

GOVERNANCE, STRATEGY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY BOARD Overview & Scrutiny Committee Agenda

Date Thursday 8 February 2024

Time 6.00 pm

Venue Crompton Suite, Civic Centre, Oldham, West Street, Oldham, OL1 1NL

- Notes
1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST- If a Member requires advice on any item involving a possible declaration of interest which could affect his/her ability to speak and/or vote he/she is advised to contact Paul Entwistle or Constitutional Services at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting.
 2. CONTACT OFFICER for this agenda is Constitutional Services Tel. 0161 770 5151 or email constitutional.services@oldham.gov.uk
 3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS - Any Member of the public wishing to ask a question at the above meeting can do so only if a written copy of the question is submitted to the contact officer by 12 noon on Date Not Specified.
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MEMBERSHIP OF THE GOVERNANCE, STRATEGY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY BOARD

Councillors Hince, Hobin, J. Hussain, McLaren (Chair), Moores, Surjan, Sykes (Substitute) and Woodvine

Item No

- 1 Apologies For Absence
To receive any apologies for absence.
- 2 Urgent Business
Urgent business, if any, introduced by the Chair
- 3 Declarations of Interest
To Receive Declarations of Interest in any Contract or matter to be discussed at the meeting.
- 4 Public Question Time
To receive Questions from the Public, in accordance with the Council's Constitution.
- 5 Liberal Democrats Budget Amendment Proposals 2024/25 (Pages 1 - 38)
Liberal Democrat Budget Proposals 2024/2025.
- 6 Conservative Budget Amendment Proposals 2024/25 (Pages 39 - 70)
Conservative Group alternative Budget proposals 2024/25.
- 7 Greater Manchester Combined Authority's Scrutiny Committee (GMCA) held on 13th December 2023 (Pages 71 - 80)
To receive the minutes of the meeting of Greater Manchester Combined Authority's Scrutiny Committee (GMCA) held on 13th December 2023.
- 8 Work Programme (Pages 81 - 86)
To note and comment on the Committee's Work Programme 2023/24.
- 9 Key Decision Document (Pages 87 - 96)
Notice of key decisions and private reports – covering decisions scheduled to be taken from 26th February 2024
- 10 Rule 13 and 14
To consider any rule 13 or 14 decisions taken since the previous meeting.



Report to Governance Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board

Liberal Democrats Budget Amendment Proposals 2024/25

Portfolio Holder: Deputy Leader of the Liberal Democrats and Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance and Low Carbon, Liberal Democrat Group, Councillor Sam Al-Hamdani

Officer Contact: Andy Cooper, Senior Finance Manager

08 February 2024

Reason for Decision

The report presents to the Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board the Liberal Democrats suggested amendments to the Administration's Budget proposals for 2024/25 and offers some forward-looking proposals to achieve savings in future years.

Executive Summary

The report presents to the Board a number of 2024/25 budget amendments in addition to those proposals already presented by the Administration to this Board at its meeting on 25 January 2024.

This report identifies additional savings totalling £0.311m in 2024/25 and a further £0.139m in 2025/26. There are a range of investments that will be funded from the savings proposals put forward to offset the increased expenditure and suggested amendments to the Capital Programme. Details of the proposals can be found in section 3 and in summary at Appendix A. Business Cases for the individual budget reductions can be found at Appendix B.

Recommendations

That the Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board considers and recommends that:

1. The Investment and Savings proposals for 2024/25 as summarised at Appendix A are commended to Cabinet.
2. The amendments to the Administration's proposed Capital Programme are implemented as set out in this report.

Liberal Democrats Budget Amendment Proposals 2024/25

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council is required by legislation to produce a balanced budget each financial year. Aside from the legal requirements, financial plans are important because they set out the financial management of the Council's policies and guide officers on the areas where they should prioritise resources.
- 1.2 In the current economic environment, it is becoming more difficult to deliver a balanced budget. The Chief Executive described setting the budget for 2023/24 as the most challenging budget round the Council has faced for a significant number of years and it is fair to say the process for 2024/25 has been equally if not more challenging. An increasing number of Local Authorities are in discussion with and/ or have had Inspectors appointed by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities with regard to their long-term financial sustainability. During the 2023/24 financial year Birmingham City Council, Nottingham City Council and Woking District have issued Section 114 notices; this follows Thurrock, Croydon and Slough Borough Council who all issued notices in previous financial years. In addition, an increasing number of authorities are issuing warnings that they are at risk of issuing a Section 114 notice if they do not quickly deliver the required savings and limit expenditure.
- 1.3 The Liberal Democrats produce budget amendments to challenge key decisions set out by the Administration, identify other areas for revenue savings and propose alternative priority areas for the Council to concentrate its resources. There is also a review of the Administration's Capital Programme with the Liberal Democrats proposing alternative schemes to deliver their priorities.
- 1.4 In producing these budget amendments, the Liberal Democrats offer common-sense practical solutions to the borough's problems and challenge the Administration to cut waste, get the basics right for residents and provide the value-for-money local services the public want. Throughout this document there is a focus on targeting resources to make the borough safer, greener and cleaner whilst providing support for the most vulnerable members of our community during this cost of living crisis.
- 1.5 In preparing the Opposition Budget, the Liberal Democrats would like Council, once again, to note the significantly reduced timescales afforded to the Party. With effectively 10 working days being made available, this is in our opinion insufficient time to construct a meaningful and robust proposal with the right amount of due diligence applied.

2. Current Position

- 2.1 The context of the whole budget setting process has once again been extremely challenging, The legacy of COVID-19 and the 'cost of living crisis' continue to have a profound and far-reaching impact on the Council in terms of service delivery.
- 2.2 Macro- and micro-economic factors together with global events have also contributed to the challenge of setting a balanced budget, whilst inflation rates have reduced significantly and interest rates have stabilised, the general cost of living continues to have an impact on the Council and the residents of the Borough, other influencing factors include:
 - The impact of Brexit – affecting trade arrangements with countries which remain within the European Union;
 - The war between Russia and Ukraine;
 - Central Government policy changes and an impending General Election.

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- 2.3 Considering these factors and existing budget constraints, the Administration has presented a series of savings proposals as part of the 2024/25 budget setting process. The Liberal Democrats recognise that, especially for the forthcoming budget, difficult choices need to be made to ensure a balanced budget can be presented to Council, and therefore reluctantly accept that the majority of the proposals for 2024/25 cannot be avoided, particularly when considering the current failure to provide a national solution to the funding of social care. In doing so the Liberal Democrats recognise the future savings required to reduce the continued reliance on reserves as set out in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy are a challenge. Each year the Council continues to use reserves to balance the budget – which is currently the only approach recommended by the Department of Levelling-up, Housing and Communities – has a compounded negative effect in future years. However, we are assured at this stage that the Council is implementing plans intended to improve its long-term financial resilience and reduce its reliance on one-off resources.
- 2.4 The proposal by the Administration to increase Oldham Council’s element of Council Tax for general purposes by 2.99% for 2024/25 as well as a 2% increase for the Adult Social Care Precept; 4.99% in total, the maximum permissible increase without requiring a Council Tax referendum is reluctantly accepted by the Liberal Democrats. Without doubt, a 4.99% Council Tax increase will be challenging for the residents of the Borough, particularly those already suffering hardship. The Liberal Democrats do however recognise that the spending power of the Council in terms of Central Government support for Local Authorities is predicated on Councils levying the maximum permissible increase, in this way, an increase that is anything lower than the currently proposed 4.99% will seriously restrict the Council in its ability to support and provide the necessary services to the Residents of the Borough, in particular the provision of non-statutory services that provide direct support to the most vulnerable citizens; potentially including but not limited to; cost of living initiatives, the provision of welfare rights, support and inclusion services as well as community and outreach services.
- 2.5 Despite the position we find ourselves in we must continue to strive for improvements in the borough. More than ever the decisions we make now will have a direct impact on future generations; therefore, collectively, we want to ensure that the correct priorities are at the forefront of decision-making processes.
- 2.6 The Liberal Democrats recognise that these priorities will not be achieved in the short term, therefore there is a real focus on including both revenue and capital investment proposals that tackle the issues within these budget amendment proposals. The proposals we have identified are also set against a background of ensuring the best interests of the Borough are supported through every day decision making at the Council, for example the Liberal Democrats believe that the Council should use its spending power to support the local economy by, where possible, spending locally.

