

Council Briefing Note

Date: **Monday 18 February 2013**

Time: **5.00 pm**

Place: **Council Chamber, Town Hall**

For any further information please contact:

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The meeting will also be available via a webcast. This means that people may choose to watch all or part of the meeting over the internet rather than attend in person. The webcast will be available to view on the City Council's website after the meeting.

CONDUCT OF COUNCIL BUSINESS

- (1) Members should switch off mobile devices unless:-

They are expecting an urgent call, in which case they should use the vibrate mode for incoming calls and messages

They are using a mobile device to read the Council agenda

- (2) Members should treat each other with mutual respect, should listen to what Members say and should not interrupt or disrupt Member speeches or addresses or questions by members of the public.
- (3) Council Business should be conducted through the Lord Mayor.
- (4) When the Lord Mayor stands to speak, all Members should sit down.
- (5) Members when speaking, should speak directly into the microphone and refrain from moving around when speaking as this affects the audibility of their voice, and they should also consider sitting when speaking.

ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR COUNCIL ON 18 FEBRUARY 2013

Council will be asked to agree to take items 1-7 and all of the Budget related items (items 10-13), and addresses and questions associated with them, and item 22 concerning the Sites and Housing Plan, and addresses and questions associated with it at this meeting, and to take all other business at a meeting of Council on 25 February 2013.

Council is also being asked to adopt the attached procedure (page 1) of this Briefing Note) for dealing with the Budget debate.

1 MINUTES

To be signed as a correct record by the Lord Mayor. The Constitution does not permit any "matters arising"

Pages 1-56 of the main Council agenda.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Guidance on this is contained within the main agenda. Members' attention is drawn to Section 23 of the Constitution.

If Members have queries about possible interests, would they please discuss them with the Monitoring Officer, before the meeting commences.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Advance apologies for absence have been received from Councillors Mick Haines and Val Smith.

4 APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES

5 LORD MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Questions and statements may be made on any announcements by the Lord Mayor

6 SHERIFF'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Questions and statements may be made on any announcements by the Sheriff

7 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE, THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER AND THE MONITORING OFFICER

8 ADDRESSES BY THE PUBLIC

5 - 10

NOTE: for items 9 and 10 combined, the Constitution sets a time limit of 45 minutes. If there is insufficient time to take all of the questions, the Constitution says that a written response will be given.

The following members of the public have submitted requests to address Council along with the text of their address and have **up to 5 minutes each** to make their address.

- (1) Sean Feeney - Sites and Housing Plan: Inspector's report (address attached)

A response to Sean Feeney's oral address, is attached to this Briefing Note.

9 QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC

There are no questions for this meeting of Council.

10 REPORT OF THE COUNCIL'S CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER ON THE ROBUSTNESS OF THE 2013/14 BUDGET

See pages 57-66 of the main Council agenda.

CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS – ITEMS 11 TO 14

11 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2013-14 TO 2016-17 AND 2013-14 BUDGET 11 - 26

See pages 67-218 of the main Council agenda report submitted to the City Executive Board on 13th February 2013.

The following information is attached to this Briefing Note:

- (1) Extract from the minutes of the City Executive Board held on 13th February 2013;
- (2) The Liberal Democratic Group's Alternative Budget proposals;

Comment from Nigel Kennedy, Head of Finance

I have reviewed the alternative budget submitted by the Lib/ Dem Group to Council on 18th February and I confirm that the budget does balance and could be implemented. The strategy makes use of a £100k reduction in contingencies to use for one-off expenditure. The Council would normally review all such contingencies at year end and whilst the reduction only represents a 1% reduction in forecast contingencies, my Section 151 report on the Adequacy of Reserves and Balances does take into account budgeted contingencies and therefore there is a degree of risk, albeit limited, should these contingencies drop below this recommended level.

Nigel Kennedy
Head of Finance

- (3) Amendment to the Budget by Councillor Jean Fook's
- (4) The Green Group's Alternative Budget proposals

12 CORPORATE PLAN 2013-2017 27 - 28

See pages 219-276 of the main Council agenda for the report submitted to the City Executive Board on 13th February 2013.

Extract from the minutes of the City Executive Board held on 13th February 2013 attached to this Briefing Note.

13 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2013-14 29 - 30

See pages 277-304 in the main Council agenda for the report submitted to the City Executive Board on 13th February 2013.

Extract from the minutes of the City Executive Board held on 13th February 2013 attached to this Briefing Note.

14 HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2013 TO 2018 31 - 32

AND FUTURE POLICY IN RELATION TO SECURING PRIVATE SECTOR TENANCIES FOR HOMELESS HOUSEHOLDS

See pages 305-350 of the main Council agenda for the report submitted to the City Executive Board held on 13th February 2013.

Extract from the minutes of the City Executive Board held on 13th February 2013 attached to this Briefing Note.

15 CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISIONS (MINUTES) AND SINGLE EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISIONS (MINUTES)

For City Executive Board minutes of 19th December 2012 and the Single Executive Member Decision, Board Member Finance and Efficiency, minutes of 25th January 2013 – See pages 351-358 of the main Council agenda.

