

Labour Group Amendments to the Administrations proposed 2019/20 Budget

For Consideration at Full Council 14th February 2019

Purpose of report

1. To present to Full Council two proposed amendments from the Labour group to the budget recommended by Cabinet on 31 January 2019, with officer's technical comments on the impact to the budget.

Background

2. The proposals are set out below:

Amendment 1:

Labour Group Budget Amendment Proposals 2019/20	Amendment 1	
	£	£
Remove monies from the following areas:		
Reduce investment to Property Services.	150,000	
Savings from IT Service Transformation.	29,500	
Reduce Cabinet budget to the equivalent of 9 members	18,000	
Reintroduce part of Highways saving originally proposed by the Administration to enable a risk based approach to be taken to services such as white lining and replacing iron and metal work on streets.	275,000	
Non acceptance of part of the Community Solutions Fund,	2,500	
	Total	475,000
Redirect monies to the following areas:		
Increase the Library Service budget to replace current savings to be made and recruit to some of the frozen posts	325,000	
Increase spending on Homelessness Service	100,000	
Reduce the Administration's savings to be found target for the Archives by a further £50k	50,000	
	Total	475,000

Amendment 2:

Labour Group Budget Amendment Proposals 2019/20	Amendment 2	
	£	£
Remove monies from following areas. Non acceptance of part of the Community Solutions Fund, having assumed £2,500 in Amendment 1, and replacement with alternative proposal below.	142,500	
Total		142,500
Redirect monies to following areas. Increase Councillors Divisional discretionary monies by £2,500 each to £12,500 per annum	142,500	
Total		142,500

Financial technical comments

3. The proposals balance and do not impact on the net base budget proposed in the original paper to Cabinet.
4. Amendment one requires further work to set out the detail of savings in Property and IT Service Transformation, however discussions with officers have identified that this is feasible but will have implications to the level of service delivery. The Property is reliant upon a tenant filling a current vacant area of County Hall and whilst this looks feasible no lease has been signed. A further sum would be found in Property from rescheduling of works. A review of IT customer access will be undertaken to reduce the cost which could impact on improvements to service delivery.
5. The replacement of the Community Solutions Fund for Amendment 2 would be reduced in 2020/21 to £42,500, as under the current Administration's proposals the fund reduces to £45,000 that year, with £100,000 going to reduce the Library's saving target.

Monitoring Officer technical comments

6. Amendment 1 contains a change to the members' allowances budget but the number of Cabinet members is a matter within the discretion of the Leader. If Council agrees this amendment then the Leader would need to consider the number of Cabinet members and any alternative funding if 10 Cabinet members are retained. Delivery of executive functions is a matter for the executive, within the overall budget set by Council.

7. The other proposals do not appear to impact adversely on the statutory duties of the Section 151 Officer, or any other statutory requirements set out in the Cabinet report.

Head of Paid Service technical comments

8. As Head of Paid Service, I can confirm that officers have provided independent technical advice.
9. We are aware of the full details of Labour's amendments as set out and consider the proposals are intra vires, and do not impact adversely on the Cabinet's budget recommendations as they would not change the net budget requirement, the level of Council Tax or reserves proposed.

Conclusion

9. Council is able to consider the two amendments.