3. 2024/25 Proposals

- 3.1 The Liberal Democrats propose a range of specific budget amendments to be considered this year. These are split into:
- an amendment to the Capital Programme for 2024/25 and 2025/26;
 - investment proposals which would achieve significant benefits within the borough;
 - budget reduction proposals where it is considered individual service areas can make new or additional savings in order to fund the investment proposals put forward in this report.
- 3.2 If the savings proposals are acceptable to the Administration, then, if taken in isolation, they have the option to reduce the level of reserves required to support the budget, thereby improving the financial resilience of the Council.

Liberal Democrat Alternative Capital Programme 2024/25 to 2026/27

- 3.3 The Liberal Democrats are proposing an adjustment to the Council's Capital Programme by directing capital resources to be allocated, prioritised and used at a local/ward level in order to help drive the wider regeneration agenda. Vibrant districts are vital to the overall prosperity of the Borough, COVID confirmed how important our Districts are and targeted funding is needed now to redress a historic lack of local investment and to restore district facilities to the heart of communities. Member Led Investment in our Districts' therefore proposes expenditure of £2.000m; £1.000m in each of 2024/25 and 2025/26 and will be targeted at a number of initiatives which will contribute to the regeneration of the Borough and allow us to build back better in a post COVID-19 environment. Priorities will include, but will not necessarily be limited to:

Crime prevention

- 3.4 To fund specific local measures targeted at reducing crime and anti-social behaviour within neighbourhoods.

Roads and Road Safety

- 3.5 Investment in the road network including improvements to the general condition and also targeted investment to make travelling throughout Oldham safer for all road users and pedestrians.

District Centres

- 3.6 Targeted neighbourhood initiatives to directly respond to the needs and wishes of residents

Environmental Initiatives

- 3.7 Furthering the green agenda at a local level including making sure that the green and recreational spaces that have become popular since the pandemic are suitably maintained and remain available to the residents of the Borough.

Summary of Capital Investment Proposals

- 3.8 The £2.000m additional capital investment required to deliver 'Investment in Our Districts' will be financed by redeploying part of the Fund for Emerging Priorities included in the report 'Capital Strategy and Capital Programme 2024/25 to 2028/29' considered by the Board on 25 January 2024. The table below summarises the Liberal Democrats Alternative Capital Programme and the call on the Fund for Emerging Priorities. The proposed expenditure leaves a total of £7.426m remaining within the Fund and does not require any Prudential Borrowing and therefore neither adds expenditure to the Capital Programme nor incur any additional revenue expenditure in the form of capital financing costs.

Table 1 - Liberal Democrats Alternative Capital Programme 2024/25 to 2027/28

Capital Proposals	2024/25 £k	2025/26 £k	2026/27 £k	2027/28 £k	Total £k
Funding					
Fund for Emerging Priorities	(1,043)	(3,318)	(2,885)	(2,000)	(9,246)
Total Funding	(1,043)	(3,318)	(2,885)	(2,000)	(9,246)
Proposals					
Investment in Our Districts	1,000	1,000			2,000
Total Proposed Capital Expenditure	1,000	1,000	0	0	2,000
Balance of Fund for Emerging Priorities	(43)	(2,318)	(2,885)	(2,000)	(7,246)

The Liberal Democrat Alternative Revenue Budget 2024/25 to 2025/26**Investment Proposals**

- 3.9 The Liberal Democrats are proposing a range of additional budget reduction proposals for 2024/25 which will make £0.311m available for investment with a further £0.139m in 2025/26 as detailed in Section 4. The resource will be used to invest in a range of proposals aimed at improving the lives of residents within the borough. Details of the individual investment proposals are provided below.

Highways and Pavement Repairs (£0.100m)

- 3.10 A revenue fund of £0.100m to support the transport infrastructure of the Borough.

Recreational and Green Spaces (£0.100m)

- 3.11 A sum of £0.100m to support and promote recreation and enhance green spaces in 2024/25.

Youth Services (£0.050m)

- 3.12 Investment in youth services is a Liberal Democrat priority. The proposal is to increase the revenue budget for the Youth Service by £0.050m. This will be used for enhanced delivery of the District and Detached Youth work offer including venue costs, activity costs and resources to support the increased youth work provision in each district of the borough and provide a quality youth work offer to young people that supports and promotes positive emotional health and wellbeing.

Investment in Crime and Safety (£0.050m)

- 3.13 An investment of £0.050m is proposed to support measures aimed at reducing crime and improving safety for the residents of the Borough.

Whit Friday Band Contest (£0.011m)

- 3.14 A sum of £0.011m to support and facilitate the running of the annual Whit Friday band contest, one of the higher profile events within the Borough, attracting visitors and providing a major boost for local businesses.

4. Liberal Democrat Alternative Budget Reduction Proposals

- 4.1 The Liberal Democrats are proposing a range of challenging budget reduction proposals, totalling £0.450m across 2024/25 and 2025/26, which will reduce spend on non-essential or non-statutory services in order to reprioritise the funds into proposals which will improve the lives of people in the borough. Brief summaries of the savings proposals are provided below with full pro-formas provided at Appendix B.

OPP-BR1-201 – Reconsideration of Council priorities with regards to the Communications and Research Service (£0.365m)

- 4.2 As in the previous two years, and with limited action from the Administration, the Liberal Democrats still feel that there is further scope in this area to reduce spend on what is a non-statutory service and to re-prioritise this to other areas. As such, the Liberal Democrats propose to redesign the Communications and Research team generating a total budget reduction of £0.365m. This will enable the reprioritisation of funding towards front line services. This reduction would be generated by halting production of the publication Oldham Council: Working for You and by disestablishing 6.3 posts which may include redundancies, however, due to staff consultation timelines only a part year effect would be achieved in 2024/25. This would generate a saving of £0.360m. It is also proposed to generate revenue of circa £0.005m by optimising income generation opportunities across the Council's media channels. The Communications and Research Service has put forward a budget reduction of £0.075m for 2024/25 (with a further £0.025m in 2025/26), achieved by a review of the Research and Engagement function. For this reason, the proposed reduction of £0.365m is reduced accordingly to £0.265m of which £0.198m will be achieved in 2024/25 with an additional £0.067m in 2025/26.

OPP-BR1-202 – Reduction in mileage budgets to reflect change in work practices (£0.055m)

- 4.3 The Liberal Democrats propose to reduce mileage budgets by £0.055m on a pro rata basis across the Council, excluding Adult Social Care and Children's Social Care cost centres. The Liberal Democrats propose that due to the increase in Council employees working from home and the increase of Teams based meetings, the requirement to travel using a personal vehicle has reduced, which in turn should result in a saving for the Council.

OPP-BR1-203 – Reduction in Trade Union Facilities Time (£0.070m)

- 4.4 The Liberal Democrats are proposing to reduce the Trades Union subsidy provided by the Council following a consistent reduction in Trades Union membership as evidenced by decreasing numbers of staff opting to pay membership through payroll. This would result in a reduction of approximately 50% to the base budget resulting in a total saving £0.070m which, due to the consultation required, would be achieved over 2 financial years resulting in a £0.035m saving in 2024/25 and a further £0.035m in 2025/26

OPP-BR1-204 – Review of car allowances, as previously promised, to reduce the amount paid as a lump sum to staff doing zero or minimal mileage (£0.050m)

- 4.5 A lump sum car allowance of £500 is paid annually to essential car users. The Council is currently paying car allowances to 532 staff members of staff (£0.236m) compared to 641 members of staff at the same point in time twelve months ago (£0.316m).
- 4.6 Analysis of the data shows that in the period April 2023 to December 2023, 244 (46%) of those individuals in roles with the Essential Car Allowance have recorded/ claimed zero miles (302= 47% to December 2022). For the same period 52 (10%) recorded/claimed for 1 to 100 miles (38= 6% to December 2022) and 236 (44%) recorded/claimed for 101 and above miles

(301= 47% to December 2022). It should be noted that anecdotal evidence suggests that officers do not always claim mileage travelled, particularly where the value is low.

- 4.7 The Liberal Democrats believe, and the analysis above supports the view that a review of the posts which attract essential car user status should be undertaken with the intention of removing the lump sum payment from posts where users routinely record zero, or very few miles. Removal of the allowance from 100 employees would result in a £0.050m saving. Due to the consultation requirements only a part year saving of £0.013m would be generated in 2024/25 with full year effect being applied in 2025/26.

