

BUDGET COUNCIL MEETING – WEDNESDAY 6 MARCH 2019

LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP AMENDMENT 1 TO THE BUSINESS PLAN: MITIGATING CUTS TO HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SERVICES AND VOLUNTARY GROUPS – AGENDA ITEM 5

Given continuing significant cuts to local government funding it is clear difficult decisions need to be made, and this Council joins others in calling on the Government to think again on the proposed cuts.

Notwithstanding these points, this Council would make the following amendments to the Business Plan:

That after Recommendation 1A shall be added: as adjusted by the deletion of saving CSF 2018-12 (Page 23 Savings Proposals Information Pack) Bond Road Reduction in Staffing (£71k) and the addition of a new saving Reducing Trade Union Facilities (£60k) and use of contingency of £11k for the shortfall (see revised Appendix 1 Draft Resolutions).

That after Recommendation 1C shall be added: as adjusted from 2020/21 by the part year effect of the new saving Reducing Trade Union Facilities (£30k) and the deletion of saving CS02 (Page 50 Savings Proposals Information Pack) Introducing Charges for Blue Badges (£15k) and set out in Appendix 7 (revised).

LIBERAL DEMOCRAT AMENDMENT 2 TO THE BUSINESS PLAN: WELLBEING INNOVATION FUND

To add a new recommendation after the end of 1F
Introduce a new £1.1m Merton Wellbeing Innovation Fund; a fund to promote social innovation by developing new approaches to help people improve their health and wellbeing; and reducing isolation through promoting independence. Also, work with health partners and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG's) to increase this fund. £248k to be transferred from General Fund reserves, which would still leave the latter above minimum prudent recommended levels ("General Fund Balances and Reserves", page 282), with the balance coming from the Outstanding Council Programme Board Reserve and Energy Renewable Reserve. This Fund could also be the first call for an increase if there is an underspend in the General Fund, at the financial end of 2018/19 subject to audit

LIBERAL DEMOCRAT AMENDMENT 3 TO THE BUSINESS PLAN: INNOVATION IN GROWING THE COUNCIL'S REVENUE & PROMOTING LONGER-TERM DECISION MAKING

The Council supports a number of amendments relating to innovating in growing the Council's revenue; and in promoting longer-term decision making.

In terms of innovation in the Council's finances: there are several roads in Merton that have not been resurfaced in years. We want a project to look at proactively

borrowing against the revenue cost of road repairs, to spend now and save larger costs later – along Stockport Council's model. Further, the Council could look at ways in which a charitable fund could be established to manage revenue coming from an additional voluntary council tax from Band H properties, based on the models used by Westminster Council and Kensington & Chelsea LBCs. These monies could be used to establish an Education Innovation Fund.

This Council would make the following amendments to the Business Plan:

That after Recommendation 1A shall be added: as adjusted by a new proposal for a Project to Investigate ways to create a Strategic Roads Fund costing £50k, and a further proposal to ensure that the Merton Little Leagues can use the parks for free at a cost of £9k, both funded by the Outstanding Council Programme Board Fund earmarked reserve (see revised Appendix 1 Draft Resolutions).

That after Recommendation 1C shall be added: as adjusted from 2020/21 by the deletion of saving CS27 (Page 21 Savings Proposals Information Pack) Deletion of Scrutiny Officer post (£70k) and set out in Appendix 7 (revised).

That after Recommendation 1C, a new Recommendation 1D and 1E be added and the following Recommendations to be renumbered accordingly

1D

To agree for a consultation to be undertaken with residents in Band H properties to determine their support for introducing a Voluntary Contribution Scheme and if successful, for the scheme to be managed through a new charity organisation to be registered with the Charity Commission;

1E

To establish a Landlord Licensing scheme, with the income generated from the licence fees estimated to be approximately £100k, to be invested in additional enforcement;

LIBERAL DEMOCRAT AMENDMENT 4 TO THE BUSINESS PLAN: BUILDING STRONGER, SAFER COMMUNITIES

This Council should step in to help maintain our community police presence for a further 3 years to mitigate the cuts planned by the Mayor as a result of his centralisation plans and funding cuts from Government.

That after Recommendation 1A shall be added: as adjusted by a new proposal for 2 Police Constables under the Met's new PartnershipPlus Scheme at a cost of £114k funded by the Outstanding Council Programme Board Fund earmarked reserve (see revised Appendix 1 Draft Resolutions);

That after Recommendation 1C shall be added: as adjusted from 2020/21 for 2 years for the 2 Police Constables under the Met's new PartnershipPlus Scheme and set out in Appendix 7 (revised).