



Item

LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP AMENDMENT TO BUDGET-SETTING REPORT (BSR) 2021/22

To:

Councillor Mike Davey, Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Committee 08/02/2021

Report by:

Caroline Ryba, Head of Finance

Tel: 01223 - 458134 Email: caroline.ryba@cambridge.gov.uk

Wards affected:

All

Key Decision

Foreword to the Liberal Democrat Group Amendment

This is not a Liberal Democrat budget, but an amendment which can realistically only enhance the proposed budget by highlighting problems and identifying aspirations and missed opportunities. Voters will get a chance to vote for a Liberal Democrat vision for Cambridge at this year's elections.

In many ways the administration's budget is an interim measure, which postpones fundamental questions, both about the needs and hopes of the city and the way the council will organise to meet them.

The Covid pandemic has changed the way many things are looked at and underscored many forgotten truths. We believe that recovery will bring an unprecedented opportunity to re-energise our political system so that we can work together to address the challenges of the 21st Century.

We want Cambridge to make a better job of planning for the global challenge of climate change than the world has made of planning for the global pandemic.

The council has been providing new housing to lower standards of sustainability in the last 5 years than it did 7 years ago. It can hardly be surprised that other developers see mixed messages. While national planning policy currently does not enable us to require high standards, apart from doing better when it is the developer, the council must use soft leadership to influence and inspire. We show a way of contributing to that within our proposals.

Public open space has been essential for supporting our community during the pandemic and must be protected and enhanced; for social reasons, biodiversity, and physical and mental health.

Apart from providing and protecting open space and applying the high standards of our local plan to new development, we want to enhance its quality and support the people who are using it in greater numbers. Our amendment includes some ways of doing this.

We have seen and benefitted from a low traffic city as fewer people have needed to travel during the pandemic. We already know that public and active transport must take the strain in future if we are to keep Cambridge accessible while tackling congestion and pollution: now is the time to plan to avoid their resurgence when activity returns.

Our amendment embraces the challenge of weaning the council off income from car parks and using their sites to help meet other under-provided social purposes like key worker housing – and mobilises support for active transport that the council has treated as a savings opportunity.

People power and community engagement has asserted itself during this pandemic, whether it's through the magnificent Covid mutual aid groups or the unprecedented participation in public consultations and petitions. This has lessons for the council in the way change is made.

Our amendment includes an important opportunity to seize the public imagination and help to make ours a more circular economy by increasing efforts to eliminate waste: mobilising a true citizen effort for something the council cannot do alone.

We specifically take issue with the budget proposal to rationalise and start closing public toilets. We regard public toilet provision as part of the primary role of a local council to supply basic universal services to all. We want to invest and improve.

Modernising ways residents can contact and do business with the council are welcome; but we don't want the council to follow the many organisations who have got this wrong. Especially because the current experience is so subject to complaint, councillors must satisfy themselves that change enables swift and personal attention and suitable ways of helping with complex problems - especially and equally for those not digitally aware or enabled and those who are vulnerable. They so far haven't.

To fund our proposals, we are taking advantage of further reductions in the cost of borrowing since the current Budget Setting Report was drafted.

The short term impact of the pandemic on the council's finances, in particular loss of income, is likely to be absorbed by government support, the use of reserves and the slow-down in other spending. However we acknowledge that beyond that, the council faces the same financial challenge that it faced before the pandemic: a future without ongoing central government grant and too much centralisation of revenues raised locally, including business rates. A transformation of many ways in which the council operates is necessary for it to become more self-supporting.

We will participate constructively in the transformation process and are ready to lead it. The council will need to ask itself what are the things on which it can most realistically make a difference and to ensure likely outcomes are judged above effort. It is likely to need to consider less paternalistic solutions and more enabling ones and to grow social enterprise in the city. It must draw on the combined capacity of a resourceful city. It must derive income from its operations and assets where this is compatible with its social role. It needs to

consider whether an integrated single tier of local government at our end of the county could enable more holistic approaches and more efficient and responsive services. Whatever the changes, protection for those who are vulnerable will be our priority. The council must remain ambitious in shaping the city for all its citizens and be open to new ways of achieving that.

We see the change in the funding of the capital programme as the most significant proposal in the budget for the council's future financial planning and impact on public assets. We understand the value of prioritising use of external grant funding, developer contributions and recycling of existing capital, where available, before calling on revenue funding of the programme. However, we have some concerns about the dependency this may create for necessary ongoing replacement and renewal of council assets, such as play equipment in open spaces, and other programmes of capital spending, such as Environment Improvement Schemes, which may not be recipients of grant funding. Borrowing is identified as a potential solution and has the attraction of spreading cost; but may ultimately become unsustainable if it were to accumulate over time due to its weight on ongoing revenue budgets and the fact that many council assets do not generate income to support and pay off loans. We will be looking for assurance that existing community infrastructure will be promptly renewed when required and that improvements will not be squeezed out.

Councillor Tim Bick, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group

Councillor Jamie Dalzell, Liberal Democrat Group Spokesperson on Finance and Resources

1. Executive Summary

This report sets out amendments proposed by the Lib Dem group to the overall set of budget proposals in the Budget Setting Report to be considered by the Executive at its meeting on 8th February 2021, for recommendation to the Council on 25th February 2021.