OPP-BR1-205 – Reduction in the Stationary Budget (£0.010m)

- 4.8 It is proposed that a budget reduction of £0.010m is implemented in 2024/25 in relation to the Stationary Budget in the belief that there is scope for a modest reduction in this area. Facilitated by the increase in home working there is a reduced reliance on physical stationary and an increasingly 'paper-less' working environment which will be consolidated as staff move to the Spindles centre. The purchase of remaining requirement for stationary is completed by individual teams across the organisation on an ad hoc basis which does not always ensure best value for money through economies of scale. It is therefore suggested that the purchase of stationery could be centralised ensuring that better value for money was being achieved through increased understanding of which items are required, volumes etc.

Summary

- 4.9 After considering all investment and savings proposals there is a balanced position as can be seen in Appendix A.

5. Items for Future Consideration

1) Hire out office space externally

A survey by Deloitte found the majority of CEO's (97%) are planning to make the changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic permanent, including increased working from home. Although a combination of office and homeworking will be needed it is reasonable to assume there will be increased demand for occasional office space and meeting rooms where external organisations require space for one off larger meetings or team away days. Conversely, if the Council also takes advantage of the increased capability for flexible working, such as working from home and virtual meetings, there will also be a decrease in demand internally for meeting rooms. Whilst acknowledging that the estate is being rationalised, the Council should look into the potential of hiring its meeting room space, including the modern facilities in the newly established Spindles, longer term proposals for Henshaw House and to maximise opportunities at satellite buildings and Town Halls.

2) Local Spending

The Liberal Democrats support a steady increase in the percentage of Council expenditure made with businesses based in our Borough and also an increased percentage of Council job vacancies made available to local residents. These aspirations also embrace spending and hiring by MioCare CIC and Oldham Community Leisure, and other partners, such as our two local colleges, the Oldham Integrated Care Board, the NHS Acute and Primary Care Trusts and social landlords.

We have called for an increase in Council local spending from the initial 52% reported in the 2019/20 financial year to at least 60% and for efforts to be made to encourage local residents to apply for Council jobs especially those at entry level. It is disappointing to note that the average for Local Spend was 46.4% in 2022/23 compared to 55% in 2021/22. The position

does however appear to be improving with 53.2% being reported at quarter 2 in the current financial year (against a target of 55%.) In addition, we note that the Council is looking to increase this figure with the implementation of the Social Value Portal for contracts above £0.100m and a programme of engagement events with local suppliers within cohorts of spend, supporting them on how to submit tenders and giving them visibility of the future pipelines of tenders coming up within their specific industry. Clearly work needs to continue to meet the stated criteria. This combined approach should yield an increase in local spend to circa 60%.

By retaining Council Tax and other revenue within the Borough, through awarding contracts where-ever possible to local businesses and by employing local people, the Liberal Democrats believe the Council and its partners can establish a virtuous circle 'making every Oldham pound go further' as this money will in turn be spent in local shops and hospitality businesses. This helps create a local economy that will recover more quickly after the COVID-19 pandemic and is also more environmentally sustainable, as it reduces commuting and the transport miles associated with the supply of goods and provision of services by contractors outside of the borough.

In addition, to support local spending, the Liberal Democrats would welcome consideration of a "local impact" measure when considering budget cuts, this would assess whether a savings option would disproportionately impact Oldham suppliers or the local economy.

3) The Remediation of Brownfield Land

The Liberal Democrats believe that the Administration should be prepared to repurpose a further significant sum from the capital programme to pay for the remediation of brownfield land sites for housing development, if either no money, or an insufficient sum, is made available to the authority from the Greater Manchester Brownfield Fund. The Flexible Housing Fund does have an allocation over the life of the current Capital Programme, however, notwithstanding the current commitments identified at this present time, it is felt that more can be done.

4) Comprehensive Analysis of Major Capital Spending Projects

The Administration has committed to a series of "big ticket" capital spending projects, largely based around Oldham town centre. The Liberal Democrats acknowledge the importance of improving our urban districts, and the need to drive improvements of Oldham town centre and are therefore suggesting there should be a thorough review of the current capital Programme; more in depth than the Annual Review, specifically targeted at schemes which have not yet begun or those where there is scope for a reduced specification.

5) Review of Potential for Housing Stock Ownership

The Administration Budget includes measures to increase the amount of rental stock available to provide accommodation to manage the current levels of homelessness in the Borough. In the medium and long term, however, this should be addressed by capital investment in housing stock, which will better offset the current revenue demands caused by this increased pressure in a demand led-.

6. Review of Previous Liberal Democrat Budgets

- 6.1 At its meeting on 7 February 2023 the Performance, Overview and Scrutiny Committee, in considering the 2023/24 Liberal Democrat Budget Reduction proposals, referred the Liberal Democrat revenue and capital budget reduction and investment proposals to Cabinet for consideration, the Committee once again shared the concerns in relation to the lack of review of mileage budgets. Without any available funding, Cabinet at its meeting on 13 February

2023 was not in a position to give its support to the Alternative Investment Proposals. Subsequently, the Budget Amendment was moved at the Council meeting held on 1 March 2023 but lost after a recorded vote.

- 6.2 It should be noted that items which have previously been rejected or referred for consideration have subsequently been adopted or proposed in full or in part by the Administration, these include:
1. Income targets with regard to Section 38 and Section 278 inspections within the Highways service
 2. Levels of expenditure within General Training budgets
 3. A variable lighting strategy in relation to street lighting
 4. Increasing the Council Tax Premium on Empty properties
- 6.3 A proposed/pending review of reward and recognition packages, to include essential car user allowances has still not been brought forward. Service data still suggests that in this tough financial climate this is an area which need to be considered in order to protect front line services.
- 6.4 Given the continued pressure within Children's Social Care, within which a major factor is the increasing cost and demand for Out of Borough Residential Placements, it is disappointing to note that the proposal to commission a Council run care home within the administrations 2023/24 proposed budget has not been delivered. Mindful of the amended Administration proposal to open three homes in 2024/25 the Liberal Democrats have chosen not replicate the 2023/24 proposal for an additional care home within its 2024/25 alternative budget.
- 6.5 In addition, some of the other previous recommendations have not been actioned. For example the Government provided (initially as part of its response to COVID-19) and continues to provide significant funding through the Holiday Activity and Food Programme in order to provide meals and activities for disadvantaged children during school holidays, therefore it has been unnecessary to identify funding for such activities from existing budgets in 2020/21 through to 2023/24 and again in 2024/25.

7. Director of Finance Comments

- 7.1 I confirm in my role as Responsible Officer under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 that the budget amendments as presented are robust and deliverable.
- 7.2 As it is an alternative set of budget options the opportunity for testing the risks associated with the proposals are more limited and it is therefore necessary to afford a level of caution in presenting these alternatives. (Sarah Johnston)

8. Options/Alternatives

- 8.1 With regard to the consideration of the Liberal Democrat's alternative Capital Programme for 2024/25 to 2028/29, revenue investment proposals and revenue savings proposals for 2024/25 to 2025/26, the options available to the Scrutiny Board are to:
- Accept and recommend to Cabinet all of the recommendations of the report
 - Accept and recommend to Cabinet some of the recommendations of the report and reject others
 - Reject all of the recommendations of the report

9. Preferred Option

- 9.1 The preferred option is that the Scrutiny Board accepts all of the recommendations.

10. Consultation

- 10.1 Service Managers have been involved in compiling the proposals and the proposals have been agreed within the content of the business cases attached at Appendix B.

11. Financial Implications

- 11.1 The financial implications are included within the report.

12. Legal Services Comments

- 12.1 There are no immediate legal issues arising from the report save that where the proposals involve a change to officer's employment terms and conditions and/ or potential redundancies appropriate HR processes will need to be followed in accordance with the Council's policies and procedures. (Alex Bougatef)

13. Co-operative Agenda

- 13.1 Revenue and Capital Investment and Savings proposals have been considered in conjunction with the Council's Co-operative Agenda and there are no adverse impacts.

14. Human Resources Comments

- 14.1 The Opposition proposals are noted.
- 14.2 The removal of car allowance, if treated as a standalone activity, is unlikely to align with work ongoing to determine future ways of working and this should therefore be incorporated into this wider workstream. The options with workforce implications will be assessed should they be approved and discharged in accordance with the organisation's policies and procedures. (Vikki Morris)

15. Risk Assessments

- 15.1 The risks of deliverability have been considered and as it is an alternative set of budget proposals the opportunity for testing the risks associated with the proposals are more limited and as advised above, it is therefore necessary to afford a level of caution in presenting these alternatives.

16. IT Implications

- 16.1 There are no specific IT requirements associated with the proposals that have not already been considered.

17. Property Implications

- 17.1 The Council's approach to its Medium Term Property Strategy will involve the relevant workstreams associated with for example, regeneration, new investments and combating climate change and carbon neutral initiatives.

