

## Briefing note and supplementary papers

Date: **Wednesday 21 February 2024**

Time: **5.00 pm**

Place: **Council Chamber - Oxford Town Hall**

The Council agenda, reports, this briefing note, and any other supplementary papers should be considered together.

This briefing note forms part of the papers to be considered at the Council meeting. It contains additional information; councillors' questions, public addresses; and amendments to motions.

All papers for this meeting can be accessed through the council's website.

**For further information** please contact:

Jonathan Malton, Committee and Member Services Manager,

📞 01865 529117

✉️ [democraticservices@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@oxford.gov.uk)

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*All public papers are available from the calendar link to this meeting once published*

# Briefing note

Information for councillors and additional papers to be considered.

		Pages
<b>5</b>	<b>Public addresses and questions that relate to matters for decision at this meeting</b>	
	None.	
<b>Budget and Council Tax</b>		
<b>9</b>	<b>Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 to 2026/27 and 2024/25 Budget</b>	5 - 6
	<b>Appendix 7 Page 216</b>	
	The fees and charges for a number of car parking charges have been shown in Appendix 7 of the report to be presented to Council as the raw calculation of the percentage increase, which has not been rounded up to the nearest 10p or 50p, so called 'pretty pricing'.	
	The attached document shows the effected car parks and the correct proposed charges.	
	Nigel Kennedy	
	Head of Financial Services (Section 151 Officer)	
<b>9a</b>	<b>Additional recommendations from Cabinet and corrections to the published budget</b>	7 – 9
<b>9b</b>	<b>Alternative budget proposals - Liberal Democrat Group amendments</b>	11 – 15
<b>9c</b>	<b>Alternative budget proposals - Green Group amendments</b>	17 – 21
<b>9d</b>	<b>Alternative budget proposals - Independent Group</b>	23 – 25
<b>9e</b>	<b>Individual amendments to the budget</b>	27 - 37

**This briefing note is published as a supplement to the agenda and should be considered along with the agenda; reports; and other supplementary papers.**

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Oxford Direct Services Fees & Charges 2024/25

		2023/24 Charge	2024/25 Charge	Increase/ (Decrease)	Increase/ (Decrease)
		£	£	£	%
<b><u>Car Parks Charges</u></b>					
<b><u>Standard rated &amp; inclusive of VAT</u></b>					
<b>City Centre Car Parks</b>					
<b>Oxpens Car Park</b>					
Monday to Sundays (08:00 - 20:00)					
0 - 1 Hours	3.90	4.10	0.20	5.13	
1 to 2 Hours	5.00	5.30	0.30	6.00	
2 to 3 Hours	6.10	6.50	0.40	6.56	
3 to 4 Hours	8.30	8.80	0.50	6.02	
4 to 5 Hours	10.50	11.10	0.60	5.71	
5 to 6 Hours	12.70	13.40	0.70	5.51	
6 to 12 Hours	20.40	21.50	1.10	5.39	
12 - 24 Hours	28.10	29.60	1.50	5.34	
All other times	4.40	4.70	0.30	6.82	
<b>Worcester Street Car Park</b>					
Monday to Friday (08:00 - 20:00)					
0 - 1 Hours	5.00	5.30	0.30	6.00	
1 to 2 Hours	7.20	7.60	0.40	5.56	
2 to 3 Hours	10.50	11.10	0.60	5.71	
3 to 4 Hours	13.20	13.90	0.70	5.30	
4 to 6 Hours	20.40	21.50	1.10	5.39	
6 to 8 Hours	31.40	33.00	1.60	5.10	
8+ Hours	39.10	41.10	2.00	5.12	
All other times	5.00	5.30	0.30	6.00	