Through the Liberal Democrat Group Budget amendment:

- A redevelopment of the Queen Anne Car Park will be explored, primarily for housing;
- Plans to rationalise public toilets will be replaced with an investment programme to refurbish and modernise them;
- A campaign will be launched to promote effective recycling and waste minimisation across the city through public engagement;
- A Children's Tree Programme will be adopted in partnership with city primary schools, providing for all year 4 pupils to receive the gift of a young tree to plant;
- An education campaign will be initiated to discourage drivers from leaving their engines idling in stationary vehicles when out of traffic;
- Examples of high standards of sustainability and retrofit in the city will be widely shared through an enhancement of the council's architectural and design awards;
- The Arts Distribution Service will continue and be supported through the lockdown, assisting the recovery of cultural events after the pandemic - instead of being closed;
- Councillors will satisfy themselves of the practical acceptability of digitisation of resident contact with the council before savings are taken from Customer Services restructuring;
- Cycling and walking grants will be expanded after underspends in prior years as the role of Active Travel Officer has been left vacant. This will help the Council to support and utilise other schemes being introduced to promote active travel during the Covid-recovery;

- The provision of public water fountains across the city will be expanded, potentially including sites both in further green spaces and local urban centres;
- The play area on Scotland Road Recreation Ground will be re-equipped and a priority list of play areas for refurbishments across the city will be developed for future capital funding;
- The funding requirements for these additional items are largely met by an update to the assumptions on Interest Rates as confirmed by independent treasury advisors following a cut to Public Works Loan Board lending rates after the completion of the initial Budget Setting Report proposals.

2. Recommendations

Changes to recommendations highlighted in italics refer to the recommendations contained within the Budget-Setting Report (BSR) 2021/22, as presented to the meeting of the Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Committee held on 8 February 2021, subject to any other amendment agreed by the Executive Councillor at this committee meeting.

The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

General Fund Revenue Budgets: [Section 5, page 23 refers]

2.1 Under recommendation 2(a), add:

- ***Together with the changes in Appendix 1 to the Liberal Democrat Group Amendment to Budget-Setting Report (BSR) 2021/22***

2.2 Incorporate and replace the tables shown in Appendix 4 into the Budget-Setting Report (BSR) 2021/22 at the pages so annotated.

Capital: [Section 6, page 25 refers]

- 2.3 At recommendation 2(e), after “Capital Plan”, add “***together with the changes in Appendix 2 to the Liberal Democrat Group Amendment to Budget-Setting Report (BSR) 2021/22***”.
- 2.4 Incorporate and replace the tables shown in Appendix 4 into the Budget-Setting Report (BSR) 2021/22 at the pages so annotated.

**General Fund: Expenditure and funding 2019/20 to 2024/25:
[Section 7, page 30 refers]**

- 2.5 Incorporate and replace the tables shown in Appendix 4 into the Budget-Setting Report (BSR) 2021/22 at the pages so annotated.

Risks and Reserves: [Section 8, page 40 refers]

- 2.6 Incorporate and replace the tables shown in Appendix 4 into the Budget-Setting Report (BSR) 2021/22 at the pages so annotated.

Equality Impact Assessment: [Appendix F, page 108 refers]

- 2.7 Append Appendix 3 to the existing Equality Impact Assessment at Appendix F to the Budget-Setting Report (BSR) 2021/22.

Section 25 Report: [Section 10, page 56 refers]

- 2.8 Note the Section 151 Officer’s assessment, at Appendix 5, of the impact of these proposed amendments on the Section 25 report presented at Section 10 of the Budget-Setting Report (BSR) 2021/22.

3. Council Tax

- 3.1 No changes to council tax are being proposed by the Lib Dem Group.

4. Implications

All budget proposals have a number of implications. A decision not to approve a revenue bid will impact on managers' ability to deliver the service or scheme in question and could have financial, staffing, equality and poverty, environmental, procurement or community safety implications. A decision not to approve a capital or external bid will impact on managers' ability to deliver the developments desired in the service areas.

a) Financial Implications

Financial implications of budget proposals are summarised in the Budget-Setting Report (BSR) 2021/22, as amended by the recommendations above.

b) Staffing Implications

Staffing implications of budget proposals are also summarised in the Budget-Setting Report (BSR) 2021/22, as amended by the recommendations above.

c) Equality and Poverty Implications

A consolidated Equality Impact Assessment for the budget proposals is included at Appendix F to the Budget-Setting Report (BSR) 2021/22, as amended by Appendix 3. Individual Equality Impact Assessments have been conducted to support this and will be available on the Council's website.

A local poverty rating (using the classifications outlined at Appendix C(a) to the Budget-Setting Report (BSR) 2021/22) has been included in each budget proposal to assist with assessment.

d) Environmental Implications

Where relevant, officers have considered the environmental impact of budget proposals which are annotated as follows:

- +H/+M/+L: to indicate that the proposal has a high, medium or low positive impact.
- Nil: to indicate that the proposal has no climate change impact.
- -H/-M/-L: to indicate that the proposal has a high, medium or low negative impact.

e) Procurement Implications

Any procurement implications are outlined in the Budget-Setting Report (BSR) 2021/22, as amended by the recommendations above.

f) Community Safety Implications

Any Community Safety implications are outlined in the Budget-Setting Report (BSR) 2021/22, as amended by the recommendations above.

5. Background papers

Background papers used in the preparation of this report:

Budget-Setting Report (BSR) 2021/22
General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020
Individual Equality Impact Assessments

6. Appendices

Appendix 1: Lib Dem Budget Amendment – Revenue Budget Proposals

Appendix 2: Lib Dem Budget Amendment – Capital Budget Proposals

Appendix 3: Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix 4: Revised tables for BSR

Appendix 5: Lib Dem Budget Amendment – Section 25 Report

7. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Caroline Ryba, Head of Finance, tel: 01223 - 458134, email: caroline.ryba@cambridge.gov.uk.