18. Procurement Implications

- 18.1 Any proposals that impact on the procurement of goods, services etc. will be undertaken in full liaison with the Procurement Service and in compliance with all necessary Council and statutory requirements.

19. Environmental and Health & Safety Implications

19.1 There are no adverse environmental or Health and Safety implications associated with the proposals.

20. Implications for Children and Young People

20.1 The investment in youth services is the key proposals that will impact have a beneficial impact on children and young people.

21. Equality, community cohesion and crime implications

21.1 There are no adverse equality, community cohesion or crime implications associated with the proposals.

22. Equality Impact Assessment Completed

22.1 These are not required at the present time for these proposals.

23. Key Decision

23.1 No.

24. Key Decision Reference

24.1 Not a Key Decision.

25. Background Papers

25.1 The following is a list of background papers on which this report is based in accordance with the requirements of Section 100(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. It does not include documents which would disclose exempt or confidential information as defined by the Act:

File Ref: Background papers are contained in Appendices A and B
Officer Name: Andy Cooper (andy.cooper@oldham.gov.uk)

26. Appendices

26.1 Appendix A: Summary of Alternative Budget Proposals.
Appendix B: Business Cases for Alternative Budget Reduction Proposals.

Appendix A

Summary of Alternative Budget Proposals

APPENDIX A

Proposal Reference	Proposal Name	Responsible Officer	Budget Proposal 2024/25 £000	FTE Impact 2023/24	Budget Proposal 2025/26 £000	FTE Impact 2025/26	Cumulative Budget Impact £000	EIA Required?
Alternative Budget: Capital Investment Proposals								
Investment Proposals								
	Member Led Investment in our Districts (inc crime prevention, roads and road safety, district centres and environmental improvements)		1,000		1,000		2,000	No
Total Cost of Alternative Capital Programme			1,000	0	1,000	0	2,000	
Funded by:								
	Fund for Emerging Priorities		(1,043)		(3,318)		(4,361)	
Total Funding			(1,043)	0	(3,318)	0	(4,361)	
Balance			(43)	0	(2,318)	0	(2,361)	
Alternative Budget: Revenue Budget Proposals								
Revenue Investment Proposals								
	Highways and Pavement Repairs		100		70		170	No
	Green Spaces		100		69		169	No
	Youth Services		50				50	No
	Investment in Crime and Safety		50				50	No
	Whit Friday- band contest		11				11	No
Total Revenue Budget Investment Proposals			311	0	139	0	450	
Alternative Budget Reduction Proposals								
OPP-BR1-201	Reconsideration of Council priorities with regards to the Communications and Research Service	Jeni Harvey	(198)	(5.3)	(67)	0	(265)	No
OPP-BR1-202	Reduction in mileage budgets to reflect change in work practices	Vikki Morris	(55)		0	0	(55)	No
OPP-BR1-203	Reduction in the subsidisation of Trades Union facilities time	Vikki Morris	(35)	(1.65)	(35)		(70)	No
OPP-BR1-204	Review of car allowances to reduce the amount paid as a lump sum to staff doing zero or minimal mileage	Vikki Morris	(13)		(37)	0	(50)	No
OPP-BR1-205	Reduction in stationery purchased	Corporate	(10)				(10)	No
Total Budget Reduction Suggestions			(311)	(7.0)	(139)	0.0	(450)	
Surplus Budget/Total FTE Impact			0	(7.0)	0	0	0	

Appendix B

Business cases for alternative budget reduction proposals

Budget reductions

BR1 - Section A

Portfolio:	Reform and Regeneration
Service Area:	Communications and Research
Budget Reduction Title:	Communications and Research Service Redesign

Budget Reduction Proposal - Detail and Objectives:

The role of the Communications and Research service is to communicate and engage with a wide range of audiences both within Oldham and beyond; in order to ensure residents are aware of Council news and services; to attract visitors and investors; and to enable our residents and stakeholders to participate in decision-making.

The Communications and Research service currently has 18 permanent FTE staff working across disciplines including digital and web, design, social media, video creation, media relations, internal communications, media relations, marketing, engagement and consultation.

As more information moves online and residents become increasingly technologically advanced the need to produce hard copy publications reduces. As such the Liberal Democrats propose to reduce the service budget for the Communications and Research team by £0.265m over a two year period.

This reduction would be met by generating £0.260m through ceasing the publication of '@Oldham Council, Working for You' and deleting/ disestablishing 5.3 FTE posts.

Alongside the above reductions, it is proposed to generate revenue of circa £0.005m through income generation activities across the full range of Council media channels

2023/24 Service Budget and Establishment	£000
Employees	927
Other Operational Expenses	75
Income	(5)
Total	997

Current Forecast (under) / overspend	-
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Number of posts (Full time equivalent)	18
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	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Proposed Budget Reduction (£000)	(198)	(67)	
Proposed Staffing Reductions (FTE)	5.3	0	0

Is your proposal a 'one-off' in 2024/25 or is it ongoing?	Ongoing
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Section B

What impact does the proposal have on the following?

Property
No impact
Service Delivery
Such significant savings to the Communications would destabilise the service's ability to deliver effective communications to the people of Oldham, and mean some core communications activity could not be delivered.
Future expected outcomes
Reducing the number of staff by 5.3 would mean that the Communications service would have to focus only on some essential elements of the service, which are chiefly reactive communications such as responding to media enquiries. This would mean the team would be unable to proactively engage with residents and communities via social and digital media; produce videos, undertake as much research and public engagement, or put out press releases with positive news stories about the council's work. This could then lead to a knock-on reputational risk due to a reduction in positive, proactive, communications teamed with far less direct engagement with residents and communities. The team would also be unable to carry out campaigns work for essential areas such as adoption, foster carer recruitment, social work recruitment and more, which could severely impact on our ability as a Council to deliver critical services such as caring for vulnerable young people. The aim of launching the Oldham Council: Working for You council newspaper was primarily to provide essential information, such as contact numbers and guidance on help and support available to households, to those without access to the Internet. Ceasing the publication of Oldham Council: Working for You could therefore lead to people who do not have access to our website or social media channels being unable to access the information they need, and struggling to get in touch with Council departments.
Organisation
Such a significant reduction in the Communications budget would mean non-essential communications internally would have to be ceased. This would lead to the organisation as a whole being less informed and less able to be effective ambassadors who understand our values and behaviours, or our aims and objectives for the borough – hampering colleagues' ability to serve local leaders and put residents first.
Workforce
Removing almost a third of the staffing in the service would create increased pressure on staff that remain, as well as removing technical specialisms such as design, video production and web expertise.
Communities and Service Users
Reduced communications activity – including social media – would leave residents less well informed about what the Council provides, including critical information such as making safeguarding referrals, getting help with housing, or accessing the range of support available through the Cost of Living crisis. Adding advertising to the website would also have a detrimental effect on the customer experience. At present, the Communications team focuses on trying to simplify web content and create interfaces that are designed to assist the resident in their tasks. Selling advertising space would undermine that effort, decrease usability and make it more difficult for service users – particularly our most vulnerable residents – to complete tasks online.
Children and Young People
No specific impact

Oldham Cares
Reduced partner communications would leave partners unclear of the role of the Council on key partnership projects, and less able to collaborate effectively.
Other Partner Organisations
Reduced partner communications would leave partners unclear of the role of the Council on key partnership projects, and less able to collaborate effectively.

Who are the key stakeholders?

Staff	Yes
Elected Members	Yes
Residents	Yes
Local business community	Yes
Schools	N/A
Trade Unions	N/A
External partners (if yes please specify below)	N/A
Other Council departments (if yes please specify below)	
Other (if yes please specify below)	

Benefits to the organisation/staff/customers including performance improvements
A budget reduction of £0.265m across 2024/25 and 2025/26

Section C

Key Risks and Mitigations – include any interdependencies

Risk	Mitigation
The Communications and Research team will be unable to meet demand.	Services will be fully engaged in the redesign process, ensuring the service continues to meet business needs and focus on key priorities during this time of change.
Proactive communications would be vastly reduced.	A tightly defined and agreed set of core priorities would have to be agreed across the organisation with an acceptance that many existing communications activities would cease.

A reduction in communication opportunities could lead to some areas delivering their own messaging.	Utilise other avenues for communication within the organisation or partners.
Inappropriate advertisements appearing on the Council website through automatic advertising placement.	Increased officer time would need to be spent managing this aspect of the website, to ensure no adverts appear on the site that are controversial or inappropriate. The cost of this may outweigh revenue brought in by the advertising.