16 RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

No reports or recommendations were submitted.

17 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

None submitted.

18 STATEMENTS ON NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

None submitted.

19 CONSIDERATION OF PETITIONS

No petitions were submitted for consideration at this meeting.

20 MOTIONS IN NOTICE

The Constitution provides for a total time of 90 minutes for this agenda item. Members' speeches are subject to a maximum of 3 minutes.

Council is reminded that Motions must, by the Constitution, be about things the Council is responsible for or something that directly affects people in the City.

No Motions on Notice submitted.

21 REPORTS AND QUESTIONS ABOUT ORGANISATIONS THE COUNCIL IS REPRESENTED ON

22 SITES AND HOUSING PLAN: INSPECTOR'S REPORT

See pages 359-600 of the main Council agenda.

BUDGET DEBATE 2013/14 – COUNCIL, 18th FEBRUARY 2013 - TIMINGS AND PROCEDURE - GUIDANCE

(NOTE: The Lord Mayor will seek Council's agreement to deal with all the Budget items first (including any addresses and questions by members of the public on the Budget). The Budget items are defined as these items on the agenda:-

- ❖ *Item 10 – Chief Finance Officer's report*
- ❖ *Item 11 – Budget*
- ❖ *Item 12 – Corporate Plan*
- ❖ *Item 13 – Treasury Management*

1. **Administration** (Board Member, Finance and Efficiency) presents its Budget (General Fund, HRA and Capital) by way of moving the recommendation to Council from the CEB meeting on 13th February. Speakers from the Administration may speak for up to 15 minutes in total.
2. **Liberal Democrat Group** (Leader or Deputy Leader) **responds** to the Administration's Budget and **presents** its Budget proposals (as amendments to the CEB recommendation). Amendments seconded. Speakers from the Liberal Democrat Group may speak for up to 15 minutes in total. One member from the Administration may respond, speaking for up to 5 minutes.
3. **Green Group** (Leader) **responds** to the Administration's Budget and **presents** its Budget proposals (as amendments to the CEB recommendation). Amendments seconded. Speakers from the Green Group may speak for up to 15 minutes in total. One member from the Administration may respond, speaking for up to 5 minutes.
4. **Opposition budget – voting** - The Liberal Democrat and Green 'alternative budgets' in their entirety may not receive cross opposition-Party support. There may though be parts of the alternative proposals that are supported by both opposition Groups. Those elements should be identified at this stage in the debate and voted upon as separate propositions. Where individual parts of alternative budget proposals that are supported by both opposition groups involve spending, then supporting savings must also be proposed and form part of the proposition voted upon. If any individual parts are carried by Council they should then be taken out of the overall opposition budgets. Then the opposition budgets should be voted upon. All speeches to be limited to a maximum of 2 minutes.

5. **Opposition amendments** - If the opposition budgets or cross opposition Party agreed amendments are carried by Council, Council will move to a vote on the CEB recommendation in amended form. If the opposition budgets or cross opposition-Party amendments are not carried, Council will move to a vote on the CEB recommendation in unamended form. All speeches to be limited to a maximum of 2 minutes.
6. **CEB recommendation** - If the Administration Budget (ie the CEB recommendation) in unamended form is voted upon and agreed, Council will move on to the next business on the agenda.
7. **Adoption of amended CEB recommendation** - If the CEB recommendation in amended form is voted upon and agreed, Council can only reach an 'in principle' decision. The Leader will then indicate, either at the meeting or afterwards, if the Executive accepts the amendments. If it does, Council's decision then becomes a substantive one. If it does not, then the City Executive Board will meet to review the position on 21st February and Council will meet again on 21st February at 5.00 pm to hear from the Board. Council's decision on 21st February on the Budget will be final.
8. **Need for adjournment** - If neither the amendments to the CEB recommendation nor the CEB recommendation itself are carried when voted upon, Council will adjourn for an agreed period of time. After that period of time Council will resume and the Leader will announce the outcome of political group discussions. At this stage, either:-
 - Council will note that the City Executive Board and Council will need to meet again on 21st February, or
 - Amendments agreed between Groups will be voted upon, and the substantive amended CEB recommendation also voted upon.

SPEAKING ORDER AND TIMING SUMMARY

1. Administration

- ❖ Ed Turner – proposes the Administration Budget
- ❖ Another member of the Executive – formally seconds Ed Turner’s proposal
- ❖ Ed Turner (and possibly other members of the Executive on their particular areas of responsibility) – speak for up to 15 minutes

2. Liberal Democrat Group

- ❖ Jean Fooks or Mark Mills propose and formally second the Lib Dem Budget
- ❖ Jean Fooks or Mark Mills (and possibly other members of the Lib Dem Group) – speak for up to 15 minutes
- ❖ Ed Turner or another member of the Administration responds – speak for up to 5 minutes

3. Green Group

- ❖ David Williams or Craig Simmons propose and formally second the Green Budget
- ❖ David Williams or Craig Simmons (and possibly other members of the Green Group) – speak for up to 15 minutes
- ❖ Ed Turner or another member of the Administration responds – speak for up to 5 minutes