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Appendix 1: Lib Dem Budget Amendment - Revenue Proposals

Proposal Type	2021/22 Budget £	2022/23 Budget £	2023/24 Budget £	2024/25 Budget £	2025/26 Budget £	Total
Total Impact of Lib Dem Budget proposals						
Unavoidable Revenue Pressure	(16,000)	(16,000)	(16,000)	(16,000)	(16,000)	(80,000)
Bids	310,000	115,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	530,000
Savings	43,000	43,000	76,000	76,000	76,000	314,000
Indicative costs of revised capital financing strategy - change in PWLB rate assumptions ¹	(61,000)	(146,000)	(198,000)	(175,000)	(253,000)	(833,000)
Indicative costs of revised capital financing strategy - additional capital charges ²	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	15,000
Net Change to use of GF reserves	279,000	-	-	-	-	279,000
Net Change to Annual Savings target	-	(1,000)	(99,000)	23,000	(78,000)	(155,000)

Notes

1 After the completion of the initial Budget-Setting Report proposals, the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) cut its lending rates by 1 percentage point. The savings shown here reflect the latest forecast of future interest rates following this cut.

2 Reflects the cost of financing the additional capital proposals set out in Appendix 2, including additional external borrowing costs.

Lib Dem Budget Amendment to Appendices C(b) & C(c) Appendix 1

2021/22 Budget – GF Bids and Savings

Reference	Item Description	2021/22 Budget £	2022/23 Budget £	2023/24 Budget £	2024/25 Budget £	2025/26 Budget £	Climate Effect	Poverty Ratings & Contact
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Appendix C (b) [2021/22 Budget – GF Proposals – Pressures & Bids]

Unavoidable Revenue Pressure

URP0014	Delete URP4739 (Review and consideration of possible alternative delivery models for the Arts Distribution Service (including a stop)) [Linked with B0015]	(16,000)	(16,000)	(16,000)	(16,000)	(16,000)	Nil	No Impact
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Removal of assumed closure of the Arts Distribution Service which would cause the loss of future surplus to the council from its operation. Linked to B0015.

Anthony French

Amendment to Total Unavoidable Revenue Pressure	(16,000)	(16,000)	(16,000)	(16,000)	(16,000)
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Bids

B0001	Expand Active Travel Grants to support Covid-recovery	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	Positive/ Medium impact	No Impact
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Recognising the opportunity to further expand walking and cycling during the Covid-recovery, we will increase active travel grant funding across the city which serve to encourage people to cycle and walk more often; promote safer cycling and walking; encourage new cyclists; reduce cycle theft - leveraging match funding from other partners and agencies.

John Richards

This will support the prompt recruitment of the Active Travel Officer (in the base budget again after been cutback in the current year) and in reconvening the Cycling & Pedestrian Steering Committee, which has not met since 2017.

B0002	Postpone Customer Service Review saving (£4780)	75,000	0	0	0	0	Nil	No Impact
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Postponement of implementation of the changes arising from this review for 3 months, in order to enable councillors to assess and approve the full practical impact of what is proposed: to verify the promised improvements and to satisfy themselves that non digitally capable and other vulnerable residents will in no sense be disadvantaged when trying to contact the council and that all residents will achieve swift attention to complex issues.

Clarissa Norman

B0004	Queen Anne Terrace redevelopment	40,000	0	0	0	0	Nil	No Impact
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Commissioning a report on options for redevelopment of the current Queen Anne Terrace car park and re-provision of the sports centre, aiming to repurpose it primarily to housing with the possibility of minority uses for commercial and reduced car parking. The report will aim to illustrate how such a scheme could contribute to increasing the supply of homes for key workers in the city.

Dave Prinsep

Lib Dem Budget Amendment to Appendices C(b) & C(c) Appendix 1

2021/22 Budget – GF Bids and Savings

Reference	Item Description	2021/22 Budget £	2022/23 Budget £	2023/24 Budget £	2024/25 Budget £	2025/26 Budget £	Climate Effect	Poverty Ratings & Contact
B0005	Recycling education campaign	30,000	30,000	0	0	0	Positive/ Medium impact	No Impact

A campaign over 2 years to promote effective recycling and waste minimisation in the city. This will improve knowledge of recycling of lesser known items and changes in recycling opportunities which have become available over recent years; but it will also refresh awareness of the entire system, as is necessary in a city of relatively high population turnover. It will also move the story forward by establishing wider appreciation of the way waste minimisation and the ultimate goals of zero waste relate to creating a circular economy, reducing greenhouse gases and fighting climate change. By doing so, it will promote understanding and enthusiasm for future changes in service offered in line with the national waste strategy and interest in changes in household purchasing behaviour.

Trevor Nicoll

There will be three areas of target activity: (1) Collaboration with schools (2) Working with our tenants and (3) establishing a volunteer-based Zero Waste Challenge.

B0006	Curbing engine idling	50,000	50,000	0	0	0	Positive/ Low impact	No Impact
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This budget item is for the development of an immediate 2 year public education campaign to curtail controllable driver behaviour of allowing engines to idle while stationary and out of traffic in the city. This would include the installation of additional signage and the management of the mobile air quality unit. This dual focus will have the benefit of creating a wider public understanding for the impact of subsequent measures. In addition to the general public, its particular potential audiences will include: the taxi trade, bus companies and drivers, the employees of major city organisations, users of council car parks and schools. The final year of the project would include evaluation of a follow-on to this with an enforcement element.

