

SUGGESTED AMENDMENTS TO THE ADMINISTRATION'S PROPOSED BUDGET 2022/23

Revenue Expenditure

The Conservative Group propose the following amendments;

1. A freeze in Council Tax

The Administration's proposed 1.99% increase to Council Tax would generate an additional £146,000 in revenue to the council in 2022/23, and in each subsequent year thereafter.

The Conservative Group propose a freeze on Council Tax in 2022/23, with the loss in revenue offset as follows;

2022/23 £146,000 reduction in the proposed increase to the reserve for "Support for Apprentices, Graduates, Training Posts" (see Appendix B3 p99)

2023/24 £146,000 reduction funded by future savings identified at paras 49-50 in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (p118)

2024/25 £122,000 reduction funded by future savings identified at paras 49-50 in the Medium Term Financial Strategy, and £24,000 reduction in the proposed increase to the reserve for "Support for Apprentices, Graduates, Training Posts"

2. Free parking on Council car parks for Battery Electric Vehicles

The Conservative Group propose that free parking is given to all 100% Battery Electric Vehicles (BEVs); these vehicles can be easily identified by parking wardens as many models are only available as BEVs, and only BEVs are eligible for number plates bearing a green stripe.

The cost of this concession is based on the proportion of cars on the road that are BEVs. The latest Department for Transport figures from June 2021 state there are 32.03 million cars on the road and the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) have estimated that by the end of 2021 there were 376,198 BEVs on the road; i.e. based on this, BEVs comprise approximately 1.17% of all vehicles.

Given that the council's expected income from car parking is approximately £400,000 per annum, based on the above, to give free parking to 100% BEVs would lead to a loss in annual income of approximately £5,000.

There would also be one-off costs associated with this in 2022/23, estimated at £5,000, for changes to signage and for the promotion of the concession.

The cost of the proposal (£10,000 in 2022/23 and £10,000 in each of the following two years to allow for possible increases in vehicle numbers and increases in car parking charges) to be funded from a reduction in the proposed increase to the reserve for the Green Agenda.

3. Improved access to Youth Zone facilities for young people in rural areas.

The Conservative Group propose the provision of evening transport to and from the Youth Zone for young people who live in rural areas.

The costs of providing an initial service utilising one vehicle on week nights, is approximately **£36,000**.

This is based on the hire of a vehicle for transport (£10,000), the provision of qualified staff to operate the vehicle (£20,000), and the additional costs of insurance, fuel, staff cover etc (£6,000).

The costs of operating these services on a recurring basis would be funded as follows;

2022/23 £36,000 reduction in the proposed increase to the reserve for “Investment in Play & Open Space Across the Borough”

2023/24 £36,000 reduction funded by future savings identified at paras 49-50 in the Medium term Financial Strategy (p118)

2024/25 £36,000 reduction in the proposed increase to the reserve for “Investment in Play & Open Space Across the Borough”

4. A feasibility study around developing drop-in customer-service facilities for vulnerable residents in rural areas.

The Conservative Group propose that a feasibility study is undertaken in respect of the above, to provide costed options for further consideration.

The estimated cost of such a study is **£5,000** and would be funded as a one-off cost from reduction in the proposed increase to the reserve for “Support for Apprentices, Graduates, Training Posts”

Totals

The total cost of the Conservative Group’s proposals in 2022/23 are **£197,000**, subject to the results of the feasibility study at point 4 above, and **£192,000** for each of the next two years.

It is proposed that these are funded as follows;

2022/23 £151,000 reduction in the proposed increase to the reserve for “Support for Apprentices, Graduates, Training Posts”, £10,000 reduction in the proposed increase to the reserve for the Green Agenda, and £36,000 reduction in the proposed increase to the reserve for “Investment in Play & Open Space Across the Borough”.

2023/24 £182,000 reduction funded by future savings identified at paras 49-50 in the Medium Term Financial Strategy, and £10,000 reduction in the proposed increase to the reserve for the Green Agenda.

2024/25 £122,000 reduction funded by future savings identified at paras 49-50 in the Medium Term Financial Strategy, and £24,000 reduction in the proposed increase to the reserve for “Support for Apprentices, Graduates, Training Posts”, £10,000 from a reduction in the proposed increase to the reserve for the Green Agenda, and £36,000 from a reduction in the proposed increase to the reserve for “Investment in Play & Open Space Across the Borough”.

Proposed by Councillor Samuel Chapman

Seconded by Councillor Martin Boardman