Key Development and Delivery Milestones

Milestone	Timeline
Undertake a formal review and consultation with impacted services and staff.	Q1 2024/2025
Implement a restructure of the Communications and Research service	Q2 2024/2025

Section D

Consultation required?	TBC
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	Start	Conclusion
Staff	TBC	TBC
Trade Union	TBC	TBC
Public	N/A	N/A
Service Users	N/A	N/A
Other	N/A	N/A

Equality Impact Screening

Is there potential for the proposed budget reduction to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following?

Disabled people	N/A
Particular Ethnic Groups	N/A
Men or Women (including impacts due to pregnancy / maternity)	N/A
People who are married or in a civil partnership	N/A
People of particular sexual orientation	N/A
People who are proposing to undergo, undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N/A
People on low incomes	N/A
People in particular age groups	N/A
Groups with particular faiths and beliefs	N/A

EIA required? (choose YES if any of the above impacts are YES)	NO
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Section E

Finance comments
<p>This option would result in a reduction of 5.3 posts within the Communications and Research service and the cessation of the Oldham Council Working For You publication, which would generate a saving of £0.260m in a full financial year. There is also an additional proposal to generate additional income estimated at £0.005m per annum and therefore the total budget reduction would be £0.265m over a two year period. The proposal may incur redundancy costs which would be funded centrally.</p> <p>The Communications and Research Service has put forward a budget reduction of £0.075m for 2024/25 (with a further £0.025m in 2025/26), achieved by a full service review, for this reason the initially proposed reduction of £0.365m in a full year is reduced accordingly to £0.265m across the two years.</p> <p>Due to the requirement for consultation with Trades Unions and staff, the whole of the reduction cannot be achieved in the first year. The profiling to incorporate this process is therefore the realisation of £0.198m in 2024/25 and £0.067m in 2025/26.</p>

Signed RO	5 February 2024
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Signed Finance	5 February 2024
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BR1 - Section A

Portfolio:	Corporate Services
Service Area:	Human Resources and Organisational Development
Budget Reduction Title:	Reduction in mileage budgets to reflect changes in work practices

Budget Reduction Proposal - Detail and Objectives:

The Liberal Democrats propose to reduce mileage budgets by £0.055m on a pro rata basis across the Council, excluding Adult Social Care and Children's Social Care cost centres.

Mileage can currently be claimed for work related travel except for travel from Oldham town centre to the following destinations (unless there are mitigating circumstances):

- Manchester City Centre
- Failsworth District Centre
- Royton District Centre
- Rochdale Town Centre
- Ashton Town Centre

Line managers must agree beforehand that using a personal vehicle is the most appropriate way to travel to a destination.

The Liberal Democrats propose that due to the increase in Council employees working from home and the increase of Teams based meetings, the requirement to travel on Council business using a personal vehicle has reduced.

2023/24 Service Budget and Establishment	£000
Employees	N/A
Other Operational Expenses	158
Income	N/A
Total	158

Current Forecast (under) / overspend	(98)
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Number of posts (Full time equivalent)	N/A
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	2024/25	2025/26	2027/28
Proposed Budget Reduction (£000)	(50)	0	0
Proposed Staffing Reductions (FTE)	0	0	0

Is your proposal a 'one-off' in 2024/25 or is it ongoing?	On-going
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Section B

What impact does the proposal have on the following?

Property
None.
Service Delivery
Council staff may have to consider alternate forms of transport if required to travel for work requirements.
Future expected outcomes
Budgets would be amended to reflect the decreasing demand for mileage claims.
Organisation
None.
Workforce
There is the potential that the workforce would evaluate whether travel is necessary or whether meetings could take place via Microsoft Teams.
Communities / Service Users
None.
Oldham Cares
None.
Partner Organisations
None.

Who are the key stakeholders?

Staff	Yes
Elected Members	No
Residents	No
Local business community	No
Schools	No
Trade Unions	No
External partners (if yes please specify below)	No
N/A	
Other Council departments (if yes please specify below)	Yes
All Council departments	
Other (if yes please specify below)	No
N/A	

Benefits to the organisation/staff/customers including performance improvements	
Budgets would be reduced to reflect the decrease in mileage claims.	

Section C

Key Risks and Mitigations

Risk	Mitigation
Staff continue to claim mileage for non-essential travel.	Adequate communication to all staff detailing the new policy along with regular budget monitoring to ensure any potential areas of overspend can be identified early and raised with budget holders.
Essential travel is restricted due to lack of travel budgets.	Budgets where essential travel is assumed to be a regular requirement are excluded from the budget reductions, for example Adults and Children's Social Care.
N/A	N/A

Key Development and Delivery Milestones

Milestone	Timeline
Proposal presented to the Policy Overview Scrutiny Committee.	8 February 2024
Review of Cost Centres which could be excluded from the budget reduction proposal.	February – March 2024
The budget reduction is implemented.	April 2024

Section D

Consultation required?	No
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	Start	Conclusion
Staff	N/A	N/A
Trade Union	N/A	N/A
Public	N/A	N/A
Service Users	N/A	N/A
Other	N/A	N/A

Equality Impact Screening

Is there potential for the proposed budget reduction to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following?

Disabled people	No
Particular Ethnic Groups	No
Men or Women (including impacts due to pregnancy / maternity)	No
People who are married or in a civil partnership	No
People of particular sexual orientation	No
People who are proposing to undergo, undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	No
People on low incomes	No
People in particular age groups	No
Groups with particular faiths and beliefs	No

EIA required? (choose YES if any of the above impacts are YES)	No
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Section E

Finance comments
This proposal would result in a budget reduction of £0.055m across mileage budgets. Budget monitoring during 2024/25 will highlight if there are any challenges to the delivery of the proposal.

Signed RO	5/2/2024
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Signed Finance	5/2/2024
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Additional information (if required)

There are many groups of roles across Council services that require travel as part of their day to day job description requirements, such as town planners, environmental health staff etc. and not just Social Workers. If staff were asked to use public transport as an alternative, this may drive up costs.

BR1 - Section A

Portfolio:	Corporate Services
Service Area:	Human Resources and Organisational Development
Budget Reduction Title:	Reduce the subsidisation of Trades Union Facility Time

Budget Reduction Proposal - Detail and Objectives:

The Council, in accordance with the National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service, recognises 3 unions for Local Government Services employees as follow:

- Unison 2.89 FTE
- GMB 0.8 FTE
- Unite 0.4 FTE

Oldham Council supports the system of collective bargaining and the principle of solving employee relations problems by discussion and agreement before they escalate and to facilitate the conduct of joint business.

The role of the unions is therefore to work with the employer to represent and protect the interests of their members by:

- Negotiating agreements with the Council on changes to conditions of service or other contractual provisions;
- Representing the workforce in consultation on changes which impact on their members or that represent major changes to the workplace such as large-scale restructure or working practices;
- Supporting members to discuss their concerns with the Council;
- Accompanying their members in disciplinary and grievance meetings; and
- Providing access to legal and financial advice and other support functions.

The Council seeks to provide for time off and facilities within the statutory framework provided by of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992, and the ACAS Code of Practice 'Time off for Trade Union Duties and Activities'. The Liberal Democrats are proposing the Council reduces it subsidisation of trade union support following a reduction in membership. This would result in a reduction of approximately 50% of the base budget resulting in a total saving £0.070m which, due to the consultation required, would be achieved over 2 financial years.

In addition, the Liberal Democrats propose a review is undertaken to ensure the Council subsidy of Trades Union time and facilities is in line with that of neighbouring boroughs.

2023/24 Service Budget and Establishment	£000
Employees	116
Other Operational Expenses	55
Income	(12)
Total	159

Current Forecast (under) / overspend	31
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Number of posts (Full time equivalent)	3.30
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	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Proposed Budget Reduction (£000)	(35)	(35)	-
Proposed Staffing Reductions (FTE)	(1.65)	-	-

Is your proposal a 'one-off' in 2024/25 or is it ongoing?	Ongoing
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Section B

What impact does the proposal have on the following?

Property	Potential impact on provision of office facilities within Manchester Chambers for UNISON and rent collection for this property.
Service Delivery	Potentially less effective use of management time and ability to conduct meetings and hearings due to non-availability of union representation.
Future expected outcomes	Loss of goodwill and excellent industrial relations history. Movement of trade union activity from local to regional level. Loss of trust and confidence among the workforce where unions are not fully involved.
Organisation	Delays in work and projects requiring (or where best practice dictates) working with, consulting or negotiating with the trade unions.
Workforce	Potential reduction in employee capacity arising from the requirement to engage the workforce directly in matters normally subject to trades union engagement. Frustration from employees unable to access statutory right to representation and delays to dealing with any matters.
Communities	Delay in the delivery of change or other cost saving activities
Service Users	Delay in the delivery of change or other cost saving activities
Partner Organisations	Where unions represent employees working within or in partnership with our partners – similar implications to those identified for Oldham Council. Oldham Council employees are not fully or properly represented in change that affects them and which is instigated within partner organisations.