Jo Dicks

The costs provided are for an Air Quality Projects Officer and a budget for promotional media.

B0010	Children's Tree Scheme	0	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	Positive/ Medium impact	No Impact
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The Council's adopted tree strategy envisages a growth of the city's tree canopy of 2% by 2030 to reduce air pollution, mitigate the effects of climate change and contribute to human wellbeing. The EU funded 2Seas project recognises that it is unlikely the council could plant enough new trees on its own land to meet the target.

Following proposals in the Liberal Democrat Budget amendment in 2017 for a Children's Tree Scheme, the council has run a trial with the charity Trees for Cities at The Spinney Primary School. The recent creation and success of the Cambridge Canopy Project activity booklet (<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/media/8771/cambridge-canopy-project-activity-booklet.pdf>) has also highlighted the wider value of engaging young people in nurturing the city's trees.

Alistair Wilson

To follow on from the current Canopy Project, this new bid increases the council's ambition to all the city's primary schools, enabling a gift of a young tree to each year 4 primary pupil, for planting at home, a designated part of the public realm or school premises, integrated with education about the importance of trees to the environment and techniques for planting and maintenance. Considerable enthusiasm about this programme has been expressed by schools since it was first proposed. It has the potential to increase the city's tree stock by 4,000 over 4 years. It is based on a unit cost of £20 per tree, envisages continued cooperation with Trees for Cities and the schools to manage educational costs.

Lib Dem Budget Amendment to Appendices C(b) & C(c) Appendix 1

2021/22 Budget – GF Bids and Savings

Reference	Item Description	2021/22 Budget £	2022/23 Budget £	2023/24 Budget £	2024/25 Budget £	2025/26 Budget £	Climate Effect	Poverty Ratings & Contact
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B0013	Run water fountains [Linked with CAP0012]	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	Positive/ Low impact	No Impact
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Annual revenue costs for maintenance of water fountains.

Alistair
Wilson

B0015	Continuation of the Arts Distribution Service [Linked with URP0014]	80,000	0	0	0	0	Nil	No Impact
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The Arts Distribution Service, which supports events around Cambridge with public advertising (posters and leaflets), has consistently generated a surplus through its operations whilst also helping reduce fly posting across the city. Together with URP0014, this bid enables this long term beneficial service to continue rather than being closed down, as is proposed in the BSR URP4739.

The Covid-19 pandemic has disrupted this business model but, with vaccines being rolled out, this service can and should be able play a role in helping our local performing arts to recover after Covid; whilst also allowing the service to return to delivering a surplus on revenue.

Anthony
French

This bid seeks to provide funding for 12 months so that capacity is retained and instead can be utilised for Public Health messaging during this period of disruption. It is a prudent assumption of total costs and assumes that such an investment now can be fully recovered within 5 years whilst potentially delivering higher surpluses through the ongoing service review.

B0016	Recognition of sustainability excellence in new buildings and retrofit of old	20,000	0	0	0	0	Positive/ Medium impact	No Impact
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The council is limited by national policy in its ability to require many desirable but demanding standards for new buildings and adaptation of existing buildings. It must therefore exploit 'soft' methods of influencing sponsors of building schemes and those engaged in delivering them. One of these is through providing public recognition of what is 'good' in order to establish tangible models which inform and stimulate others to a high level.

The Cambridge Design and Construction Awards have contributed to this for many years. This item provides for a review of the awards scheme, both to develop and enhance its impact and to consider creation of specific additional awards for projects demonstrating excellence and innovation in Sustainability of new buildings and Retrofit of existing. Funding is provided to allow for officer time, including utilisation of experience within Building Control and consultation with the Cambridge Forum for the Construction Industry, together with the commissioning of a significantly improved and attractive public web presence in order to showcase winning schemes, project details and judges' assessments in a much more widely accessible manner.

Stephen
Kelly

Amendment to Total Bids	310,000	115,000	35,000	35,000	35,000
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Amendment to Pressures & Bids Total:	294,000	99,000	19,000	19,000	19,000
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Lib Dem Budget Amendment to Appendices C(b) & C(c) Appendix 1

2021/22 Budget – GF Bids and Savings

Reference	Item Description	2021/22 Budget £	2022/23 Budget £	2023/24 Budget £	2024/25 Budget £	2025/26 Budget £	Climate Effect	Poverty Ratings & Contact
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Appendix C (c) [2021/22 Budget – GF Proposals – Savings]

Savings

S0007	Delete S4743 (Public toilet review and policy implementation) [Linked with CAP0008]	43,000	43,000	76,000	76,000	76,000	Nil	No Impact
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Removal of the savings from rationalisation of public toilet sites due replacement of S4743 by CAP0008.

Alistair
Wilson

Amendment to Total Savings	43,000	43,000	76,000	76,000	76,000
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Amendment to Savings Total:	43,000	43,000	76,000	76,000	76,000
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All portfolios – Net Impact of Lib Dem Amendments Total	337,000	142,000	95,000	95,000	95,000
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Lib Dem Budget – Capital Budget Proposals

Amendment to Appendix D (a)

Appendix 2

2021/22 Budget – GF Capital

Reference	Item Description	2021/22 Budget £	2022/23 Budget £	2023/24 Budget £	2024/25 Budget £	2025/26 Budget £	Climate Effect	Poverty Ratings & Contact
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Capital Bids

CAP0008	Delete CAP4741 (Investment programme for public toilet re-purposed property assets) [Linked with S0007 and CAP0009]	(50,000)	(275,000)	(300,000)	0	0	Nil	No Impact
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Delete initial capital allocation, replace with CAP0009.