Saturday & Sunday (08:00 - 20:00)					
0 - 1 Hours	5.50	5.80	0.30	5.45	
1 to 2 Hours	8.60	9.10	0.50	5.81	
2 to 3 Hours	11.60	12.20	0.60	5.17	
3 to 4 Hours	14.30	15.10	0.80	5.59	
4 to 6 Hours	22.60	23.80	1.20	5.31	
6 to 8 Hours	33.60	35.30	1.70	5.06	
8+ Hours	39.10	41.10	2.00	5.12	
All other times	5.50	5.80	0.30	5.45	
<b>Gloucester Green Car Park</b>					
Monday to Friday (08:00 - 20:00)					
0 - 1 Hours	5.00	5.30	0.30	6.00	
1 to 2 Hours	7.20	7.60	0.40	5.56	
2 to 3 Hours	10.50	11.10	0.60	5.71	
3 to 4 Hours	13.20	13.90	0.70	5.30	
4 to 6 Hours	20.40	21.50	1.10	5.39	
6 to 8 Hours	31.40	33.00	1.60	5.10	
8+ Hours	39.10	41.10	2.00	5.12	
All other times	5.00	5.30	0.30	6.00	
Saturday & Sunday (08:00 - 20:00)					
0 - 1 Hours	5.50	5.80	0.30	5.45	
1 to 2 Hours	8.60	9.10	0.50	5.81	
2 to 3 Hours	11.60	12.20	0.60	5.17	
3 to 4 Hours	14.30	15.10	0.80	5.59	
4 to 6 Hours	22.60	23.80	1.20	5.31	
6 to 8 Hours	33.60	35.30	1.70	5.06	
8+ Hours	39.10	41.10	2.00	5.12	
All other times	5.50	5.80	0.30	5.45	
<b>Other Off Street Car Parks</b>					

# Agenda Item 9a

## Labour budget amendment, February 2024

Taking on board the feedback stemming from other amendments, and in the spirit of co-operation in which Oxford City Council takes pride, we would like to propose the following amendment to the administration budget as agreed by cabinet:

Item	2024/5	2025/6	2026/7	2027/8
Remove CTR saving		146	146	146
Disposal of assets not on display and use proceeds to reduce prudential borrowing		(20)	(20)	(20)
Amend cabinet allowances through reduced membership or variations to SRAs		(16)	(16)	(16)
Increase target saving from communities review towards previous level		(110)	(110)	(110)

The disposal of assets will require a subsequent decision by Cabinet; any amendment to allowances will be based upon a decision of Council following a recommendation from the Independent Review Panel, so these matters are not in the competence of the budget council meeting alone.

Councillor Ed Turner, Deputy Leader, and Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management.

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**Head of Finance – Section 151 Comments on Labour Group Amendment for 2024-25 to 2027/28**

**Date 15-02-24**

I have reviewed the amendment submitted by the Labour Group to their General Fund Revenue budget and confirm it is arithmetically correct and could be implemented if voted through.

**Nigel Kennedy**

**Head of Financial Services (Section 151 Officer)**

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## **Liberal Democrat Group Budget Amendment Explanatory Text**

**Proposer: Chris Smowton**

**Seconder: Laurence Fouweather**

This amendment seeks to prevent the budget's intended £146k/yr cuts to Council Tax Reduction (CTR) support, drawing its funding from a roughly 50/50 mixture of one-off and ongoing savings.

We believe CTR is an important programme to continue to support at the same level as at present, because the proposed level of savings, equivalent to reducing the 100% CTR band to 85%, would in that scenario expose households earning less than £167/week to an additional tax liability of around £300 a year or £25 a month. Even for a household earning the maximum possible earnings for the 100% band, that is a 3.5% fall in their gross income, and may be problematic for households already in a very difficult financial position to adapt to. We also note that most of the new liability does not even accrue to the City Council, so cannot be used by ourselves to provide corresponding compensatory services.

We believe it is appropriate to fund this programme from a mixture of one-off and ongoing savings because while CTR is an ongoing programme and so must have a firm financial underpinning, we are also at a highly unusual point in British history, facing ongoing aftershocks from the financial crisis, Brexit and the COVID pandemic, and with Local Authorities nationwide issuing Section 114 notices at a historically remarkable rate. It therefore seems likely that the next government, which will have been in place for at least 2 years by the end of the MTFP, must take action to redress local government funding in general.

We take a one-off saving from the sale of a hunting trophy that has a high (£200k before cost of sale estimated at £15k) value, but is of no historical note and is in any event currently inaccessible to members of the public. We also recover £16k added to the budget since the Budget for Consultation for flowerbeds in Frideswide Square; we view this as an addition that would be nice to have, but of a very different category of urgency and importance compared to CTR support.

