels of debt when compared against all the other English unitary authorities.

Prudential Indicator	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
	(£m)	(£m)	(£m)	(£m)
Capital Financing Requirement	310.197	333.295	327.929	321.994
(underlying need to borrow)				
External Borrowing	292.388	320.568	320.568	315.568
Internal Borrowing	17.809	12.727	7.361	6.426
Authorised limit for External Debt	331.000	354.000	348.000	342.000
Annual Capital Financing Cost	12.060	13.732	14.685	15.404
% of Net Revenue Budget on debt costs	8.4%	9.5%	9.7%	9.9%

Table 5: Prudential Indicators

5. Flexible use of capital receipts strategy

- 5.1. Local authorities are ordinarily only able to utilise capital receipts from the sale of fixed assets for specific purposes. This precludes the financing of revenue expenditure under s15(1) of the Local Government Act 2003.
- 5.2. In 2016/17, the Department of Levelling up Housing and Communities implemented a time limited relaxation to the regulations under the Local Government Act 2003 Sections 16(2)(b) and 20. This allows capital receipts to be used to finance revenue expenditure in specific circumstances and subject to certain conditions.
- 5.3. The current statutory direction applies to financial years from 1 April 2022 up to and including 31 March 2025. However the Government announced as part of the Local government finance policy statement 2025 to 2026 that they would extend the flexible use of capital receipts to 31 March 2030. The Government will also remove

the restriction with respect to redundancy costs, imposed from April 2022, that limits the use of the flexibility to statutory redundancy costs only. This will support authorities in taking forward transformation and invest-to-save projects. A new statutory direction should be issued shortly.

- 5.4. Eligible expenditure under the regulations relates to revenue expenditure which:
 is designed to generate ongoing expenditure savings, income generation, and/or more efficient delivery of services, and/or
 - transforms service delivery to reduce costs/ reduce demand; and/or
 - improves the quality-of-service delivery in future years.
- 5.5. The annual Flexible Use of Capital Receipts (FUoCR) Strategy is required to be approved by Full Council as part and is part of the budget and policy framework. For 2025/26, the Strategy is under development alongside a review of the Transformation Programme and will be presented to Council for consideration and approval in April 2025.
- 5.6. The expenditure required to deliver the Transformation Programme will be a combination of revenue and capital expenditure. The FUoCR Strategy will set out any plans for eligible revenue expenditure to be incurred during the financial year to be funded by capital receipts in accordance with statutory regulations. The Council is not permitted to apply flexible capital receipts to fund expenditure more than the sum set out in the approved Strategy. A copy of the FUoCR Strategy, once approved by Council is required to be shared with DLUHC to enable review and oversight (but not approval).
- 5.7. As detailed previously the Council is undertaking a major transformation programme from 2024/25 to move the Council to a lower cost base for the future. It is anticipated that the amount of transformation expenditure will be up to £5.0m in 2025/26 (including ICT), with an estimate for redundancy costs of up to £1.750m in 2025/26, and a contingency budget of £0.750m. This will mean that the estimated value of the FUOCR will be £7.5m in 2025/26, and once finalised this will be presented for consideration and approval by Council in April 2025 as referenced above.
- 5.8. The transformation expenditure can only be financed by capital receipts given the low level of revenue reserves held by the Council. The FUoCR strategy therefore provides the funding solution for the revenue costs of transformation work to be funded from capital receipts generated from the current review of assets as approved by the Executive in November 2023

6. Risk & Governance

6.1. The proposed four year Capital Programme will require the Council to use a higher proportion of available resources but without recourse to any more borrowing than is necessary to meet existing commitments. Investment of this nature will result in the Council being exposed to additional inherent risks as follows:

- economic risks on capital projects such as rising inflation and extended leading times for orders.
- the impact of increases in construction costs.
- major schemes have a long pay-back period, which will require the use of reserves in the early years to fund short term deficits in business plans.
- Any unforeseen events occur which effect the overall cost or delivery times for specific schemes.
- 6.2. The management of risk on projects within the Capital Programme is managed by individual service directors as part of their own risk processes but is overseen by the Leadership Management Team as part of its corporate governance responsibilities.
- 6.3. The governance arrangements for managing and monitoring the delivery of the programme to plan and to budget were strengthened during 2024/25 as detailed in the <u>Capital Programme Governance Improvement</u> report to Executive on 13 November 2024. This involved the creation of a Strategic and Corporate Capital Programme Board framework consisting of elected members and senior officers to oversee and support the delivery of the Capital Programme as part of its governance improvement. This will take the lead role for the organisation on both programme planning, scheme delivery and financing.
- 6.4. Future budget planning rounds will be subject to improved programme governance through the above to ensure that new projects align to the priorities of the Council plan and available resources to ensure value for money and affordability.

Annex

1

Proposed Revised Capital Programme 2025/26 to 2028/29