Who are the key stakeholders?

Staff	Yes
Elected Members	Yes
Residents	No
Local business community	No

Schools	Yes
Trade Unions	Yes
External partners (if yes please specify below)	No
Other Council departments (if yes please specify below)	Yes
All	
Other (if yes please specify below)	Yes
Oldham Cares, Mio Care Group, Unity, Oldham Schools, Academies (who buy back)	

Benefits to the organisation/staff/customers including performance improvements
Reduction in cost.

Section C

Key Risks and Mitigations

Risk	Mitigation
Delay in the ability of management to arrange and undertake meetings requiring statutory or policy trade union presence in a timely manner or having no continuity of attendees.	Trade Unions to seek greater involvement from Regional / National Officers. Trade Unions to increase recruitment of directorate stewards to undertake role within working time, although previous attempts yielded little success. Lengthen consultation periods / development of new initiatives deadlines to allow for limited availability of local representatives.
TU lack of capacity to be able to support and properly represent their members especially given the Transformation Programme within the Council, Greater Manchester devolution, Health Integration Programme, change within Children's services and the significant levels of change anticipated within Oldham over the next 12 - 24 months.	Trade Unions to seek greater involvement from Regional / National Officers. Trade Unions to increase recruitment of directorate stewards to undertake role within working time, although previous attempts yielded little success.
Inability of the organisation to comply with statutory, national or local policy requirements regarding negotiation, consultation and representation which will increase the risk of successful challenge, litigation and significant cost.	Trade Unions to seek greater involvement from Regional / National Officers. Trade Unions to increase recruitment of directorate stewards to undertake role within working time, although previous attempts yielded little success. Increase in employee direct engagement.
Confusion with the Councils own Fair Employment Charter which honours the right of every employee to be an active member of a recognised trade union without fear of discrimination or reprisal.	Be clear with employees where they are able to access alternative representation outside of the Council.

Movement away from local representation and engagement, with Unions relying more on their own professional Regional Officers. Significant time delays due to lack of availability together with loss of knowledgeable local representation who understand the context, history and operational positions within Oldham.	Retain the recognition agreement and sufficient reasonable and benchmarked facility time.
Reduction in capacity efficiencies gained from collective bargaining. Decline in current constructive industrial relations working partnership and increase in disputes and escalation of industrial action	Retain the recognition agreement and sufficient and benchmarked facility time.

Key Development and Delivery Milestones

Milestone	Timeline
Complete review of Employment decision making mechanisms in conjunction with Constitutional Services	February 2024
Consult trades union on proposals	February 2024
Review Membership amongst current workforce and update TU figures	April 2024
Benchmark facility time against results from 2022/2023 statutory return	April 2024
(Submission of statutory trade union statistics return to government site under the Trade Union Facility Time Publication Requirements Regs 2017)	(By 31 July 2024)
Open consultation with the trades unions on any change proposals resulting from change to mechanisms and the normal bi - annual review.	April 2024
Internal sign off process.	June 2024
Submission to relevant committee for sign off.	July 2024

Section D

Consultation required?	Yes
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	Start	Conclusion
Staff	N/A	N/A
Trade Union	Feb 2024	June 2024
Public	N/A	N/A
Service Users	N/A	N/A
Other – schools /partners	April 2024	June 2024

Equality Impact Screening

Is there potential for the proposed budget reduction to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following?

Disabled people	No
Particular Ethnic Groups	No
Men or Women (including impacts due to pregnancy / maternity)	No
People who are married or in a civil partnership	No
People of particular sexual orientation	No
People who are proposing to undergo, undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	No
People on low incomes	No
People in particular age groups	No
Groups with particular faiths and beliefs	No

EIA required? (choose YES if any of the above impacts are YES)	No
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Section E

Finance comments
The successful delivery of this budget reduction proposal will require successful negotiation with Trades Union representatives. There will be the requirement for careful management of consequences such as staff / managers spending time on staffing matters that Trades Union representatives would otherwise have undertaken, leading to increased costs. This will therefore require close financial monitoring.

Signed RO	5/02/2024
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Signed Finance	5/02/2024
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BR1 - Section A

Portfolio:	Corporate Services
Service Area:	Human Resources and Organisational Development
Budget Reduction Title:	Review of car allowances as previously promised to reduce the amount paid as a lump sum to staff doing zero or minimal mileage

Budget Reduction Proposal - Detail and Objectives:

An Essential Car Allowance of £500 is paid to staff members who are employed in positions which are designated as requiring a car as essential to completing the duties of the post. The money is paid over 12 months at £41.66 a month.

As at January 2024 the Council had 532 staff members employed in roles that paid the Essential Car Allowance, compared to 641 twelve months prior.

Analysis of the data shows that in the period April 2023 to December 2024, 244 (46%) of those individuals in roles with the Essential Car Allowance have recorded/claimed zero miles. For the same period 52 (10%) recorded/claimed for 1 to 100 miles and 236 (44%) recorded/claimed for 101 and above miles.

It should be noted that anecdotal evidence suggests that officers do not always claim mileage travelled, particularly where the value is low.

The Liberal Democrats propose generating a £0.050m saving by reducing the number of posts that attract an essential car user payment. A saving of £0.050m would equate to removal of allowance from 100 employees. Due to consultation requirements, only a part year reduction of £0.013m would be generated in 2024/25 with an additional saving of £0.037m in 2024/25.

There is a local agreement with Trades Unions regarding the assessment of entitlement and application of the Car Allowance Scheme. The scheme comprises a series of factors, including mileage, and allocates points per factor. Consultation with Trades Unions and individuals would need to take place before staff terms and conditions could be amended.

2023/24 Service Budget and Establishment	£000
Employees	0
Other Operational Expenses	419
Income	0
Total	419
Current Forecast (under) / overspend	50
Number of posts (Full time equivalent)	0

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Proposed Budget Reduction (£000)	(13)	(37)	-
Proposed Staffing Reductions (FTE)	-	-	-

Is your proposal a 'one-off' in 2024/25 or is it ongoing?	On-going
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Section B

What impact does the proposal have on the following?

Property
As Essential user status bestows free parking on Council property, budget is provided to the Property Team. Removal of Essential user status would lead to a reduction in the Property Team budget.
Service Delivery
Employees may refuse to use their own vehicles to complete their duties which may result in service delay, especially in the areas of social care. The removal of allowances in certain areas could have a detrimental impact on recruitment and retention, for example Social Workers where recruitment is already difficult.
Future expected outcomes
Potential to increase travel costs associated with other methods e.g. taxi, public transport.
Organisation
None.
Workforce
Certain individuals will have Car Allowance removed. Car parking costs would also increase for those individuals who are reclassified from Essential Users. The contractual change may not be accepted by the individual resulting in their dismissal and re-engagement.
Communities / Service Users
Potential for delays in receiving support in certain areas, e.g. social care.
Oldham Cares
None.
Partner Organisations
The alignment of practice within Team Oldham organisation should be considered as part of the exercise.

Who are the key stakeholders?

Staff	Yes
Elected Members	No
Residents	No
Local business community	No
Schools	No
Trade Unions	Yes
External partners (if yes please specify below)	No
N/A	

Other Council departments (if yes please specify below)	Yes
People and Place - Property	
Other (if yes please specify below)	No
N/A	

Benefits to the organisation/staff/customers including performance improvements
Achievement of a budget reduction.

Section C

Key Risks and Mitigations

Risk	Mitigation
The allowance may be taken from users who travel a significant number of miles but have not claimed recompense in the past.	Communicate to claimants the requirement to claim mileage on a regular basis. This would develop an accurate baseline on which to conduct the exercise. The claiming of mileage previously unclaimed will come at an initial cost.
Where allowance is removed there may be an increase in costs associated with other modes of transport, e.g. taxis, public transport.	None.
There is a requirement to undertake appropriate consultation and seek agreement from Trades Unions.	Excellent working relationships with Trades Unions should facilitate and appropriate agreement. In the event agreement is not possible, individual consultation will be required and dismissal and re-engagement processes invoked at last resort.
Services areas where the allowance is paid may be experiencing recruitment and retention difficulties as a result of the proposal. Areas such as Children's Social Work already experience significant difficulties in recruiting and this may exacerbate the issue.	The revised scheme must account for critical areas.
The savings are indicative at this point and have not been modelled on the final scheme (as this is presently not finalised). The full savings may therefore not be realised.	The revised scheme / removal of the allowance will account for the required savings and seek to deliver.
The organisation and services have not yet developed the post-Covid operating model which may further increase remote working and reliance on car travel to visit service users.	Proposals should be developed in synergy with targeted working styles.