4. Opposition Budget – Speeches (Note: this part relates to the parts of the opposition budgets that do not have cross opposition Party support)

- ❖ All speeches at this part of the debate to be limited to 2 minutes maximum
- ❖ Jean Fooks or Mark Mills sum up at the end of the Lib Dem Budget debate – speak for up to 2 minutes
- ❖ Ed Turner or another member of the Administration speaks last – up to 2 minutes

- ❖ David Williams or Craig Simmons sum up at the end of the Green Budget debate – speak for up to 2 minutes
 - ❖ Ed Turner or another member of the Administration speaks last – up to 2 minutes
5. **Opposition Amendments – Speeches (Note: this part relates to any parts of the opposition budgets that do have cross opposition Party support)**
- ❖ All speeches at this part of the debate to be limited to 2 minutes maximum
 - ❖ A Lib Dem and a Green member proposes and formally seconds agreed cross opposition Party amendments
 - ❖ A Lib Dem or Green member sums up at the end of the debate on agreed cross opposition Party amendments – speak for up to 2 minutes
 - ❖ Ed Turner or another member of the Administration speaks last – up to 2 minutes
6. **Substantive Budget**
- ❖ If the Administration Budget is unamended Ed Turner may speak for up to 2 minutes and Council votes on its adoption
 - ❖ If the Administration Budget is amended a member of the opposition and then Ed Turner each speak for up to 2 minutes and Council votes on its adoption.

THEN SEE THE PROCEDURE IN 7 AND 8 OF THE NOTE IF THE ADMINISTRATION'S BUDGET IS ADOPTED IN AMENDED FORM

Agenda Item 8

Sean Feeney's address under agenda item 8 to Oxford City Council on 18 Feb 2013, speaking on agenda item 22

The Worshipful Lord Mayor, officers, and members of Council, with power comes responsibility. Decision-making elected members, I have a modest proposal: reject your officer's advice to adopt the Sites and Housing Development Plan Document.

The permanent pasture of Port Meadow is *strictly protected* under the Habitats and Species Directive as part of Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation. Three perhaps less well known hay meadows are part of the SAC: Pixey and Yarnton Meads, perhaps the world's best hay meadow, Wolvercote Meadows, and Cassington Meadows.

The JNCC, the UK's own statutory advisor, states these vegetation communities are "perhaps unique in the world". This ecology is literally irreplaceable. I have provided your solicitors with astonishing correspondence from Natural England, confirming there has been a loss of area of around one-third of the hay meadows between 2005 and 2011.

A journal article cited on your website by Dr Alison MacDonald states the very rare plant *apium repens* which grows on Port Meadow was "killed" in 2006 and the underlying cause of the fatal hydrological change "is not known but is being investigated by the Environment Agency and Dr. David Gowing, Open University".

I believe you have breached the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive duty to report "existing environmental problems" and consult the public.

Elected members, unless these problems have been taken into account, which they have not, I believe it is impossible for you, acting as the competent authority, to be certain beyond reasonable scientific doubt that this plan will not have adverse effects on the SAC.

Some things are beyond price. This plan allocates sites which will enrich the employers of some elected members (and/or those of your spouses), such as Oxford University.

The European Commission has opened a formal investigation into my complaint that the UK and its emanations, including this Council, have failed in duties to protect the SAC and avoid deterioration; infraction proceedings against the UK could follow in the Court of Justice of the European Union.

Do not repeat the mistake made by 8 out of 9 members of West Area Committee. Vote against harming Port Meadow. Vote to protect Oxford Meadows SAC. Vote *not* to adopt this environmentally harmful plan.

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Response to Mr Feeney's oral address to Council on 18th February regarding agenda item 22

Mr Feeney raises two specific concerns about whether the City Council has taken into account all 'existing environmental problems' in carrying out its duty under the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive. These concerns relate firstly to the condition of the Creeping Marshwort on Port Meadow, and secondly to the alleged loss of around one-third of the hay meadows which are part of the Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

The City Council has undertaken an assessment of the Sites and Housing Plan and published a Sustainability Appraisal, which includes a SEA, and which was informed by the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). The HRA for the Sites and Housing Plan includes an Appropriate Assessment. The HRA was undertaken to ensure that the policies in the Sites and Housing Plan do not harm sites designated as being of European importance for biodiversity, which included the Oxford Meadows SAC. This concluded that given the mitigation measures, there are not likely to be any adverse impacts on the integrity of Oxford Meadows SAC. These mitigation measures are included within the Sites and Housing Plan. As such, the duties under the SEA Directive and the Habitats Directive have been discharged.

The City Council worked on a constructive and ongoing basis with Natural England throughout the production of the Sites and Housing Plan. The City Council responded to their advice by making amendments to the Plan which included commissioning a visitor's survey to provide information to inform the HRA in relation to potential recreational impacts. During the Examination into the Sites and Housing Plan, the City Council and Natural England agreed a Statement of Common Ground which confirmed that Natural England were satisfied that any outstanding matters regarding the Plan, the HRA and SEA had been satisfactorily resolved.

