

Meeting

Council

Date and time

Tuesday 27th February, 2024

At 7.00 pm

Venue

Hendon Town Hall, The Burroughs, London NW4 4BQ

Dear Councillors,

Please find enclosed:-

1. Updated Conservative Alternative Budget containing changes to the savings descriptions in relation to:
 - Back-office savings in Revenue Savings; and
 - Council Tax in Variations in Income.
2. Updated Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer comments on the Conservative Alternative Budget.

Governance Service

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Items set out in Section 31A (2) (a) to (f) of the Act	£1,086,567,324	with	£1,081,313,324
Items set out in Section 31A (3) (a) to (d) of the Act	£856,711,942	with	£851,457,942
Council Tax Requirement in accordance with Section 31A (4) of the Act,	£229,855,382	with	£229,855,382

AGENDA ITEM 10.1

The Conservative Group Budget Proposals

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	£	£	£	£

PART 1 - REVENUE				
Variations in Expenditure				
Ongoing				
Quit LGA	(72,000)	(72,000)	(72,000)	(72,000)
Quit London Councils membership	(162,000)	(162,000)	(162,000)	(162,000)
Staff efficiencies: All services excluding statutory services - 4.7% saving	(2,829,419)	(2,829,419)	(2,829,419)	(2,829,419)
Relocate Back Office and Administrative Staff - 25% saving in cost	(2,674,581)	(2,674,581)	(2,674,581)	(2,674,581)
Reduce non-statutory staff training budget by 30%	(109,000)	(109,000)	(109,000)	(109,000)
Scrap Barnet First or make fully self-financing	(68,000)	(68,000)	(68,000)	(68,000)
Reduce communications budget by 50%	(420,000)	(420,000)	(420,000)	(420,000)
End Trade Union financial assistance	(128,000)	(128,000)	(128,000)	(128,000)
Office efficiencies - 80% reduction in printing budget, more energy efficient bulbs etc	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)
Consolidate existing Cabinet post to 7 and create new cabinet member solely responsible for Finance.	(30,000)	(30,000)	(30,000)	(30,000)
Disband Town centre team	(517,000)	(517,000)	(517,000)	(517,000)
Subtotal	(7,060,000)	(7,060,000)	(7,060,000)	(7,060,000)
One-off				
Scrap Director of Transformation	(214,000)	(214,000)	(214,000)	(214,000)
Scrap Strategic Policy Advisor	(80,000)	(80,000)	(80,000)	(80,000)
Subtotal	(294,000)	(294,000)	(294,000)	(294,000)
TOTAL SAVINGS	(7,354,000)	(7,354,000)	(7,354,000)	(7,354,000)

Developments				
Ongoing				
Increase CIL budgets for area committees (25%)	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Increase tree and flower planting in town centres and wild meadows along roads	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
Boost to repair roads, pavements and other related improvements.	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Subtotal	2,100,000	2,100,000	2,100,000	2,100,000
One-off				
Subtotal	0	0	0	0
TOTAL DEVELOPMENTS	2,100,000	2,100,000	2,100,000	2,100,000

Variations in Income				
Ongoing				
More advertising on council land and website	(100,000)	(100,000)	(100,000)	(100,000)
Reduce administration's increase of council tax by 2% (to 0.98%)	4,200,000	4,200,000	4,200,000	4,200,000
Freeze Green Bin Charge	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
SEND Transport – cost to avoid the cut	800,000	800,000	800,000	800,000
Renting out a further two floors of the Colindale office to third parties	(646,000)	(646,000)	(646,000)	(646,000)
Subtotal	5,254,000	5,254,000	5,254,000	5,254,000
One-off				
Subtotal	0	0	0	0
TOTAL INCOME	5,254,000	5,254,000	5,254,000	5,254,000

Variation to revenue budget recommended (0) (0) (0) (0)

Note: Proposals included within this budget are not cumulative but are the same savings recurring every year

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Revised Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer Comments on the Conservative Alternative Budget

Staff efficiencies:

All services excluding Adults and Children's Social Care, Grounds Maintenance, Street Clean, Waste & Public Health. Notionally this would be taking approximately 51 posts out of the services not mentioned above. These 51 posts would be in addition to the staffing savings already included in the MTFS and would have a significant impact on the delivery of those services. There are elements within these services where it would not be possible to generate savings because service delivery is either contracted to other organisations, funding is ringfenced or services are income generating. The S151 would advise caution in the delivery of this saving and the impact it could have on services.

Any proposals for the relocation of back office and administrative staff would have associated set up costs. There would be a lead in time for delivery and savings would not be achievable from 1st April 2024. Associated costs could include project costs, set up costs and possible redundancy costs.

End trade union financial assistance:

Legally the council does not have to fund full time union officials, but the council have to legally allow reasonable facilities time. If the council did not fund full time union officials, the council would have to continually release other union reps for facilities time, to represent members at hearings, attend JNCC meetings etc. Removing the funding for union officials would therefore shift cost onto service departments. It would also risk a significant industrial relations dispute.

Increasing Neighbourhood CIL

Charging authorities can choose to pass on more than 25% of the levy, although the wider spending powers that apply to the neighbourhood funding element of the levy will not apply to any additional funds passed on. These additional funds can only be spent on infrastructure, as defined in the Planning Act 2008 for the purposes of the levy. In effect, if more than 25% is used by area committees there would be more restrictions on how they spend it and they would have to comply with the tighter controls that are imposed on Borough CIL.

Advertising

Any increased advertising on council land and website would need to be within the limits set by law and looked at on a case-by-case basis.

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