Key Development and Delivery Milestones

Milestone	Timeline
Proposal presented to the Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee.	8 February 2024
Communicate to all staff the requirement to claim mileage in a timely manner.	April – May 2024
Finalise new scheme / allowances (or removal of)	June – September 2024
Consult with affected employees and Trade Unions	October – December 2024
Implement new scheme	January 2025

Section D

Consultation required?	Yes
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	Start	Conclusion
Staff	October 2024	December 2024
Trade Union	October 2024	December 2025
Public	N/A	N/A
Service Users	N/A	N/A
Other	N/A	N/A

Equality Impact Screening

Is there potential for the proposed budget reduction to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following?

Disabled people	N/A
Particular Ethnic Groups	N/A
Men or Women (including impacts due to pregnancy / maternity)	N/A
People who are married or in a civil partnership	N/A
People of particular sexual orientation	N/A

People who are proposing to undergo, undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N/A
People on low incomes	N/A
People in particular age groups	N/A
Groups with particular faiths and beliefs	N/A
EIA required? (choose YES if any of the above impacts are YES)	N/A

Section E

Finance comments
The reduction in the number of essential users for car allowances by 100 employees would generate a saving of £0.050m. Due to the need to consult this would be phased over 2024/25 (£0.13m) and 2025/26 (£0.037m). The achievement of this budget reduction will be reliant on successful negotiation with Trades Unions and the management of any consequences such as additional alternative travel arrangements.

Signed RO	5/2/2024
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Signed Finance	5/2/2024
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BR1 - Section A

Portfolio:	Corporate Services
Service:	Cross Cutting
Budget Reduction Title:	Reduction in the amount of stationery purchased across the authority

Budget Reduction Proposal - Detail and Objectives:

The purchase of stationery pre the pandemic was completed using the A1 financial system. This ensures that suppliers used are those where contracts have been agreed by the strategic sourcing team. However, rather than stationery being ordered centrally, it was on occasion ordered by individual teams on an ad hoc basis which did not always ensure best value for money through economies of scale.

Previous proposals for savings around centralising the system have been superseded by the pandemic. This has resulted in substantial home working reducing the requirement for stationery purchased across the authority. The Liberal Democrats therefore propose that for 2024/25, each mainstream stationery budget is reduced by 15% to reflect the reduced demand for stationary and the move to a paper-less working environment.

2023/24 Service Budget and Establishment	£000
Employees	N/A
Other Operational Expenses	70
Income	N/A
Total	70

Current Forecast (under) / overspend	(4)
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Number of posts (Full time equivalent)	N/A
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	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Proposed Budget Reduction (£000)	(10)	0	0
Proposed Staffing Reductions (FTE)	0	0	0

Is your proposal a 'one-off' in 2024/25 or is it ongoing?	Ongoing
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Section B

What impact does the proposal have on the following?

Property
None.
Service Delivery
None.
Future expected outcomes
Staff work using the ICT provided reducing the requirement for future Stationery.
Organisation
Staff continue to work at home.
Workforce
There is the potential that the workforce would evaluate whether items were needed if they were required to arrange a pick-up at the office.
Communities / Service Users
None.
Oldham Cares
None.
Partner Organisations
None.

Who are the key stakeholders?

Staff	Yes
Elected Members	No
Residents	No
Local business community	No
Schools	No
Trade Unions	No
External partners (if yes please specify below)	No
N/A	
Other Council departments (if yes please specify below)	Yes
All Council departments	
Other (if yes please specify below)	Yes

Current suppliers of stationery items	
Benefits to the organisation/staff/customers including performance improvements	
Financial savings would be achieved by less stationery required due to increased online working.	

Section C

Key Risks and Mitigations

Risk	Mitigation
Services continue to purchase stationery at the same level as before home working.	Staff continue to minimise work in the office therefore reducing Stationery ordered.
Certain processes continue to require stationery to support them.	The new way of working would be discussed throughout 2024/25 to ensure that stationery ordered does not increase burden on any one service.
N/A	N/A

Key Development and Delivery Milestones

Milestone	Timeline
Proposal presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Performance and Value for Money Select Committee.	8 February 2024
Implementation of 15% reduction of 2024/25 mainstream stationery budgets.	1 April 2024
Monitoring of expenditure against reduced budgets and early identification of pressures	Q1 and Q2 2024/25

Section D

Consultation required?	No
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	Start	Conclusion
Staff	N/A	N/A
Trade Union	N/A	N/A
Public	N/A	N/A
Service Users	N/A	N/A
Other	N/A	N/A

Equality Impact Screening

Is there potential for the proposed budget reduction to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following?

Disabled people	No
Particular Ethnic Groups	No
Men or Women (including impacts due to pregnancy / maternity)	No
People who are married or in a civil partnership	No
People of particular sexual orientation	No
People who are proposing to undergo, undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	No
People on low incomes	No
People in particular age groups	No
Groups with particular faiths and beliefs	No

EIA required? (choose YES if any of the above impacts are YES)	No
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Section E

Finance comments
The approval of this budget reduction proposal would reduce mainstream stationery budgets by £0.010m in 2024/25, budgets for stationery are held across the Council and therefore this would be a cross cutting saving.

Signed RO	5/02/2024
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Signed Finance	5/02/2024
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Report to Governance, Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Board

Conservative Budget Amendment Proposals 2024/25

Portfolio Holder: Councillor M. Woodvine

Officer: Chris Kelsall, Assistant Director of Finance

05 February 2024

Reason for Decision

This Report presents to Governance, Strategy & Resources Board the Conservative Group proposals for amendments to the Administration's Budget for 2024/25.

Executive Summary

This Report presents to the Board a series of amendments in addition to those proposals already presented by the Administration in the 2024/25 Budget. This report proposes, for the second consecutive year, a freeze in Council Tax for General Purposes.

We would like to thank the Assistant Director of Finance and the Conservative group researcher for their efforts in helping pull much of the information that is provided in this report. Also taken into consideration during the production of the proposed amendments in this report are the parameters in which Oldham Council must work within. That is, direction set by His Majesty's Government, in policy areas such as Education, and the strategic oversight of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority across the Metropolitan County.

It must be pointed out that we faced difficulties in obtaining information across all departments. We feel that the Council's finances should be much more open and transparent to elected members and to the public, so they can access and engage with them properly and help contribute in a more meaningful way with the financial wellbeing of the Metropolitan Borough. It is something the executive and senior officers should re-evaluate going forward.

Nevertheless, the proposed amendments to the Administration's Budget are focused on the **people's priorities, by reducing waste, investing in our highways, environment, neighbourhoods, and more importantly FREEZING the Council Tax for general purposes.**

Details of the proposals can be found in Section 3 and in summary at Appendix One. Business Cases for the individual budget reductions can be found at Appendix Two.

At the Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 7 February 2023, the Conservative Budget Amendment proposals were presented for discussion and recommendation as an Alternative Budget. The Scrutiny Committee did not accept the Conservative Party budget reduction proposals and did not commend them to Cabinet.

Recommendations

The Board recommends:

1. The proposal to implement no increase in Council Tax for General Purposes.
2. Significant capital investment in Highways, Environment and Neighbourhoods.
3. A redistribution of funds back to local wards and districts for events.

Conservative Budget Amendment Proposals 2024/25

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council is required by legislation to produce a balanced budget each financial year. Aside from the legal requirements, financial plans are important because they set out the financial management of the Council's policies and guide Officers on the areas where they should prioritise resources.