We take ongoing savings by cutting the cost of our own operations, reducing the cabinet SRA budget from 10-person equivalent to 8, and reducing our two deputy leaders to one. The cabinet has in any event been operating with less than 10 members for the past few months, and we further note that from year 2 onwards the council may opt to adopt other approaches (subject to an IRP) to allocating the reduced SRA budget, such as allocating less per cabinet member or tiering cabinet roles into larger and smaller briefs attracting different SRAs. We note just this reduction in SRA spending covers just over 18% of the funding put back into the CTR scheme.

Finally we take the balance of funding by restoring some (£55k/yr) of the savings from the Community Services budget that were intended in the Budget for Consultation. We believe this is a better choice than reducing CTR because we as a council have the administrative resources and collective will to examine our Community Services offer in great detail and identify the least impactful cuts, lever in outside funding, or otherwise ameliorate impact. By contrast the individual families affected by a CTR cut must each individually re-plan for their reduced income, and some of them will surely lack the available time or knowledge to do so effectively. We also note that a detailed review of Community Services is necessary

regardless under the Administration's plan for £350k/yr savings from this budget, and that our ask of £405/yr is still significantly less than the £500k/yr savings originally signed off in the Budget for Consultation.

REVENUE

GROUP AMENDMENTS TO THE ADMINISTRATIONS CONSULTATION BUDGET

AMENDMENT 1

REVENUE

£1000's

	2024-25 £000'S	2025-26 £000'S	2026-27 £000'S	2027-28 £000'S
<b>Consultation Budget Net Budget Requirement</b>	28,536	26,998	27,886	28,801
<b>Changes since the consultation budget</b>				
<b>Sub total changes since the consultation budget</b>	(79)	110	(778)	(907)
<b><u>Additional Savings proposed</u></b>				
	(10)	(2)	(2)	(2)
Eliminate Frideswide Planting				
	(185)			
Sell Morrell Trophy				
		(55)	(55)	(55)
Restore savings sought from the Community Services budget				
Cabinet SRAs down to 8	(16)	(16)	(16)	(16)
Deputy leaders down to 1		(5)	(5)	(5)
<b>Total additional savings proposed</b>	(211)	(78)	(78)	(78)
<b>Cumulative additional savings</b>	(211)	(289)	(367)	(445)
<b><u>Additional costs proposed</u></b>				
Eliminate Council Tax Reduction savings		146	146	146
<b>Total additional costs proposed</b>	0	146	146	146
<b><u>Net effect on budget in-year of proposals</u></b>	(211)	68	68	68
<b><u>Cumulative effect on budget</u></b>	(211)	(143)	(75)	(7)
Additional Budget transfer to/(from) reserves consultation budget	(705)	(606)	281	409
Additional Budget transfer to/(from) reserves from amendments	211	(68)	(68)	(68)
Transfer from/(to) working balance				
<b>Alternative Budget Net Budget Requirement</b>	<b>27,752</b>	<b>26,502</b>	<b>27,389</b>	<b>28,303</b>
<b>Financed By :</b>				
Council Tax- Consultation Budget	(16,014)	(16,496)	(16,992)	(17,504)
Retained Business Rates - Consultation Budget	(11,175)	(10,006)	(10,397)	(10,799)
New Homes Bonus	(352)	0	0	0
Revenue Support Grant	(211)			
<b>Total</b>	<b>(27,752)</b>	<b>(26,502)</b>	<b>(27,389)</b>	<b>(28,303)</b>
<b>(surplus)/deficit</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>General Fund Working Balance</b>				
Working Balance 1st April	(3,856)	(3,856)	(3,856)	(3,856)
Transfer (to)/from balance	0	0	0	0
Working Balance 31st March	(3,856)	(3,856)	(3,856)	(3,856)

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## **Head of Finance – Section 151 Comments on Lib Dem Group Alternative Budget for 2024-25 to 2027/28**

**Date 15-02-24**

I have reviewed the budget amendments submitted by the Lib Dem party as an alternative to the Labour Administrations budget and whilst they are arithmetically correct there are some items worthy of note:

### **Group Amendment**

#### **The General Fund Revenue**

The budget allows for an additional £7k transfer to reserves over the 4 year period.