The Oxford Meadows SAC consists of four SSSIs:

- Pixey and Yarnton Meads
- Cassington Meadows
- Wolvercote Meadows
- Port Meadow and Wolvercote Common and Green

Cassington Meadows and the main part of Pixey and Yarnton Meads lie within Cherwell district. Three of the SSSI's are designated as part of the SAC because of their importance as lowland hay meadows and the fourth (Port Meadow and Wolvercote Commons and Green) is designated as part of the SAC because it contains the rare plant species *apium repens* (Creeping Marshwort).

The latest available assessment regarding the condition of Port Meadow with Wolvercote Common & Green SSSI and Wolvercote Meadows SSSI is from July/August 2010. This is available on Natural England's website

<http://www.sssi.naturalengland.org.uk/Special/sssi/reportAction.cfm?report=sdrt13&category=S&reference=1000153>. It indicates that the vast majority of both SSSIs are in a favourable condition with a small area recovering. Different parts of Pixey and Yarnton Meads SSSI were assessed in July 2010 and December 2012, and were judged to be in favourable condition. The latest information on Cassington Meadows SSSI is from August 2011 and shows it to be in favourable condition.

Creeping Marshwort

Mr Feeney refers to a study that identifies the Creeping Marshwort on the Oxford Meadows SAC had been “killed”. A first hand site visit undertaken by the Oxford Rare Plants Group with an officer of the City Council in 2011, confirmed that the plant remains on Port Meadow. In fact, Natural England have advised that they believe it may be spreading, rather than declining. Mr Feeney also refers to work that the Environment Agency and Dr Gowing have been undertaking to assess why the groundwater levels at Port Meadow have been high in recent years. In connection with this, it is understood that a breach of the canal has recently been fixed by the Environment Agency, and the results of this are being awaited. Natural England has also been looking at clearing the ditches around Port Meadow, and both of these projects may help with water levels on the meadow. This work is not complete and therefore cannot inform the City Council’s assessments for the Sites and Housing Plan.

Hay Meadow

Mr Feeney appears to have misinterpreted or misunderstood the information provided to him by Natural England. They do not state that there has been a loss in the coverage of hay meadow as suggested by Mr Feeney. Rather they state that the previous higher coverage figure was the “best available estimate” at the time and that their knowledge has improved since then such that the more recent assessment “is considered to be more accurate”. This does not mean that there has been an actual reduction in hay meadow coverage. In fact, it is understood from Natural England that since 2008 the sites have been in Higher Level Stewardship land management which has resulted in them coming into much better management than before, so the sites will be improving. The December 2012 assessment concludes that the Pixey and Yarnton Meads SSSI has maintained its favourable condition. It is the City Council’s view that there has been no significant change in the evidence base which would warrant any reassessment under the HRA or SEA regulations.

Compliance with relevant Directives and Regulations

The SEA Directive and Regulations require the preparation of an environmental report identifying the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme, and of reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme. The information to be given includes, any existing

environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance such as a special area of conservation (article 5(1) of the Directive, regulations 5 and 12 of the Regulations).

The environmental report is to include the information that can reasonably be required taking into account current knowledge and methods of assessment, the contents and level of detail in the plan or programme, its stage in the decision making process and the extent to which certain matters are more appropriately assessed as different levels in that process in order to avoid duplication of the assessment (article 5(2) of the Directive, regulation 12(3) of the Regulations).

Prescribed bodies (the Countryside Agency, English Heritage, Natural England and the Environment Area) and the public are to be given an early and effective opportunity within appropriate time frames to express their opinion on the draft plan or programme and the accompanying environmental report before adoption or submission to legislative procedure (article 6(2) of the Directive, regulation 13 of the Regulations). The Council has fully complied with these requirements with such consultation having been executed at all relevant times dating back to mid 2011.

For the purposes of compliance with the Habitats Directive and Regulations the Plan has been subjected to appropriate assessment. In the form recommended for adoption the Independent Examination Inspector specifically concluded that the impact of the plan upon the natural environment has been soundly addressed noting that Natural England had no outstanding objection (paras 97 and 98).

The Independent Examination Inspector specifically considered the legality of the Sites and Housing Plan. She concluded that the Plan met all the legal requirements (para 140).

The Sites and Housing Plan is therefore considered to be fully compliant with the Habitats Directive and Regulations and the SEA Directive and Regulations.

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EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES

CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD

Wednesday 13 February 2013

86. BUDGET AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The Head of Finance submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended), which presented the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2013/14 to 2016/17 and the Council's 2013/14 Budget. The Finance and Performance Scrutiny Panel also submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended).

