

APPENDIX G ADDITIONAL GROWTH PROPOSALS

Pressures	2026/27	Comments
Theme : supporting our residents:		
Increasing Discretionary housing payments (DHP) (see also para 4.1.12)	£99,000	The Council uses DHP to support residents short term to stay in their homes, with awards in 2024/25 reflecting pressure on households affected by the spare room subsidy restriction, and those in receipt of universal credit. There are always more requests than funding and an additional £100K is recommended for 2026/27. The funding for 2025/26 has already been exhausted and the service is experiencing increasing levels requests for support.
Increasing the Council tax hardship fund	£90,000	An Exceptional Hardship Relief scheme is offered by SBC (Section 13(A) 1 discretionary relief for council tax). There has been an uptake in this since the pandemic and during the ongoing difficult economic climate. There is an application process requiring financial information and supporting evidence and each case is reviewed independently and against the Exceptional Hardship Relief policy. Any award will be used to reduce council tax liabilities for those found to be in exceptional hardship and to help them improve their financial situation. SBC has a residual amount of circa £170K remaining and it is recommended that this is increased by £100K
Theme : supporting residents into work:		
The Enterprise and Skills allocation will augment the existing activity in Stevenage, which has largely focused on supporting young people into opportunity, particularly through our work on STEM pathways and construction-related progression. The 2026/27 allocation sustains core delivery capacity and commissions targeted interventions that both deepen that youth-focused offer, through an extension of the partnership with Mission 44, and broaden it by expanding support for adults who are out of work or looking to change careers. Alongside this, it strengthens the Stevenage Works approach by funding additional targeted support for 16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training.	£210,000	<p>Enterprise and Skills Partnership Officer (12-month extension) to coordinate delivery, partnerships, bid development and impact reporting.</p> <p>Pioneering Young STEM Futures delivery package to extend our partnership with Mission 44, supporting youth voice and progression activity (including the Youth Advisory Board and progression pilots).</p> <p>Adult learning and career change pilot to expand support for adults who are out of work or looking to change career, focused on employability and progression into training and work.</p> <p>Stevenage Works: training for 16 to 18 NEETs providing targeted support for young people not in education, employment or training, aligned to the wider Stevenage Works “front door” approach to skills and employment support.</p>
Theme : Improving the Town for residents:		
Increasing the budget to allow for increased hedge trimming throughout the Town	£100,000	The current level of resources do not allow for a full summer prune of hedgerows. This growth bid will check vigorous growth and prevent stems becoming woody and too thick for hedge cutters.
Electric Addex bin vehicle	£70,000	The Council currently has one electric bin collection vehicle in the town centre, purchasing a further vehicle will provide service resilience and allow for wider use across the town and improve productivity.
Theme : Increasing the financial support Councillors can give through increasing the Local Community Budget		
LCB's increase per Member	£20,000	This proposal is to increase the LCB allowance by £500 per Member and Youth Mayor in the 80th Anniversary year of the Town
Total	£589,000	