Alistair
Wilson

CAP0009	Public Toilet Improvement Programme	50,000	275,000	300,000	0	0	Nil	No Impact
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This item redirects the capital provision proposed in CAP4741 towards investment in public toilets across the city to improve provision through refurbishment and modernisation, enabling ease of cleaning and reduced maintenance, rather than rationalisation and closure. Consideration may be given to include public toilet provision with other public facilities where appropriate.

Alistair
Wilson

CAP0011	Scotland Road play equipment	60,000	0	0	0	0	Nil	No Impact
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A scheme to provide new play equipment at the Scotland Road Recreation Ground where existing provision needs updating. Local consultation will focus on how people want to use the space and how best to enhance it. The council will also prepare a rolling programme of other children's play areas in need of refurbishment in locations across the city which lack s106 funding and define requirements for a multi-year funding plan to progressively equalise provision for consideration in next year's budget cycle.

Alistair
Wilson

CAP0012	Public water fountains [Linked with B0013]	35,000	0	0	0	0	Positive/ Low impact	No Impact
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The existing programme of provision of water fountains will be expanded by 10 across the city, both adding to the number of sites on green spaces and opening up the possibility of locating in urban centres such as Arbury Court, Cherry Hinton High Street or Chesterton High Street. This will complement the Refill scheme where some businesses agree to offer to refill water bottles during their operating hours.

Alistair
Wilson

The objectives are to provide an alternative to high sugar drinks in single use plastic containers. Locations to be determined with input from residents' groups and area committees, taking account of feasibility and benefit to people taking part in activities such as shopping, socialising, running routes, trim trails, football and using all-weather pitches. The fountain on Parker's Piece provides a good model.

Amendment to Total Capital Bids	95,000	0	0	0	0
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Amendment to Capital Total:	95,000	0	0	0	0
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All portfolios – Net Impact of Lib Dem Amendments Total	95,000	0	0	0	0
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Cambridge City Council Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

This tool helps the Council ensure that we fulfil legal obligations of the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) to have due regard to the need to –

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Guidance on how to complete this tool can be found on the Cambridge City Council intranet. For specific questions on the tool email Helen Crowther, Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer at equalities@cambridge.gov.uk or phone 01223 457046.

Once you have drafted the EqIA please send this to equalities@cambridge.gov.uk for checking. For advice on consulting on equality impacts, please contact Graham Saint, Strategy Officer, (graham.saint@cambridge.gov.uk or 01223 457044).

1. Title of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service
Liberal Democrat budget proposals 2021/22

2. Webpage link to full details of the strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service (if available)

3. What is the objective or purpose of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?
<p>The Liberal Democrat's budget amendment makes a number of alternative budget proposals to those set out by the ruling group in the Budget Setting Report. This EqIA has been carried out by Council officers to provide Councillors with an assessment of the potential equality impacts of the Liberal Democrat budget proposals at the point when they are being asked to make a decision, as required by the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>Some proposals in the Liberal Democrat budget amendment will have very small or neutral impacts on equality and therefore have not been included in this EqIA. For other proposals there is not enough information at this stage on the proposal to be able to assess equality impacts.</p>

The proposals that could have more significant impacts related to equality include:

- Postpone Customer Service Review Saving
- Recycling Education Campaign
- Curbing Engine Idling
- Delete - S4743 "Public Toilet Review and policy implementation"
- Children's Tree Scheme
- Scotland Road Play Equipment
- Public Water Fountains (buy)
- Run Water Fountains

4. Responsible service

The Finance service manages the budget process, but a range of Council services would be responsible for the individual proposals included in this EqIA, if they were implemented.

5. Who will be affected by this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

(Please tick all that apply)

- Residents
- Visitors
- Staff

Please state any specific client group or groups (e.g. City Council tenants, tourists, people who work in the city but do not live here):

6. What type of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service is this?

- New
- Major change
- Minor change

7. Are other departments or partners involved in delivering this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service? (Please tick)

- Yes
- No

If 'Yes' please provide details below:

This is an assessment of proposed amendments to the Budget Setting Report and therefore covers many Council services. The budget also affects some of the Councils partnership working.

8. Has the report on your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service gone to Committee? If so, which one?

The Liberal Democrat budget proposals will go to Council on 25 February 2021

9. What research methods/ evidence have you used in order to identify equality impacts of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

General Fund Budget 2021/22 proposals EqIA

Sources used in this EqIA include

- ONS (2019), Exploring the UK's Digital Divide
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/exploringtheuksdigitaldivide>
- Cambridge Canopy Project activity booklet
<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/media/8771/cambridge-canopy-project-activity-booklet.pdf>

10. Potential impacts

For each category below, please explain if the strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service could have a positive/ negative impact or no impact. Where an impact has been identified, please explain what it is. Consider impacts on service users, visitors and staff members separately.

(a) Age - Please also consider any safeguarding issues for children and adults at risk

Postpone Customer Service Review Saving

The Customer Service Review Saving relates to a restructure of Customer Services including introduction of new digital self-service channels, enhanced assisted self-service provision, a new (cashless) face to face model. The Liberal Democrat proposal is to postpone this by three months to enable councillors to assess and approve what is proposed, including to satisfy themselves that non digitally capable and other vulnerable residents will in no sense be disadvantaged when trying to contact the council, and that all residents will achieve swift attention to complex issues. An Equality Impact Assessment has been produced on the Customer Service Review (see General Fund Budget 2021/22 proposals EqIA). With regards to non-digitally capable/ digitally excluded people, this EqIA has identified that older people are especially likely to be excluded due to lack of digital skills, and the issue increases with age. The General Fund Budget Bid EqIA shares that assisted digital arrangements would ensure that customers are able to access services effectively if they struggle to get online.

