

GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET & COUNCIL TAX 2011/12

Conservative Group Amendments

Amendment 1

It is proposed that the following additional savings are made in the General Fund revenue budget for 2012/13:

- To bring forward the 2013/14 saving of £0.228m in the Human Resources budget as set out on page 153 of the agenda. The part year effect of the saving is £0.057m in 2012/13 as the proposal will require a lead in time of about 9 months thereby requiring £0.171m reserves to meet the difference between the full and part year impact.
- To reduce the decentralised training and development budgets by 10% generating a saving of £0.056m.
- To cease the publication of City News and reduce the Communications budget by £0.052m in a full year. The part year effect of the saving is £0.039m in 2012/13 as the proposal will require a lead in time of about 3 months thereby requiring £0.013m reserves to meet the difference between the full and part year impact.
- To reduce the Communications budget by £0.044m in a full year from the budget for support for events marketing and seek to provide the support in other ways. The part year effect of the saving is £0.033m in 2012/13 as the proposal will require an estimated lead in time of 3 months thereby requiring £0.011m reserves to meet the difference between the full and part year impact.
- To bring forward the 2013/14 saving of £0.250m in management and administration set out on page 177 of the agenda. The part year effect of the saving is £0.125m in 2012/13 as the proposal will require a lead in time of about 6 months thereby requiring £0.125m reserves to meet the difference between the full and part year impact.
- To remove the additional funding for part of the sustainability team of £0.150m set out in paragraph 3.35 on page 16 of the agenda. The core team will remain unaffected.
- To keep the downland management contract with the existing provider for 6 months beyond the 1 April 2012 whilst a new contract is tendered and procured generating a saving of £0.050m in the relevant Resources and Finance budgets.

- To allocate £0.150m of the second tranche of the New Homes Bonus money to support the General Fund Revenue budget rather than housing initiatives set out in paragraph 3.17 on page 10 of the agenda where there are not yet firm commitments for this additional investment.
- This proposal retains £0.050m in officer time to undertake additional private sector work to bring back long term empty private sector properties into use and meet any costs that cannot be recovered from private sector landlords.
- To switch the funding arrangements for the Private Sector Renewal Grants capital programme of £1.500m and part of the funding for Woodvale cremators of £0.081m from borrowing to revenue reserves, thereby generating an ongoing saving of £0.207m in the debt financing budget. This proposal requires £1.581m of revenue reserves to reduce borrowing by the same amount.

The savings proposals set out above require a total of £1.901m revenue reserves. It is proposed that these are generated by:

- Reallocating the £1.217m contribution to the Customer Access and Accommodation reserve set out in paragraph 3.25 starting on page 13 of the agenda.
- Using the uncommitted balance of £0.090m on the unringfenced Seaside Towns grant.
- Reallocating £0.250m from the single status reserve generated from strike pay deductions as shown on page 43 of the agenda thereby maintaining a balance of £5.933m in the reserve.
- Reallocating £0.344m of the resources set aside to support the implementation of a local council tax benefit scheme from April 2013 set out in paragraph 3.25 starting on page 13 of the agenda.

The proposals will generate ongoing savings of £1.187m. It is proposed that these resources will be used as follows:

- £1.187m to reduce the council tax increase in 2012/13 so that the council qualifies for £2.986m 2012/13 council tax freeze grant to enable a freeze in the level of council tax for 2012/13.

The proposals in this amendment will increase the savings gap for 2013/14 by £3.630m due to the ending of the 2012/13 council tax freeze grant and because some 2013/14 savings have been brought forward into 2012/13.

Conservative Group Amendments

Amendment 2

It is proposed that the following additional savings are made in the General Fund revenue budget for 2012/13:

- Reduce the budget for de-centralised training and development budgets by a further 5% generating a saving of £0.028m.
- Generate additional income through the Communications team by undertaking joint working with other local authorities, creating a saving of £0.030m.

