

GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET & COUNCIL TAX 2013/14

Conservative Group Amendments

Amendment 1

It is proposed that the following additional savings are made in the General Fund revenue budget for 2013/14:

- **To reduce Communications Team budget of £0.784m by the service pressure funding of £0.050m set out in the Resources & Finance budget summary on page 97 of the agenda.**

Chief Finance Officer comments:

This would require a reprioritisation of external communications and marketing spend and a reduction in the response times to media and public enquiries. The service has made staffing savings to contribute to the existing Management & Administration savings targets and is already reliant on one off funding for certain pieces of work such as communicating changes from welfare reform, communication with staff on pay modernisation and support for City Deal.

- **To reduce the budget for the European Team by £0.025m in 2013/14 and £0.050m in a full year. A budget of £0.088m would remain on an ongoing basis.**

Chief Finance Officer comments:

Contributions from other organisations who use the European team's services would be sought and if this were not successful the saving would equate to a reduction of 1.5 fte posts.

- **To reduce the budget for Scrutiny of £0.205m by £0.050m. This would result in approximately 20% less scrutiny activity.**
- **To reduce the Human Resources (HR) and Organisational Development budget of £3.782m by £0.050m.**

Chief Finance Officer comments:

HR have identified £0.228m savings to meet their brought forward 2013/14 savings targets. These include a reduction of 6.1 fte posts and a reduction in health and safety and training budgets of £0.050m. They also have an underlying budget pressure of over £0.300m which they have plans to fund through a further 4.6 fte staffing reductions (£0.135m) through the Voluntary Severance scheme and the remainder from

training and development and health and safety budgets. If HR were to meet in full its indicative share of the cross council service redesign savings targets it would need to find a further £0.077m bringing the total savings requirement in one year to over £0.600m. It is considered extremely unlikely that this would be deliverable at this point in time without a serious impact on effective organisational operation. A further £0.050m saving would inevitably exacerbate this further. No Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken on this proposal at this stage and in particular the cumulative effect of all of these savings. The service will still be dependent on short term funding to support pay modernisation and the additional workload generated by auto enrolment to the Pension Fund and new regulations for reporting PAYE in real time to HMRC.

- **To reduce the recurrent council tax reduction scheme discretionary fund shown in paragraph 3.37 on page 19 of the agenda by £0.100m. This would still leave £0.100m recurrent funding and £0.100m non-recurrent funding available to support the Council Tax Discretionary Fund. The call on these funds may be slightly lower due to the proposed freeze on council tax.**

Chief Finance Officer comments:

An Equalities Impact Assessment was undertaken on a lower level of discretionary funds when the Council Tax Reduction Scheme was designed.

- **To increase the target saving for the Voluntary Severance scheme from £3m to £3.5m. It will require an additional £0.5m in one-off resources to meet the estimated additional severance costs and to cover the budget up to the end of May when the posts will be deleted.**

Chief Finance Officer comments:

The Voluntary Severance scheme currently assumes approximately 100 fte reductions. This would be approximately a further 18 posts. The savings will only be realised if it is possible to achieve service redesign on this scale and if there are suitable numbers of applicants who meet the agreed criteria. This saving will be incorporated into the existing process for Equalities Impact Assessment on these proposals.

The savings proposals set out above require £0.525m revenue reserves to fund the part year saving in the European Team and the one-off resources needed for the expansion of the Voluntary Severance scheme. It is proposed that these are generated by:

- Borrowing an additional £0.525m to fund the 2013/14 General Fund Capital Investment Programme releasing an equivalent amount in general reserves.

The proposals above will generate ongoing savings of £0.800m. It is proposed that these resources will be used as follows:

- £0.763m to freeze the council tax for 2013/14 ensuring that the council qualifies for £1.219m council tax freeze grant from the Government.
- £0.037m to cover the capital financing costs associated with the £0.525m additional borrowing.

Amendment 2

It is proposed that the following additional savings are made in the General Fund revenue budget for 2013/14:

- **To reduce the Travellers Service budget of £0.571m by the additional funding of £0.050m set out in the service pressure investment area table on page 53 of the agenda.**

Chief Finance Officer comments:

There is a strong likelihood that the Travellers Service would need to incur costs above the agreed budget for security reasons as in previous years. The level will depend on the quantity of unlawful encampments.

