

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

Date 15-02-24

I have reviewed the budget submitted by the Independent Group as an alternative to the Labour Administrations budget and it is arithmetically correct. Points worthy of note are detailed below.

The General Fund Revenue

The budget allows for additional transfer to reserves of £439k over the 4 year period. The additional income/savings is further analysed as follows :

Savings

- Savings in the cost of a number of services provided by ODS such as street cleansing and parks maintenance (£79k) and closure of toilets (£83k) are proposed which would be in addition to the savings from ODS services already in the budget from 1-4-2025.

Costs

- **Removal of bulky waste** charge for one year –cost of £105k. The rationale is that there is a causal link between fly tipping and bulky waste although
 - Officers are not convinced that such link exists, with increases in fly tipping incidences probably coming from increased recording
 - Recent changes in legislation allows householders to take DIY waste to Household waste sites free of charge, hence lessening the need to fly tip
- **Reducing the Council tax** increase down from 2.99% to 1.99%. Within the budget consultation there was more support for increasing council tax by the maximum permissible rate of 2.99% with 52% in support compared to 33% of respondents that did not support.

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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