- **Sell Morrell Trophy – (£185k)** The Council has yet to find documentation in relation to this trophy. The sale will generate one off income which has been estimated at the current market value less estimated auction costs and insurance against any covenants

#### **Additional costs**

- **Council tax reduction** - The elimination of the proposed savings to the council tax reduction scheme would result in an increased cost pressure of £146k per annum.

**Capital Budget** - There are no proposed changes to the Administrations Capital Budget

**The HRA** – There are no proposed changes to the Administrations HRA Budget

**Nigel Kennedy**

**Head of Financial Services (Section 151 Officer)**

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## **Green Group Budget Amendment Narrative**

**Proposer: Councillor Chris Jarvis**

**Seconded: Councillor Lois Muddiman**

The Green Group would like to thank officers for the huge amount of work that has gone into the preparation of this year's budget, particularly in the context of the immense pressure on the council's finances.

In this council, we have often discussed the scale of the challenge that pressure poses. Since 2010, local government has been under assault from central government, with austerity having made it all but impossible for councils like ours to deliver the kind of public services we would want to and the transformation in peoples' lives that we should be able to. This has only been compounded by 14 years of reckless economic policy which has driven increased pressure on services. The cost of living crisis and a lack of protection for private renters driving a homelessness crisis and a rising need for Temporary Accommodation is the most pressing example of this, but it is only the latest.

Despite this context, it is also true that local government does have powers at its disposal to alleviate poverty, reduce inequality and reduce the impacts of central government policies on residents in our city. This council has a strong history of doing just this in a multitude of ways.

This year, the Green Group's amendment to the budget and MTFP has that drive to reduce inequality and disadvantage at its heart.

We are proposing to stop the reduction in the Council Tax Reduction Scheme proposed as part of the administration's budget. This scheme is a crucial lifeline for many of the people in our city who are struggling the most, and it should be preserved.

Alongside this, we are also seeking to stop other measures in the budget and MTFP which we believe will adversely affect the least well off in our city. This includes dropping planned increases in bulky waste collection and the concessionary rate for garden waste bins. Both of these savings proposed as part of the administration's budget are small, and yet would add an unnecessary financial burden on residents, while risking negative environmental impacts including increased burning of green waste and fly tipping.

We also believe that the proposed cuts to voluntary sector grants will have a negative impact on our city, and so our budget amendment proposes to reinstate £150,000 into this budget line across three years.

In addition to seeking to reverse elements of the administration's proposals which we think will hit those who have the least the hardest, our budget amendment is also proposing new spending dedicated to tackling inequality and alleviating poverty in our city. We are proposing to introduce a discretionary hardship fund - money that can be used by the council in a targeted way to provide some alleviation for the cost of living crisis for those in our city who have been hit hardest. This fund would need to be established by Cabinet, and we have intentionally left this as a centrally held fund which could be distributed to service areas as needed, in order to give Cabinet sufficient flexibility on its use, in recognition of the unpredictability in the economy at present and the way in which the cost of living crisis is impacting people continues to change. While the amount of money we are proposing to allocate here is small, its impacts could nonetheless be significant.

We are proposing to finance these additional costs on the budget in the following ways:

- Introducing charging for the first hour at park and rides
- Introducing a greater increase on car parks from year 2 of the MTFP
- Introducing a greater increase on park and ride charges from year 3 of the MTFP
- Reducing the number of cabinet special responsibility allowances from 10 to 8
- Removing the non-statutory deputy leader
- Removing the proposed investment in flower beds at Frideswide Square proposed since the consultation budget
- Selling the Morrell Trophy

Changes to special responsibility allowances, the sale of assets and proposing to remove investment in flower beds are subject to either consultation with the IRP or Cabinet decision and therefore we are proposing reductions in the budgets for these items, with these being the recommended areas from which the savings can be achieved.

While these changes would lead to a slightly greater draw on reserves in the early years of the MTFP, across its full four years, our proposals would lead to a small net increase in reserves.