It is proposed to allocate the £0.058m generated from the above and from using £0.050m of the resources set aside to support the implementation of a local council tax benefit scheme from April 2013 set out in paragraph 3.25 starting on page 13 of the agenda to the following:

- £0.040m for Parking & Traffic to reduce the proposed annual charge for business permits from £300 (included as part of the savings on page 119 of the agenda) to £200 in 2012/13 and £250 plus inflation in 2013/14. However the council will seek additional savings in 2013/14 in order to keep the charge at £200 plus inflation for 2013/14. The quarterly charge for both years will be reduced in proportion. This proposal requires the use of £0.020m recurrent resources and £0.020m one off resources.
- £0.068m for Parking & Traffic to reduce the proposed annual charge for Traders permits from £600 (included as part of the savings on page 119 of the agenda) to £400 in 2012/13 and £500 plus inflation in 2013/14. This proposal also increases the number of permits issued by releasing 40% of the waiting list and allows for the consequent loss in on-street parking income. However additional savings will be sought in 2013/14 in order to keep the charge at £400 plus inflation for 2013/14. The quarterly charge for both years will be reduced in proportion. This proposal requires the use of £0.038m recurrent resources and £0.030m one off resources.

Conservative Group Amendments

Amendment 3

It is proposed to reduce the budget in Human Resources for council funded union officials by £0.083m per annum. This would leave £0.063m per annum for council funded union officials in the budget, the existing time off arrangements for staff undertaking union duties from services across the council and the temporary funding for work in conjunction with single status.

It is proposed to allocate the £0.083m generated above to the following:

- £0.013m for Library Services to reverse part of the saving identified on page 166 of the agenda in order to restore 0.5 day's opening to both Hangleton and Portslade libraries.
- £0.023m for City Parks to reverse part of the saving identified on page 121 of the agenda in order to reduce the annual allotment fee to £36 for a 5 pole plot and £72 for a 10 pole plot rather than the proposed fees of £44.20 and £88.40 respectively in 2012/13.
- £0.012m to reverse part of the saving identified on page 122 of the agenda in order to maintain the tree donation charge at current level of £144 rather than the proposed charge of £288.
- £0.035m for City Clean to reverse part of the saving identified on page 120 of the agenda in order to maintain current opening arrangements for seafront toilets at Black Rock, West Pier, King Alfred and King's Esplanade.

Conservative Group Amendments

Amendment 4

It is proposed to close Brightstart Nursery from 1 September 2012 generating a full year saving of £0.078m. The part year saving in 2012/13 will be £0.042m requiring reserves of £0.136m to cover both a provision for possible redundancy and redeployment costs and the difference between the full and part year savings. To meet this possible requirement it is proposed to reallocate £0.136m of the resources set aside to support the implementation of a local council tax benefit scheme from April 2013 set out in paragraph 3.25 starting on page 13 of the agenda. An Equalities Impact Assessment will be prepared before this proposal is implemented.

It is proposed to allocate the £0.078m generated above to the following:

- £0.030m for the Community and Voluntary Sector Forum to support their work with the children and young people's network.
- £0.048m to the Youth Service to reverse part of the proposed savings in that service set out on page 95 of the agenda.

Conservative Group Amendments

Amendment 5

It is proposed to remove the remaining budget in Human Resources for council funded union officials of £0.063m per annum. This would leave provision for the existing time off arrangements for staff undertaking union duties from services across the council and the temporary funding for work in conjunction with single status.

It is proposed to allocate the £0.063m generated above to the Parking & Traffic budget in order to reinstate a 3 hour charge of £9.50 during the week and £12 at weekends at the Lanes Car Park instead of going straight to the 4 hour charges of £12 weekday and £15 weekend from the 2 hour rates.

Comments of the Chief Finance Officer:

There is a risk that the Council will not be able to discharge its legal duties under the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 without some funding of this nature and that costs would therefore simply be displaced to other budgets making the saving undeliverable. In this circumstance the council would need to make compensating savings elsewhere to offset the costs.

Conservative Group Amendments

Amendment 6

It is proposed not to sell the vehicle license plate CD1 and to switch the funding for voluntary and community organisations from the sale of this license plate to revenue reserves.

This proposal requires one off resources of £0.120m and it is proposed to reallocate £0.120m of the resources set aside to support the implementation of a local council tax benefit scheme from April 2013 set out in paragraph 3.25 starting on page 13 of the agenda.