Resolved:-

- (1) to RECOMMEND Council to:-
 - (a) Approve the Council's General Fund Budget Requirement of £25,027,000 for 2013/14 and in doing so to approve an increase in the Band D Council Tax of 1.99% or £5.23 per annum representing a Band D Council Tax of £268.19 per annum;
 - (b) Approve the Council's General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2013-14 to 2016-17 and indicative budgets as set out in Appendices 1-5 of the report;
 - (c) Approve the Housing Revenue Account budget for 2013/14 as set out in Appendix 5 to the report and in doing so to approve an increase in average dwelling rent of 4.62% (£4.27 per week) resulting in an annual average rent of £96.83;
 - (d)
 - (i) Approve the Capital Programme for 2013/14 -2016-17 as set out in Appendix 6 to the report;
 - (ii) To vire £65,000 from underspends in the current year's Capital Programme for the purpose of providing and improving floodlights, seating and dugouts at the Oxford City Football Club's stadium at Court Place Farm;
 - (e) Approve the Fees and Charges schedule as set out in Appendix 7 to the report;
 - (f) Approve the level of exemptions and discounts on empty homes and unoccupied properties as outlined in paragraphs 18-19 of the report;
- (2) On the Scrutiny recommendations, to agree the recommendations in the following terms:-
 - (a) That the Business Rate Retention Scheme should become the focus of more robust modelling and detailed forecasting within the Medium Term Financial Strategy;

- (b) That the trading strategy should continue to have a high level of contingency held against it, noting that it was subject to periodic review and that as experience in winning and successfully delivering traded work became embedded, the risk profile associated with the income stream would reduce;
 - (c) That the opportunity to pool contingencies in the light of experience would be considered as part of next year's Medium Term Financial Plan refresh;
 - (d) That there should be a clear recognition of structural and operational needs to deliver on increased income and trading targets and that those Service Areas most affected should continue to be reviewed to ensure best practice;
 - (e) To record that equality impact assessments were required for all budget changes and that they should be available at the earliest opportunity;
 - (f) To ask that a briefing note be provided to all councillors as soon as possible outlining the use of the various pots of money within the Green Deal;
- (3) To record the Board's thanks for all the work that Directors, Service Heads and Finance staff had put in to the formulation and presentation of the Budget.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE ADMINISTRATIONS CONSULTATION BUDGET
REVENUE
£1000's

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Consultation Budget Net Budget Requirement	24,133	23,323	22,043	21,891
Changes since the consultation budget				
Additional New Homes Bonus	(124)	(124)	(124)	(124)
Pay Settlement	(507)	(1,047)	(1,309)	(1,433)
Homelessness prevention	957	957	957	957
Promotion of Economic Growth and Jobs: Officer Support	150	150	150	0
Parish council tax support grant	24			
Council tax grant shown in funding below	278	285		
Direct revenue funding	116	(241)	(53)	(241)
Additional Savings				
Reduce spending on Consultants (7%)	(50)	(50)	(50)	(50)
Reduce CEB by 3, reduce from £1.5k to £1k, half allowance to opposition group leaders	(40)	(40)	(40)	(40)
Investigate Savings in overheads due to Financial Services outsourcing	(20)	(50)	(50)	(50)
Reallocate social exclusion initiative to ward members (see below)	(50)	(50)	(50)	(50)
Review of contingencies	(100)			
Total additional savings/growth	(260)	(190)	(190)	(190)
Cumulative additional savings	(260)	(450)	(640)	(830)
Additional costs				
Raise ward member budgets £1500 to £2500	48	48	48	48
English language classes for teaching English as an additional language especially for mothers	20	20	20	20
Grants for money/debt advice	30	30	0	0
Neighbourhood planning support	20	20	20	20
Pothole repairs -	100	0	0	0
Energy advice - to reduce fuel poverty	50	50		
Area Committees reinstated	50	70	70	70
Total additional costs	318	238	158	158
Net effect on budget in-year	58	48	(32)	(32)
Cumulative effect on budget	58	106	74	42
Budget transfer to/(from) reserves	(58)	(48)	32	32
Alternative Budget Net Budget Requirement	25,027	23,303	21,664	21,050
Financed By :				
Formula Grant and specific grants	(13,880)	(12,063)	(10,254)	(9,469)
Council Tax	(11,074)	(11,240)	(11,410)	(11,581)
Collection Fund Surplus	(73)			
Total	(25,027)	(23,303)	(21,664)	(21,050)
General Fund Working Balance				
Working Balance 1st April	3,621	3,563	3,515	3,547
Transfer to/(from) balance	(58)	(48)	32	32
Working Balance 31st March	3,563	3,515	3,547	3,579

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PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE ADMINISTRATIONS CONSULTATION BUDGET
CAPITAL

	2013/14 £000'S	2014/15 £000'S	2015/16 £000'S	2016/17 £000'S
CAPITAL PROGRAM AS PER CEB 19TH DECEMBER - General Fund	21,130	9,906	4,636	3,182
HRA	19,054	21,247	14,310	22,360
Slippages from 2012/13	2,817			
Oxford Spires	200			
Town Hall	200			
Savings				
Reprioritisation of capital programme	(250)	(250)		
ADDITIONAL SPENDING				
Extensions on Council Houses	250	250		
REVISED CAPITAL PROGRAM	43,401	31,153	18,946	25,542

FINANCING				
Additional capital funding for additions to Consultation Budget	3217			
FINANCING AS PER CEB REPORT 19TH DECEMBER	40,184	31,153	18,946	25,542
REVISED CAPITAL FINANCING	43,401	31,153	18,946	25,542

Shortfall 0 0 0 0

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Suggested changes to parking charges in Cutteslowe Park and Alexandra Courts.