Recycling Education Campaign

The proposed bid involves 3 branches of focussed campaign work with the aim of improving recycling behaviour and one of the branches of work is collaboration with schools. This is around work to develop recycling activities and messages that can either be delivered in classrooms or assemblies. This not only improves recycling and understanding in the school itself, but messaging gets relayed back to family members (and there may be pop-up events aimed at parents).

Children's tree scheme

This proposal is to follow on from a trial with the charity Trees for Cities at The Spinney Primary School. It is to extend the project to all the city's primary schools, enabling a gift of a young tree to each year 4 primary pupil, for planting at home, a designated part of the public realm or school premises, integrated with education about the importance of trees to the environment and techniques for planting and maintenance. Considerable enthusiasm about this programme has been expressed by schools since it was first proposed. The proposal envisages continued cooperation with Trees for Cities and the schools to manage educational costs.

Scotland Road Play Equipment

The proposal is for a scheme to provide new play equipment at the Scotland Road Recreation Ground. It is also proposed that the council will prepare a rolling programme of other children's play areas in need of refurbishment in locations across the city which lack s106 funding and define requirements for a multi-year funding plan aiming to progressively equalise provision for consideration in next year's budget cycle.

(b) Disability

Curbing Engine Idling

The proposed public education campaign to reduce vehicle idling could help improve air quality. This would have a positive impact for those with existing health conditions, especially those with cardiovascular problems, as they are more likely to be negatively impacted by poor air quality.

Postpone Customer Service Review Saving

The Liberal Democrat proposal is to postpone this by three months to enable councillors to assess and approve what is proposed, including to satisfy themselves that non digitally capable and other vulnerable residents will in no sense be disadvantaged when trying to contact the council. An Equality Impact Assessment has been produced on the Customer Service Review (see General Fund Budget 2021/22 proposals EqIA). This identified potential adverse impacts for disabled people who are more likely to be digitally excluded and a main reason for this can be lack of access to equipment adapted to meet their needs that can impact also on their development of sufficient skills to use the internet. However, the EqIA identified that people with mobility impairments who are not digitally excluded might benefit from digital options, as they are not required to travel to have their query resolved. To prevent detrimental impacts on disabled people the review proposes an enhanced

'assisted digital' service, triage arrangements and vulnerability/complex needs framework to ensure that customers requiring tailored assistance can be identified.

Children's tree scheme

The proposed project has the potential to increase the city's tree stock by 4,000 over 4 years, which may help improve air quality. This could have a positive impact for people with some health conditions, especially those with cardiovascular problems. Moreover, researchers have found that trees and green environments support relaxation and reduce stress.

Delete - S4743 "Public Toilet Review and policy implementation"

The Public Toilet Review and policy implementation proposal is to close 6 out of 20 of the council's public toilet facilities. This might impact on people with disabilities with physical impairments or who have long-term illnesses meaning they need to use the toilet more often, as people may need to travel further to access a public toilet. However, the proposal is to close toilets where available alternative facilities exist and/or the need for continued facility provision no longer exists (due to very low usage). Therefore, the impact of deleting this proposal might have a small positive impact on disabled people.

Public Water Fountains (buy); and Run Water Fountains

These proposals are to buy and run 10 new public water fountains across the city in urban centres. One of the objectives is to provide an alternative to high sugar drinks people can purchase by providing access to free, clean water. It may also help people stay better hydrated by providing this free refill, which has positive impacts on people's health.

(c) Gender reassignment

Delete - S4743 "Public Toilet Review and policy implementation"

The Public Toilet Review and policy implementation proposal is to close 6 out of 20 of the council's public toilet facilities. Three of the facilities the council is proposing to close have gender neutral facilities – Park Street (which were closing anyway due to the redevelopment of Park Street carpark), Cherry Hinton Recreation ground and Arbury Court. This does not disproportionately impact on people feeling more comfortable to use gender neutral toilets (which includes many transgender people) as around half of the council's facilities in total have gender neutral options. Moreover, the proposal is to close toilets where available alternative facilities exist and/or the need for continued facility provision no longer exists (due to very low usage). Therefore, the impact of deleting this proposal might have a small positive impact on people with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment.

(d) Marriage and civil partnership

No impacts have been identified specific to this equality group

(e) Pregnancy and maternity

Curbing Engine Idling

The proposed public education campaign to reduce vehicle idling could help improve air quality. This could have a positive impact for women who are pregnant, as there is evidence that exposure to air pollution can lead to potential effects on foetal growth, premature birth and low birth weight. Moreover, in addition to the general public a potential audience is schools.

Delete - S4743 “Public Toilet Review and policy implementation”

The Public Toilet Review and policy implementation proposal is to close 6 out of 20 of the council’s public toilet facilities. The closure may have a detrimental impact on parents with very young children who might need to access toilet facilities to change babies and toddlers. However, if the toilets are rarely used and/ or if some do not have baby change facilities then the impact of closing them might be minimal.