REVENUE

GROUP AMENDMENTS TO THE ADMINISTRATIONS CONSULTATION BUDGET

REVENUE

£1000's

	2024-25 £000'S	2025-26 £000'S	2026-27 £000'S	2027-28 £000'S
<b>Consultation Budget Net Budget Requirement</b>	28,536	26,998	27,886	28,801
<b>Changes since the consultation budget</b>				
<b>Sub total changes since the consultation budget</b>	(79)	110	(778)	(907)
<b><u>Additional Savings proposed</u></b>				
Remove first hour free at park and rides		(10)	(10)	(10)
10% increase on car parks from Y2		(160)	(160)	(160)
Additional 25p on park and ride charges from Y3			(80)	(80)
Reduce cabinet allowances from 10 to 8	(16)	(16)	(16)	(16)
Removal of non-statutory deputy leader		(5)	(5)	(5)
Removal of Frideswide Square Flowerbeds investment	(10)	(2)	(2)	(2)
Sale of Morrell Trophy		(185)		
<b>Total additional savings proposed</b>	(26)	(378)	(273)	(273)
<b>Cumulative additional savings</b>	(26)	(405)	(678)	(952)
<b><u>Additional costs proposed</u></b>				
Reverse reduction to Council Tax Reduction Scheme		146	146	146
Reduction in cut to voluntary sector grants		50	50	50
Hardship relief fund	150	100		
Removal of bulky waste increase	10	10	10	10
Removal of concessionary garden waste increase	16	16	16	16
<b>Total additional costs proposed</b>	176	322	222	222
<b><u>Net effect on budget in-year of proposals</u></b>	<u>150</u>	<u>(56)</u>	<u>(51)</u>	<u>(51)</u>
<b><u>Cumulative effect on budget</u></b>	<u>150</u>	<u>93</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>(10)</u>
Additional Budget transfer to/(from) reserves	(705)	(606)	281	409
Additional Budget transfer to/(from) reserves from amendments	(150)	56	51	51
Transfer from/(to) working balance				
<b>Alternative Budget Net Budget Requirement</b>	<b>27,752</b>	<b>26,502</b>	<b>27,389</b>	<b>28,303</b>
<b>Financed By :</b>				
Council Tax- Consultation Budget	(16,014)	(16,496)	(16,992)	(17,504)
Retained Business Rates - Consultation Budget	(11,175)	(10,006)	(10,397)	(10,799)
New Homes Bonus	(352)	0	0	0
Revenue Support Grant	(211)			
<b>Total</b>	<b>(27,752)</b>	<b>(26,502)</b>	<b>(27,389)</b>	<b>(28,303)</b>
<b>(surplus)/deficit</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>(0)</b>
<b>General Fund Working Balance</b>				
Working Balance 1st April	(3,856)	(3,856)	(3,856)	(3,856)
Transfer (to)/from balance	0	0	0	0
Working Balance 31st March	(3,856)	(3,856)	(3,856)	(3,856)

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## Head of Finance – Section 151 Comments on Green Group Alternative Budget for 2024-25 to 2027/28

Date 15-02-24

I have reviewed the budget submitted by the Green party as an alternative to the Labour Administrations budget and whilst it is arithmetically correct there are some areas worthy of note.

### The General Fund Revenue

The budget allows for additional transfer £10k to reserves over the 4 year period.

- **Remove first hour free parking at park and rides.** – The Council would normally try to align park and ride charges with the County Council although parking for one hour is more likely to be site specific. The modelling allows for a 50% resistance factor since whether hourly tickets will continue to be purchased is unknown.
- **Increase off street parking by 10% from April 2025.** – This increase in parking charges would be off the back of a 5% increase in 2024-25 which is already in the budget. This significant rise over the 2 year period may lead to higher than average resistance which has been factored into the estimated income. Charges are approaching £6 per hour which is stretching the bounds of elasticity, raising the risk of not securing the income this is moreso in future years where the base budget is uncertain.
- **Park and Ride charges-** Such charges would normally be agreed with the County Council to ensure consistency. If this is to be achieved then this does present some risk to the additional income albeit in the back end of the MTFP.
- **Reduce Cabinet budget equivalent to a reduction in members from 10 to 8** – This would achieve a saving of around £16k per annum
- **Removal of non-statutory deputy** – This would achieve a saving of around £5k per annum
- **Frideswide square flowerbeds** – This could achieve a saving of £16k over the 4 year period.
- **Sell Morrell Trophy – (£185k)** The Council has yet to find documentation in relation to this trophy. The sale will generate one off income which has been estimated at the current market value less estimated auction costs and insurance against any covenants

