

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 neighborhood 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.

Capitalisation of Revenue costs - clarification:

The narrative accompanying the Conservative Group's alternative budget references "capitalisation of previous revenue costs". For clarification, none of the proposals within the MTFS propose this course of action.