These are intended to be fiscally neutral and at the same time to result in much better conditions for residents near and visitors to Cutteslowe Park, while correcting an anomaly in the charging structures at Alexandra Courts compared to the Summertown and Ferry Pool car parks

I am basing my assumptions on the usage and income data provided to Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee on November 5th 2012.

At present there is a charge of 50p for one hour's parking in Cutteslowe park and although it is a small charge, it nevertheless makes some people park in the surrounding roads instead. The County Council are proposing to allow free parking for up to two hours in the roads around, which is likely to mean that parking will continue here for short-time park visitors. Residents are asking that this time be reduced to one hour – to reduce on-street parking by park users – but this would be almost totally eliminated if people could park in the Park for one hour free of charge.

Usage and income for 0-1 hours

at Harbord Road 1/9/11 to 30/6/12:	at the A40 car park
6082 vehicles for £3041	2013 vehicles for £1006.50.

Total income from people parking for less than an hour £4047.50.

Charges for longer stays both here and at Alex Courts are

1-3 hours £1
3-5 hours £2
5-24 hours at Alex Courts - £10, Cutteslowe Park charge of £2 covers 5-24 hours.

Proposed new charges 2013/4

Cutteslowe and Alex Courts 50p, £1.05 and £2.10, meaning no increase in the 0-1 hour charge.

Charges at Summertown and Ferry Pool car parks are proposed for 2013/4:

0-1 hour £1.10
1-2 hours £1.60
2-3 hours £3.10
3-4 hours £5.10
4-8+hours £12.80

Alex Courts spaces are well-used but mostly by shoppers and people working in Summertown. It would be possible to allow tennis court users to have a discounted rate if the 0-1 and 1-2 hour charges were increased to much closer to Summertown levels.

Alex Courts usage and income for the period 1/9/11 to 30/6/12

0-1 hour	1024	-	£512	increasing to	£512
1-3 hours	2417	-	£2417	"	£2537.85
3-5 hours	1036		£2072	"	£2175.60
5-24 hours	14				i.e. negligible

Total income for people parking up to 5 hours = £5001 at 2012/3 rates, and £5225.45.

Assuming that the usage is distributed as follows and using the Summertown car park charges for 2013/4

0-1 hour	1024	1024x £1.10 =	£1126.40
1-2 hours	1517	1517x £1.60 =	£2427.20
2-3 hours	900	900x £3.10 =	£2790.00
3-4 hours	800	800x £5.10 =	£4080.00
4-5 hours	236	236x £12.80 =	£ 3020.80

Assuming that in fact no-one would park for more than 4 hours, as they tend not to do at Summertown ,
The total income would be £10,423.60 compared with the £5225.45 if charges were only raised to 2013/4 Cutteslowe park rates, i.e. an extra £5198.15.

This compares with the loss of the income from having a free hour at Cutteslowe of £4047.50, i.e. income increased by £1150.65.

Even allowing for some discounts for tennis players and a possible reduction in parking at Alex Courts, the suggested changes would be at the very least fiscally neutral.

This comparison is based on the income and usage for the same period provided by officers for V&P , and would of course be different for a different time period, but the relative advantage of the new regime at Alex Courts would be much the same.

I propose that the charges at Alex Courts should be raised to be the same as in the two Summertown car parks.

It would be possible to raise a similar income as would be lost at Cutteslowe by charging slightly less at Alex Courts eg £1, £1.50, £2.50, £4 if people felt that this would be a good idea. This would be £8749.50, i.e. an extra £3524.05 which is only £523.45 less than the loss from the free hour at Cutteslowe.

Summary - Green Group Revenue Budget 2013-2014

We present here a four year balanced budget amendment which builds on the consultation budget - rather than seeks to fundamentally change it. We may not share the same priorities as the administration, but we continue to support the spending on education, youth work and elderly people's services that have been woefully under-funded by the County Council. Although the City Council can never plug the gap left by County cuts, it is important that we try and do what we can within our own limited resources whilst not undermining the quality of the valuable services that we have historically delivered.

Our budget takes advantage of the fact that we would reduce the size of the capital programme by £4.0m (by refurbishing both BBL and TC pools rather than building a costly new pool) and takes some (£1.5m) of the predicted revenue underspend destined for the capital fund and instead spends this money on one-off items, reductions in fees and charges and grants. The underspend is currently expected to comfortably exceed £1.5m, but if it doesn't then we accept that we would need to tailor our spending plans accordingly (although note that the Council would still remain better off overall as a result of our reductions in Capital Spend).

On top of this we have made various ongoing savings in CEB allowances, increased car parking and P & R charges and made other modest cuts to fund our on-going revenue priorities such as the return to Area Committees. We have prudently NOT included energy cost reductions from our capital spending on renewables.