Additional costs include :

- **Council Tax Reduction Scheme** – A net additional cost of £146k per annum
- **Voluntary sector grants** – to reduce the saving in grants of £50k per annum
- **Hardship relief** – to create one off funds of £250k over the next 3 years
- **Removal of bulky waste** increase in charges - £10k per annum
- **Removal of increase in garden waste** charge - £16k per annum

**Capital Budget** - There are no proposed changes to the Administrations Capital Budget

**The HRA** – There are no proposed changes to the Administrations HRA Budget

**Nigel Kennedy**

**Head of Financial Services (Section 151 Officer)**

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## Independent Group Budget Amendments

**Proposer: Councillor Ajaz Rehman**

**Seconder: Councillor Shaista Aziz**

Aims and objective of the amendments are to give residents a choice. It is correct in terms of the parameters set by officers in terms of responsibility and safeguarding the city's finances.

Council approves that council tax rise be at a rate of 1.99% instead of 2.99%. whilst acknowledging the consultation indicated support for the increase 52% in favour to 33% against. It does not however provide information where the additional funds would be utilised. The proposed savings with a more efficient parks cleaning programme and subject to cabinet approval the closing of less used public toilets may well yield a different set of results.

Council approves a reduction to cabinet SRA budget and suggest the numbers are reduced from the current 10 to 8 to allow for this. At a time when services are being reduced and residents asked to assist and accept changes it is vital to show support and solidarity with residents by applying the measures to within council.

Council also approves a further reduction in the budget to a sum which is equivalent to the non-statutory leader SRA, which it proposes cabinet should not appoint to in order to achieve the reduction in spend.

Fly tipping has seen an increase of 75% since the bulky item charge has been introduced. ODS figure show this therefore we believe a removal of this stealth tax would actually save money and reduce costs

	2021	2022	2023
<b>April</b>	379	236	373
<b>May</b>	259	270	406
<b>June</b>	299	260	441
<b>July</b>	274	181	415
<b>August</b>	347	208	200
<b>September</b>	149	199	593
<b>October</b>	264	209	436
<b>November</b>	214	199	380
<b>December</b>	204	289	289
<b>January</b>	291	420	
<b>February</b>	251	387	
<b>March</b>	266	378	
	<b>3197</b>	<b>3236</b>	<b>3533</b>

Some public toilets are not well used by the public and can often be unfriendly and intimidating places. Many are often close facilities which are of a higher standard and more amenable to use. This also provides clarity as many toilets are routinely out of use. It is therefore proposed to make a saving of £83,000 from the budget for public toilets which it would recommend cabinet achieve by reviewing and closing the most under utilised public toilets.

## Narrative

The aim of the independent group is to listen to and serve the people of Oxford.

We believe our amendments within the scope of what the budget allows is what residents would want most.

The aims and objectives of the amendments are to give residents a choice.

We are aware through the surgeries we hold; the case work we do as councillors and through our interactions with residents in our wards of the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on people and families. By proposing these amendments, we are trying to give some flexibility and choice to the people of Oxford and let decisions be made by them for them.

We have proposed to abolish the Bulky Waste collection charge, this is a stealth tax.

There has been a reported 75% increase in fly tipping since it has been introduced. This is a dramatic rise compared to previous years. The additional cost of removing this is substantial and possibly greater than the revenue generated. The impact on residents is significant and people are unhappy with the additional charges being imposed on them.

	2021	2022	2023
<b>April</b>	379	236	373
<b>May</b>	259	270	406
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<b>October</b>	264	209	436
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<b>December</b>	204	289	289
<b>January</b>	291	420	



<b>February</b>	251	387	
<b>March</b>	266	378	
	<b>3197</b>	<b>3236</b>	<b>3533</b>

At present Council feels it cannot draw a direct correlation between the increased fly tipping and the charge. We have asked officers to monitor this over the coming financial year.

We propose to keep the minimum council tax increase of 1.99% over the MTFP this will give residents of Oxford over £600,000 in their pocket to use as they wish. whilst we acknowledge the consultation indicated 52% support of the rise compared to 33% opposing what the consultation did not indicate where the income would be spent.