(f) Race – Note that the protected characteristic ‘race’ refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

Postpone Customer Service Review Saving

The Liberal Democrat proposal is to postpone this by three months to enable councillors to assess and approve what is proposed, including to satisfy themselves that non digitally capable and other vulnerable residents will in no sense be disadvantaged when trying to contact the council. An Equality Impact Assessment has been produced on the Customer Service Review (see General Fund Budget 2021/22 proposals EqIA). This identified that in relation to race, where English is not people’s first language they may be negatively impacted from a move to increasingly digitised services and removal of a face to face drop-in service. The General Fund Budget EqIA holds that enhanced triage arrangements, assisted digital and vulnerability/complex needs framework developed would ensure that customers requiring assistance can be identified so the council can continue to use its interpretation/ translation service effectively to support customers with language barriers.

(g) Religion or belief

No impacts have been identified specific to this equality group

(h) Sex

No impacts have been identified specific to this equality group

(i) Sexual orientation

No impacts have been identified specific to this equality group

(j) Other factors that may lead to inequality – in particular, please consider the impact of any changes on low income groups or those experiencing the impacts of poverty

Postpone Customer Service Review Saving

The Liberal Democrat proposal is to postpone this by three months to enable councillors to assess and approve what is proposed, including to satisfy themselves that non digitally capable and other vulnerable residents will in no sense be disadvantaged when trying to contact the council. An Equality Impact Assessment has been produced on the Customer Service Review (see General Fund Budget 2021/22 proposals EqIA). It found that people on a low income may be negatively impacted following a removal of drop-ins for services and cash payments and increasingly digitised services. This could be due to lack of access to a computer or device and funds for internet access. However, the General Fund Budget EqIA shares that the enhanced assisted digital arrangements including access to computers means staff can provide tailored assistance to this group.

Public Water Fountains (buy); and Run Water Fountains

These proposals are to buy and run 10 new public water fountains across the city in urban centres. This will increase the supply of free clean water in the city, which may benefit people on low incomes or in poverty when they visit areas like the city's parks and green space, by providing an alternative to buying drinks from shops.

11. Action plan – New equality impacts will be identified in different stages throughout the planning and implementation stages of changes to your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service. How will you monitor these going forward? Also, how will you ensure that any potential negative impacts of the changes will be mitigated? (Please include dates where possible for when you will update this EqIA accordingly.)

No actions have been identified

12. Do you have any additional comments?

None

13. Sign off

Name and job title of lead officer for this equality impact assessment: Helen Crowther.
Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer

Names and job titles of other assessment team members and people consulted: David
Kidston, Strategy and Partnerships Manager

Date of EqIA sign off: 1st February 2021

Date of next review of the equalities impact assessment: N/a

Date to be published on Cambridge City Council website: 17th February 2021

Section 5 General Fund revenue budgets
Performance against savings target (BSR, page 24)

Savings Targets	2021/22 £0	2022/23 £0	2023/24 £0	2024/25 £0	2025/26 £0	Total £0
MTFS 2020 Current Savings Target (new savings each year)	2,156	2,143	1,264	561	(460)	5,664
Adjust savings requirements for items now coming forward as proposals						
Car parking income	1,069	550				
Commercial and administrative property income	749	702	720	495	495	
Cambridge Live	750					
	2,568	1,252	720	495	495	
MTFS 2020 adjusted savings requirement in year	(412)	3,459	1,796	786	(460)	
Unavoidable revenue pressures	717	717	712	712	712	
Reduced income	2,539	1,667	1,018	793	793	
Bids	706	375	329	329	174	
Savings	(4,014)	(3,846)	(3,869)	(3,869)	(3,869)	
Increased income	(256)	(81)	(11)	(186)	(186)	
Programme	50	0	0	0	0	
Impact of Lib Dem budget proposals	337	142	95	95	95	
Net bids and savings	79	(1,026)	(1,726)	(2,126)	(2,281)	
Reduction in council tax income, £5 increase rather than 1.99%, lower tax base	(107)	15	146	104	327	
Changes to business rates assumptions	(26)	(59)	(59)	(59)	873	
Business rates growth - contribution to reserves	1,325					
Collection Fund surplus	(130)					
Uncommitted NHB used to fund in-year spend	(427)					
Covid-19 emergency funding 2021/22	(652)					
Lower Tier Services Grant	(988)					
Reduction in use of reserves to support revenue spending on services compared with MTFS 2020	1,562					
Impact of Lib Dem budget proposals - increased use of reserves to support revenue spending	(279)					
Total funding changes	278	(44)	87	45	1,200	
Indicative costs of revised capital financing strategy	113	296	589	565	1,219	
Impact of Lib Dem budget proposals arising from additional capital expenditure	3	3	3	3	3	
Lib Dem budget - change in PWLB interest rate assumptions	(61)	(146)	(198)	(175)	(253)	
Total changes to savings requirements	412	(917)	(1,245)	(1,688)	(112)	
Revised savings target / savings (new savings each year)	0	2,130	1,468	343	1,116	5,057

Section 6 General Fund capital budgets
Financing (BSR, pages 28 & 29)

Capital plan spending	2020/21 £'000	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	Total £'000
Spend MTFS Oct 2020	59,250	36,546	24,744	29,877	8,344	466	159,227
Approved since MTFS October 2020	440	239	41	10	18	10	758
Capital plan before new proposals	59,690	36,785	24,785	29,887	8,362	476	159,985
New proposals see Appendix D(a)	0	4,073	746	300	0	234	5,353
Impact of Lib Dem budget proposals	95	0	0	0	0	0	95
Revised capital plan	59,785	40,858	25,531	30,187	8,362	710	165,433