Note that our budget amendment does not carry with it any increased budgetary risk (we are actually spending less overall) - but does shift the risk from capital to revenue. We are spending less on capital items - but more on revenue items. We have, however, retained flexibility by focusing our spending on one-off items or fees & charges that can quickly be altered should the financial situation take a turn for the worse.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE ADMINISTRATIONS CONSULTATION BUDGET

GREEN GROUP

REVENUE

£1000's

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Consultation Budget Net Budget Requirement	24,133	23,323	22,043	21,891
Changes since the consultation budget				
Additional New Homes Bonus	(124)	(124)	(124)	(124)
Pay Settlement	(507)	(1,047)	(1,309)	(1,433)
Homelessness prevention	957	957	957	957
Promotion of Economic Growth and Jobs: Officer Support	150	150	150	0
Parish council tax support grant	24			
Council tax grant shown in funding below	278	285		
Direct revenue funding	116	(241)	(53)	(241)
Additional Savings/growth				
Reverse some of surplus revenue transfer to capital	(1,500)	0	0	0
Limit SRA allowance on CEB to 5 Councillors and reduce remainder by £2k each	(45)	(45)	(45)	(45)
Increase parking charges by additional 1%	(60)	(60)	(60)	(60)
Park & Ride increase to £2.50 and £1.00 after 8pm (aligned with City Centre Car Park 1hr rate & times) - then RPI thereafter - currently free after 6:30pm (retain concessions - figure incl resistance)	(150)	(165)	(180)	(195)
Additional 5% cut to Crime Strategy/CCTV budget (currently £480k)	(25)	(25)	(25)	(25)
Reduction in size of media & communications	(30)	(30)	(30)	(30)
stop Your Oxford (direct savings = £8k plus staff time savings reflected above)	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)
Member grants to be delivered via area ctte budgets (see spend below)	(122)	(122)	(122)	(122)
introduction of late night licence fees	(25)	(50)	(50)	(50)
other listed fees & penalty charges increased (courses, gaming, clubs, premises, taxis, etc)	(5)	(5)	(5)	(5)
Agree all CEB New Revenue Proposals except				
Extra river bank enforcement	(22)	(22)	(22)	(22)
Events (halve proposed annual grant)	(25)	(25)	(25)	(25)
Total additional savings/growth	(2,017)	(557)	(572)	(587)
Cumulative additional savings	(2,017)	(2,574)	(3,146)	(3,733)
Additional costs				
reinstate area committee budgets, area planning & staffing	250	250	250	250
keep Temple Cowley Pool open	0	300	400	400
Amendment to grants budget (Cowley Rd Carnival)	50	0	0	0
phase-in free green waste collection (fees & charges) - half price in Y1 & 2, free Y3 & 4	160	168	352	368
subsidise pest control services (fees & charges)	30	30	30	30
fund for installation of grit bins at critical spots	20			
improve neighbourhood planning notifications	20	20	20	20
contribution to Dawson Street Square, off Cowley Road	20			
install bike parking, St. Clements St	15			
subsidise County cuts to Day Centre in Oxford	15	15	15	15
subsidise ESOL language training	5	5	5	5
out-of-centre retail manager (fundraise in Y2 to cover cost)	35	15	0	0
student letting agency (grant fund)	20			
Freeze fees for accommodation assessments and work permit application	1	1	1	1
Total additional costs	641	804	1,073	1,089
Net effect on budget in-year	(1,376)	247	501	502
Cumulative effect on budget	(1,376)	(1,129)	(628)	(126)
Alternative budget transfer to/(from) reserves	1,376	(247)	(501)	(502)
Alternative Budget Net Budget Requirement	25,027	23,303	21,664	21,050
Financed By :				
Formula Grant and specific grants	(13,880)	(12,063)	(10,254)	(9,469)
Council Tax	(11,074)	(11,240)	(11,410)	(11,581)
Collection Fund Surplus	(73)			
Total	(25,027)	(23,303)	(21,664)	(21,050)
General Fund Working Balance				
Working Balance 1st April	3,621	4,997	4,750	4,249
Transfer to/(from) balance	1,376	(247)	(501)	(502)
Working Balance 31st March	4,997	4,750	4,249	3,747

Summary - Green Group Capital Budget 2013-14

By cancelling the proposed new pool at BBL we free up £7.5m of capital expenditure. This is reduced by around £1.5m by the loss of revenue from sale of the Temple Cowley Pool land. Of the remaining £6m, we would spend £2.6m on refurbishing the existing pools at TCP and BBL which would substantially extend their lives.

This leaves £3.4m of which £1.5m is used to offset the anticipated revenue contribution (that we have retained in the revenue budget). £1m of the remainder is held back to fund any abortive costs from cancelling the BBL pool.

Of the remaining £0.9m, we put £200k towards purchasing Warneford Meadow for the people of Oxford and £500k to further boost funding of renewable energy installations on Council buildings which will generate energy savings that would appear in the revenue budget (which we have conservatively NOT shown).