We've reduced park cleaning from 12 to 9 per year as this included fly tipping within the parks. A better targeted programme instead of a unilateral blanket approach is a more efficient way to keep our parks clean and free of fly tipping.

We request officers engage with ODS to develop a more efficient and targeted approach to park cleaning.

Infrequently used public toilets are not by definition used often, they are often intimidating and generally a facility residents would want to avoid. There are often facilities close to these locations which are of a higher standard and more amenable to use. We believe residents would prefer the above changes and the additional money to meet their own needs.

At a time of cost cutting and hardship - it's vital that council tax increase is kept to the absolute minimum.

Proposals to reduce the SRA budget is to take the first step whilst making changes it is vital to show residents the cost saving and reduction of services does not only apply to them. Council accepts the responsibility for the tough actions and begins from within to show we are together with the people of Oxford.

Whilst referencing high inflation and world conflicts such as the war in Ukraine it is important to begin locally within the scope you have and to remain focused on expenditure you have influence over.

We note the current cabinet is operating with 9 members since November 2023 and the current administration with 22 members, results in nearly half receiving additional SRA's. We do not believe that is in line with Councils principals at a time when we set out tough budget proposals. Referencing high inflation and world conflicts such as the war in Ukraine

These amendments have been tabled to give back to the community and the public the power to spend their money as they wish and mainly to create an overall feeling of togetherness. The amendments also add over £400,000 to the City's reserves to protect finances should our assumptions not be met.

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## **Individual Amendment 1 (transfer from community services budget to CTR programme) Explanatory Text**

**Proposer: Councillor Chris Smowton**

**Seconder: Councillor Laurence Fouweather**

This amendment seeks to prevent the cuts to Council Tax Reduction (CTR) support for all the same reasons set out in the main Liberal Democrat Group budget amendment. We note that councillors may not support the argument presented therein that it is appropriate to fund ongoing CTR partly from one-off savings. In that case, we present this simple one-off amendment that restores full funding to the CTR programme by returning the intended savings from Community Services to the £500k/yr that was originally set out in the Budget for Consultation. We believe this is a better saving to make than reducing CTR for the reasons already set out in our main budget amendment.

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# REVENUE

Individual amendment 1: transfer from community services budget to CTR programme

## REVENUE

£1000's

	2024-25 £000'S	2025-26 £000'S	2026-27 £000'S	2027-28 £000'S
<b>Consultation Budget Net Budget Requirement</b>	28,536	26,998	27,886	28,801
<b>Changes since the consultation budget</b>				
<b>Sub total changes since the consultation budget</b>	(79)	110	(778)	(907)
<b><u>Additional Savings proposed</u></b>				
Restore savings sought from the Community Services budget		(150)	(150)	(150)
<b>Total additional savings proposed</b>	0	(150)	(150)	(150)
<b>Cumulative additional savings</b>	0	(150)	(300)	(450)
<b><u>Additional costs proposed</u></b>				
Eliminate Council Tax Reduction savings		146	146	146
<b>Total additional costs proposed</b>	0	146	146	146
<b><u>Net effect on budget in-year of proposals</u></b>	0	(4)	(4)	(4)
<b><u>Cumulative effect on budget</u></b>	0	(4)	(8)	(12)
Additional Budget transfer to/(from) reserves consultation budget	(705)	(606)	281	409
Additional Budget transfer to/(from) reserves from amendments	0	4	4	4
Transfer from/(to) working balance				
<b>Alternative Budget Net Budget Requirement</b>	<b>27,752</b>	<b>26,502</b>	<b>27,389</b>	<b>28,303</b>
<b>Financed By :</b>				
Council Tax- Consultation Budget	(16,014)	(16,496)	(16,992)	(17,504)
Retained Business Rates - Consultation Budget	(11,175)	(10,006)	(10,397)	(10,799)
New Homes Bonus	(352)	0	0	0
Revenue Support Grant	(211)			
<b>Total</b>	<b>(27,752)</b>	<b>(26,502)</b>	<b>(27,389)</b>	<b>(28,303)</b>
<b>(surplus)/deficit</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>General Fund Working Balance</b>				
Working Balance 1st April	(3,856)	(3,856)	(3,856)	(3,856)
Transfer (to)/from balance	0	0	0	0
Working Balance 31st March	(3,856)	(3,856)	(3,856)	(3,856)

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## **Head of Finance – Section 151 Comments on Individual Amendments**

**Date 15-02-24**

### **Individual Amendment 1**

#### **General Fund Revenue**

The amendment is arithmetically correct and allows for an additional £12k transfer to reserves over the 4 year period.