Capital plan funding	2020/21 £'000	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000
External support						
Developer contributions	(2,238)	(239)	(41)	(10)	(18)	(10)
Other sources	(591)	(93)	0	0	0	0
Total – External support	(2,829)	(332)	(41)	(10)	(18)	(10)
City Council						
Direct Revenue Financing (DRF) – GF services	(60)	0	0	0	0	0
Direct Revenue Financing (DRF) – in-year allocation of revenue funding	(3,180)	0	0	0	0	0
Earmarked reserve – capital contributions	(773)	0	0	0	0	0
Earmarked Reserve – Repairs and renewals Fund	(889)	(1,195)	0	0	0	0
Earmarked Reserve – OAS	(70)	0	0	0	0	0
Usable capital receipts	(6,028)	(7,025)	(1,256)	(781)	(1,171)	0
External borrowing - Park Street redevelopment	(9,744)	(26,521)	(18,534)	(29,396)	(7,173)	0
Internal and external borrowing - on-lending for capital purposes	(32,665)	(5,550)	(5,700)	0	0	0
Internal and external borrowing - other schemes	(3,452)	(235)	0	0	0	(700)
Impact of Lib Dem budget proposals - internal and external borrowing	(95)	0	0	0	0	0
Total – City Council	(56,956)	(40,526)	(25,490)	(30,177)	(8,344)	(700)
Total Funding	(59,785)	(40,858)	(25,531)	(30,187)	(8,362)	(710)
Capital Plan	59,785	40,858	25,531	30,187	8,362	710

**Section 7 General Fund: Expenditure and funding 2020/21 to 2025/26
(BSR, page 30)**

Description / £'000s	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Expenditure						
Strategy and external partnerships	14,270	7,484	6,028	6,421	6,747	7,551
Finance and resources	(5,644)	(4,873)	(4,727)	(4,669)	(4,726)	(4,559)
General Fund housing	4,197	3,474	3,652	3,803	3,950	4,084
Climate change, environment and city centre	5,808	5,049	5,251	5,422	5,598	5,772
Planning policy and open spaces	4,569	3,597	3,726	3,646	3,695	3,813
Communities	7,420	7,848	7,271	7,364	7,521	7,673
Transport and community safety	272	2,336	1,963	1,348	1,223	1,232
Impact of Lib Dem budget proposals (before allocation to portfolios)	0	279	(1)	(100)	(77)	(155)
Revised net savings requirement	0	0	(2,130)	(3,598)	(3,941)	(5,057)
Net service budgets	30,893	25,193	21,034	19,637	19,990	20,354
Capital accounting adjustments	(6,353)	(6,347)	(6,347)	(6,347)	(6,347)	(6,347)
Capital expenditure financed from revenue	(1,174)	1,458	80	80	80	80
Contributions to earmarked funds	27,779	1,178	738	1,004	1,004	1,004
Collection fund deficit	0	23,000	889	888	0	0
Net spending requirement	51,145	44,483	16,395	15,263	14,727	15,092
Funded by:						
Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA)	(4,203)	(4,272)	(4,086)	(4,086)	(4,086)	(4,086)
Locally Retained Business Rates – Growth Element/additional income	(24,907)	(1,325)	0	0	0	0
New Homes Bonus (NHB)	(4,913)	(3,458)	(1,496)	0	0	0
Covid-related grants	(2,008)	(1,641)	0	0	0	0
Appropriations from earmarked funds	(2,609)	(23,662)	(1,433)	(1,445)	(570)	(584)
Council Tax	(9,031)	(9,033)	(9,380)	(9,732)	(10,071)	(10,422)
Contributions to / (use of) reserves	(3,474)	(813)	0	0	0	0
Impact of Lib Dem budget proposals - increased use of reserves to support revenue spending	0	(279)	0	0	0	0
Total funding	(51,145)	(44,483)	(16,395)	(15,263)	(14,727)	(15,092)

Section 8 - Risks and reserves
General reserves (BSR, page 49)

Description	2019/20 £0	2020/21 £0	2021/22 £0	2022/23 £0	2023/24 £0	2024/25 £0
Balance as at 1 April b/fwd	(17,263)	(13,789)	(12,697)	(12,697)	(12,697)	(12,697)
Contribution from reserves	286					
Carry forwards	1,087					
Projected business rates surplus		(1,325)				
Contribution to the Climate Change Fund (NCL4667 and NCL 4722)	50	200				
Contingency funding for mothballing Corn Exchange and Guildhall venues (NCL4712)		600				
Use of reserves to support delivery of services	2,051	1,338				
Impact of Lib Dem budget proposals - increased use of reserves to support revenue spending	0	279	0	0	0	0
Balance as at 31 March (c/fwd)	(13,789)	(12,697)	(12,697)	(12,697)	(12,697)	(12,697)

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Appendix 5 – Lib Dem Budget Amendment – Section 25 Report

These budget amendments would not require any substantive changes to the existing Section 10 – Section 25 Report. **[Section 10, Page 56 refers]**

There are two types of amendment:

- General Fund (GF) revenue amendments – spending proposals or reductions in savings and income are matched by funding generated from the adjustment of the interest rate used to calculate the indicative costs of the revised capital financing strategy with a small cumulative saving over the five year period.

It should be noted that the proposal relating to the Queen Anne Terrace car park may give rise to bids for funding and reductions in income in the future.

- Capital bids – a net increase of £95k is proposed. In line with the revised capital financing strategy, this would give rise to an indicative annual revenue cost of approximately £3k p.a. that is included within these amendments

I therefore consider, in relation to the budget resulting from the application of these amendments, the estimates for the financial year 2021/22 to be sufficiently robust and the financial reserves up to 31 March 2022 to be adequate.

Caroline Ryba
Head of Finance and S151 Officer

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