The residual £71k we would leave in the Capital Reserve adding to the size of the contingency.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE ADMINISTRATIONS CONSULTATION BUDGET CAPITAL - GREEN GROUP

	2013/14 £000'S	2014/15 £000'S	2015/16 £000'S	2016/17 £000'S
CAPITAL PROGRAM AS PER CEB 19TH DECEMBER - General Fund	21,130	9,906	4,636	3,182
HRA	19,054	21,247	14,310	22,360
Slippages from 2012/13	2,817			
Oxford Spires	200			
Town Hall	200			
Savings				
BBL pool extn	(7,500)			
ADDITIONAL SPENDING				
Repair & refurbishment to Temple Cowley Pool	2429			
Repairs to existing BBL pool	300			
Support to purchase Warneford Meadow from NHS	200			
Contribution to Low Carbon Oxford solar on Council buildings	500			
REVISED CAPITAL PROGRAM	39,330	31,153	18,946	25,542

FINANCING				
Additional capital funding for additions to Consultation Budget	3,217			
FINANCING AS PER CEB REPORT 19TH DECEMBER	40,184	31,153	18,946	25,542
Reduced use of capital Receipts	-4,071			
REVISED CAPITAL FINANCING	39,330	31,153	18,946	25,542

Capital Receipts	
Reduced receipts used on BBL pool	-7500
Lost receipt from sale of pool	1500
Receipts used on new initiatives shown above	3429
Replacement of underspends transferred from revenue	1500
Payment towards abortive costs of pool	1000
Leaving the following amount unallocated - to be put in Capital Reserve	71

Summary - Green Group HRA Budget Amendment - Green Group

We deplore the proposed 'inflation plus' increases to Council rents and charges at a time when Council tenants are under seige from the benefit cap and bedroom tax. The Council is no longer required by central government to follow the so-called convergence formula (aimed at converging private and public sector rents) and many Council's have now abandoned this.

The Council's proposed 4.6% average rent increase on top of service charge increases is going to hit tenants hard. Note that the Council profits from Council house rents earning £m's more than is required to maintain the housing stock.

The surplus is used to support the Council's ambitious capital programme, to be used to fund new housing and other new projects. We believe that it is possible to find other means of funding these worthy projects (by borrowing against future rental income, for example) lightening the burden on today's hard-pressed Council tenants.

Such a radical re-think of our capital funding programme is beyond the scope of a budget amendment, but to indicate what is possible within the current budget framework, we have reversed the proposed service charge increase.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE ADMINISTRATIONS CONSULTATION BUDGET HRA	GREEN GROUP			
	2013/14 £000'S	2014/15 £000'S	2015/16 £000'S	2016/17 £000'S
Reduce Service Charge increase (we still support better redistribution of this)	100	100	100	100
Revised Total Income	(42,718)	(44,437)	(46,478)	(48,316)
Total Expenditure (unchanged)	34,480	35,039	35,422	35,832
Net Operating Expenditure/(Income)	(8,238)	(9,398)	(11,056)	(12,484)
Total Appropriations	11,467	10,709	6,541	15,714
ANNUAL (SURPLUS) / DEFICIT	3,229	1,311	(4,515)	3,230
Opening Balance	(8,799)	(5,570)	(4,259)	(8,774)
Closing Balance	(5,570)	(4,259)	(8,774)	(5,544)

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EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES

CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD

Wednesday 13 February 2013

87. CORPORATE PLAN – CONSULTATION OUTCOME

The Head of Policy, Culture and Communications submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which informed the Board of the consultation on the Corporate Plan 2013-2017.

Resolved to:-

- (1) RECOMMEND Council to agree the Corporate Plan 2013-2017;
- (2) To note that the Plan contained new text and targets in the light of consultation;
- (3) Delegate authority to the Head of Policy, Culture and Communications to make minor textual amendments where necessary in preparation for formal publication of the Corporate Plan.

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EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES

CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD

Wednesday 13 February 2013

88. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2013/14

The Head of Finance submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which presented the Treasury Management Strategy for 2013/14 with the Prudential Indicators for 2013/14 – 2016/17.

Resolved to RECOMMEND Council to:-

- (1) Adopt and approve the Prudential Indicators and limits for 2013/14 to 2016/17 as set out in paragraphs 62 to 86 of the report;
- (2) Approve the Minimum Revenue Provision statement at paragraphs 25-27 of the report which sets out the Council's policy on the repayment of debt;
- (3) Approve the Treasury Management Strategy 2013/14 and the treasury prudential indicators at paragraphs 17-39 of the report;
- (4) Approve the Investment Strategy for 2013/14 contained in the Treasury Management Strategy and the detailed investment criteria as set out in paragraphs 40-60 of and Appendix 1 to the report.

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EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES

CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD

Wednesday 13 February 2013

91. HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY – REVIEW OUTCOME

The Head of Housing submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which set out a revised Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan for 2013-18 following consultation, and which asked the Board to review policy following the commencement of additional powers related to the Council fulfilling its duties by securing a private sector tenancy for statutory homeless households.

Resolved to:-

- (1) RECOMMEND Council to adopt the Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan 2013-18 comprised in the report;
- (2) To note the commencement of additional powers introduced by virtue of the Localism Act 2011 related to Council fulfilling its duties by securing a private sector tenancy for statutory homeless households (paragraphs 8-11 of the report refers) and:-
 - (a) To approve the policy as outlined in Appendix D to the report as Council policy;
 - (b) To delegate authority to the Head of Housing to implement the policy together with any minor changes that may come forward due to any subsequent revisions or clarifications to Government guidance and any ensuing case law.

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