It is proposed that these resources will be used as follows:

- Increase the funding for the Music Service by £0.050m.

Amendment 3

It is proposed that the following additional saving is made in the General Fund revenue budget for 2013/14:

- **To reduce the budget in Human Resources for council funded union officials by 50% or £0.072m per annum.**

Chief Finance Officer comments:

This would leave £0.072m of the centrally funded Trade Union support budget to be retained in order to progress pay modernisation discussions, plus the existing time off arrangements for staff undertaking union duties from services across the council.

- **To reduce the decentralised training and development budgets across the council by 5% generating a saving of £0.028m.**

Chief Finance Officer comments:

This would be in addition to the savings in training budgets already identified in the Human Resources budget saving in amendment 1.

- **To reduce the £0.750m unallocated investment in preventative services which is part of the £1.2m extra funding from the Government to the National Health Service for adult social care shown in paragraph 3.40 page 19 of the agenda by £0.017m.**

Chief Finance Officer comments:

This would require negotiation with health partners to agree a revised split of NHS funding for Social Care to use more money to protect existing services and to reduce the new investment in preventative services.

It is proposed that these resources are used as follows:

- £0.117m to reduce the cost of Business and Trader parking permits. The proposed charges are shown in the table below.

	Per Annum	3 months	Low Emission Per Annum	Low Emission 3 months
Traders				
- Current	£600	£160	£300	£80
- Proposed	£520	£140	£260	£70
Business				
- Current	£300	£85	£150	£42.50
- Proposed	£260	£75	£130	£37.50

Amendment 4

It is proposed that the following additional savings are made in the General Fund revenue budget for 2013/14:

- **To reduce the £0.750m unallocated investment in preventative services which is part of the £1.2m extra funding from the Government to the National Health Service for adult social care shown in paragraph 3.40 page 19 of the agenda by a further £0.032m making the reduction £0.049m if amendment 3 is accepted.**

Chief Finance Officer comments:

This would require negotiation with health partners to agree a revised split of NHS funding for Social Care to use more money to protect existing services and to reduce the new investment in preventative services.

- **To combine the Transport and Environment Committees resulting in a saving of £0.015m in the Democratic Services budget. The savings would arise from lower committee support and administrative costs.**

It is proposed that these resources will be used as follows:

- £0.047m to reverse the commissioning saving freezing discretionary grants to the Community and Voluntary sector at 2012/13 levels set out on page 89 of the agenda and provide for a 3% increase.

Amendment 5

It is proposed that the following additional savings are made in the General Fund revenue budget for 2013/14:

- **To reduce the £0.750m unallocated investment in preventative services which is part of the £1.2m extra funding from the Government to the National Health Service for adult social care shown in paragraph 3.40 page 19 of the agenda by a further £0.031m making the reduction £0.080m if amendments 3 and 4 are accepted.**

Chief Finance Officer comments:

This would require negotiation with health partners to agree a revised split of NHS funding for Social Care to use more money to protect existing services and to reduce the new investment in preventative services.

It is proposed that these resources will be used as follows:

- £0.031m to extend the opening hours for Norton Road (opposite Hove Town Hall) toilets to 7 days per week instead of weekends and bank holidays only and improve signage.

Amendment 6

It is proposed that the following additional savings are made in the General Fund revenue budget for 2013/14:

- **To reduce the £0.750m unallocated investment in preventative services which is part of the £1.2m extra funding from the Government to the National Health Service for adult social care shown in paragraph 3.40 page 19 of the agenda by a further £0.020m making the reduction £0.100m if amendments 3, 4 and 5 are accepted.**

Chief Finance Officer comments:

This would require negotiation with health partners to agree a revised split of NHS funding for Social Care to use more money to protect existing services and to reduce the new investment in preventative services.

It is proposed that these resources will be used as follows:

- **To establish a prize of £0.020m to be awarded to one or more secondary schools delivering the best value added for pupil performance. This is expected to deliver a focus on improved pupil attainment across the ability spectrum and improve parents' and carers' focus on this and other measures of school performance when choosing a secondary school for their children.**