The removal of the changes to Council Tax reduction scheme are balanced by the reinstatement of savings in Community Services.

**Nigel Kennedy**

**Head of Financial Services (Section 151 Officer)**

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## **Individual Amendment 2 (transfer from Magd Woods paving to Vision Zero development) Explanatory Text**

**Proposer: Katherine Miles**

**Seconder: Roz Smith**

This budget amendment intends to allocate resources at the City Council level to develop a Vision Zero action plan for the City identifying areas and commitments that are within the sole remit of the City Council, to complement the county council's Vision Zero Strategy. This is because Oxford City Council is committed to the elimination of deaths and serious injuries from road traffic collisions in the city. This is based on the assumption that deaths and serious injuries from road traffic collisions on Oxford's streets are neither inevitable, nor should they be tolerated. While the County Council leads on Vision Zero for Oxfordshire, there are distinct action areas that are the direct responsibility of the City Council that can deliver safety improvements to contribute to safety of pedestrians and other vulnerable road users specifically in Oxford. The funding would be for 6 person-months to research, develop and consult on an action plan with local partners, and liaise with the county to ensure complementary approaches are adopted towards the shared Vision Zero.

Examples of possible avenues to explore include creating safe streets through the planning function, responsibility for pavements, and work to procure safe vehicles and promote the procurement of safe vehicles where heavy vehicles such as refuse lorries and some delivery vehicles must access properties in the city.

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REVENUE

Individual amendment 2: transfer from Magd Woods paving to Vision Zero development

REVENUE

£1000's

	2024-25 £000'S	2025-26 £000'S	2026-27 £000'S	2027-28 £000'S
<b>Consultation Budget Net Budget Requirement</b>	28,536	26,998	27,886	28,801
<b>Changes since the consultation budget</b>				
<b>Sub total changes since the consultation budget</b>	(79)	110	(778)	(907)
<b><u>Additional Savings proposed</u></b>				
Eliminate Magdalen Woods paving works	(25)			
<b>Total additional savings proposed</b>	(25)	0	0	0
<b>Cumulative additional savings</b>	(25)	(25)	(25)	(25)
<b><u>Additional costs proposed</u></b>				
Vision Zero action plan development (1FTE x 6 months)	22			
<b>Total additional costs proposed</b>	22	0	0	0
<b><u>Net effect on budget in-year of proposals</u></b>	(3)	0	0	0
<b><u>Cumulative effect on budget</u></b>	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)
Additional Budget transfer to/(from) reserves consultation budget	(705)	(606)	281	409
Additional Budget transfer to/(from) reserves from amendments	3	0	0	0
Transfer from/(to) working balance				
<b>Alternative Budget Net Budget Requirement</b>	<b>27,752</b>	<b>26,502</b>	<b>27,389</b>	<b>28,303</b>
<b>Financed By :</b>				
Council Tax- Consultation Budget	(16,014)	(16,496)	(16,992)	(17,504)
Retained Business Rates - Consultation Budget	(11,175)	(10,006)	(10,397)	(10,799)
New Homes Bonus	(352)	0	0	0
Revenue Support Grant	(211)			
<b>Total</b>	<b>(27,752)</b>	<b>(26,502)</b>	<b>(27,389)</b>	<b>(28,303)</b>
<b>(surplus)/deficit</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>General Fund Working Balance</b>				
Working Balance 1st April	(3,856)	(3,856)	(3,856)	(3,856)
Transfer (to)/from balance	0	0	0	0
Working Balance 31st March	(3,856)	(3,856)	(3,856)	(3,856)

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**Head of Finance – Section 151 Comments on Individual Amendments to the Budget for 2024-25 to 2027/28**

**Date 15-02-24**

**Individual Amendment 2**

The amendment is arithmetically correct and allows for an additional £3k transfer to reserves over the 4 year period.

**Nigel Kennedy**

**Head of Financial Services (Section 151 Officer)**

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