2. 2024/25 Revenue Budget Proposals

- 2.1 With several Councils having issued Section 114 notices banning all non-essential spending, the safe stewardship of the Council's resources and supporting deliverable priorities has become ever more important. These amendments ensure a balanced budget.
- 2.2 As highlighted in at least one national newspaper which said, "There are a whole bunch who think they are in serious risk of issuing a 114 but they haven't made it public." This same article listed Oldham as one of these authorities. It is incumbent on the Labour administration to be more transparent about what is going on at Oldham Council and to set the record straight, rather than reading such information in a national newspaper. It is of considerable concern to all of us that the financial wellbeing of the authority is in good order. It is why we have followed very strict fiscal rules and not engaged in any additional borrowing.
- 2.3 Given the concerns highlighted in the press we believe that it is time for the politicians in the Council chamber who have for over a decade made difficult financial decisions to now make themselves subject to those same decisions. It is why we have suggested some of the most far-reaching savings be made by elected members. Simply put we believe that it is time to take money from politicians' pockets and put it back into the people of Oldham's pockets. We believe that it should be a Civic honour and duty to serve the people of the Oldham Metropolitan Borough.
- 2.4 We are also reducing wastage costs by implementing savings to photocopying and postage charges with a 20% to 15% saving being made respectively.
- 2.5 Given the reluctance of the administration to take up Article 4 directions to better regulate HMO's we are looking at increasing the costs associated with this to limit the expansion of such institutions in our Borough.
- 2.6 We will abolish the Working for your Newspaper. Propaganda on the rates by the administration and of the cult of personality with such publications around the Council Leader is akin to that of Russia, not a Council in the North West of England.
- 2.7 We have also frozen senior executive pay for two years (those on over £100k), rationalised senior executive posts, reduced the use of agency staff, reduced management entitlements, and reduced duplication. We are clear that we need to put the people of the Oldham Metropolitan Borough first. These are difficult decisions,

which we are having to take to help reduce the burden on taxpayers who have faced years of Council tax rises by the current Labour administration.

- 2.8 Looking to other local authorities, businesses and online we can look to raise new income without reducing levels of service. The Council can earn increasing amounts of income from advertising and maximising its fleet to that effect. We do not live in Socialist state where all advertising must be government propaganda. We believe that there are more innovative and effective ways of increasing income for the Council. With a public/private partnership the Council can adapt to this opportunity to help local public services.
- 2.9 The priority of the Conservative Group is to keep taxation at the lowest possible level. While making Budget reductions, we do not directly impact any of the Council's statutory services and residents should not feel any direct result of them – that has been the priority of the Conservative Group. The Conservatives in Opposition are retaining resource in statutory services, which residents expect to be delivered well, but asking this Council to feel the pinch for itself whilst giving residents much-needed relief in freezing Council Tax in these inflationary times.
- 2.10 We have factored in reducing the number of Councillors by 1/3 to future budget proposals. This will over the term of a Councillor reduce expenditure by £814,120.

Budget Reduction Proposals

- 3.6 The Conservatives in Opposition are proposing a range of budget reduction proposals which will reduce spend on non-essential services in order to prioritise helping people deal with cost-of-living pressures. An explanation of these savings proposals is summarised at Table 1 below and outlined in detail at **Appendix 1**.
- 3.7 Proformas are attached at **Appendix 2** as follows:

Proposal	Full Year Impact £000
OPP-BR1-301 – District Partnerships	788
OPP-BR1-302 – Communications & Research	559
OPP-BR1-303 – Vacancy Factor	400
OPP-BR1-304 – Senior Management	314

- 3.8 Other proposals relate to general efficiencies that can be delivered within the organisation.

Revenue changes proposals

- 3.9 We will redistribute the sum of £21k from town centre events into local districts giving them £4.2k per district and split that amongst local ward members to use it as they see fit for local events such as Christmas, Whit Friday etc. District events due to previous budgetary changes by the administration are now facing higher costs for Christmas lights and Whit Friday.

3.10 We will also redistribute a further £20k from events to districts to help societies, clubs and pubs organise many well attended public events that can have an impact on public safety and or the highway. Due to large attendances, many of these events may need support with proper licences and safety. Using a targeted approach we can verify and accredit venues. This funding can then help support local events whether it be bonfire night or other events such as Whit Friday, St Georges Day, Armed Forces Day or even Christmas. It will be for local districts and elected ward members to determine how they spend this money as we trust local members to support local community events in their districts.

Summary of Conservative's Revenue proposals

Table 1 - Conservatives Revenue summary 2024/25 to 2025/26

Ref	Proposal	24/25 £000	25/26 £000
Reduction In Council Tax Levied		(3,300)	(3,300)
Proposed Savings			
1	District Partnerships	500	788
2	Communications Savings	350	559
3	Additional Vacancy Factor	400	400
4	Executive Management	200	319
5	Admin Efficiencies	309	374
6	Members Allowances	200	486
7	Officers Car Allowances	75	105
8	Increased Income	50	81
9	Events / Improvements	178	38
Total Proposed Savings		2,262	3,149
Additional Expenditure		(41)	(41)
Additional contribution from Reserves		1,079	192
Net Impact		-	-

4 Capital proposals

4.6 We are investing in neighbourhoods with devolved targeted funding in Austerlands, Derker, Moorside, Heyside, High Crompton, Lees, Thornham, Royley, Wrigley Head, Westwood and Whitegate to name a few. We believe that it is down to local elected members to deliver projects to these areas and not centrally drive them. We want proper business cases to be made and for long lasting improvements to be made to neighbourhoods.

4.7 We are also making key investments into neglected town centres in Royton and Shaw with a £1.3 million investment to reverse the decline in our high streets. As well as a making a key investment with a new health centre for Saddleworth. It is also worth

pointing out that Chadderton thanks to HM Government is receiving £20 million over the next decade, as part of the overlooked towns fund announced by the Prime Minister in October 2023.

4.8 The Borough has seen a dramatic increase in fly tipping. We need to break the business model of fly tippers and stop the Council being merely a ‘click and collect’ service. As part of our commitment to help reduce and tackle the issue we believe we need to tackle the problem with more preventative measures, enforcement, and the use of technology. We will work with a cross departmental taskforce to target these resources effectively and efficiently to help deliver the best results with data and patterns where hotspots are prevalent. As well as co-ordinating more rapid legal action. This funding is there to make that happen.

4.9 We are also investing in our highways so we can turn the tide on the declining state of our roads. We want to invest in them to help reduce potholes, improve safety and help make sure that our roads are fit for the future.

Table 2 - Conservatives Alternative Capital Programme 2024/25 to 2026/27

	24/25 £000	25/26 £000	26/27 £000	Total £000
Funding				
Fund for Emerging Priorities (Cap prog)	2,043	6,793	410	9,246
Proposals				
1. Environmental Measures	235	468	410	1,113
2. District Town Centres	300	1,000		1,300
3. Highways	1,308	1,000		2,308
4. Neighbourhoods	200	1,100		1,100
5. Saddleworth Health Centre		3,225		3,225
Total Proposed Capital Expenditure	2,043	6,793	410	9,246
Balance of Fund for Emerging Priorities	-	-	-	-

4.10 Further detail can be provided at **Appendix 3**.

5 Director of Finance Comments

5.1 I confirm in my role as Responsible Officer under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 that the proposed have been financially reviewed and evaluated by officers.

5.2 As it is an alternative set of budget options the opportunity for testing the risks associated with the proposals is always limited, even more so this year due to the financial challenges in setting a balanced budget this year and the reduced time available. It is therefore necessary to afford a level of caution in presenting these alternatives as to the implications of the proposed budget reductions and the ability to generate increased income.

-
- 5.3 The proposal not to increase the level of Council Tax for general purposes would significantly increase the budget challenge for 2025/26 and later years and as such must be considered a high risk proposal given the financial pressures the Council will continue to face and the continued uncertainty over future funding from central government.
(Sarah Johnston – Director of Finance)

6 Options/Alternatives

- 6.1 With regard to the proposals set out in this report, the options available to the Governance, Strategy & Resources Board are to:
- Accept and recommend to Cabinet all of the recommendations of the report.
 - Accept and recommend to Cabinet some of the recommendations of the report and reject others.
 - Reject all of the recommendations of the report.

7 Preferred Option

- 7.1 The preferred option is that the Governance, Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Board accepts and recommends to Cabinet all of the recommendations.

8 Consultation

- 8.1 Heads of Service have been consulted in compiling the proposals set out in this report and the proposals have been agreed within the content of the business cases attached in Appendix B. The presentation of the Conservative Budget Amendment proposals to the Governance, Strategy & Resources Board on 5 February 2024 will be the first stage of the budget consultation process.

9 Financial Implications

- 9.1 Full financial implications are included within this Report.

10 Legal Services Comments

- 10.1 The proposals involve a change to officers' and members' employment terms and conditions, appropriate HR processes will need to be followed in accordance with the Council's policies and procedures.
- 10.2 Any proposal to reduce the number of Councillors must be approved by the Local Government Boundary Commission.

11 Co-operative Agenda

- 11.1 The proposals included within this report have been considered in conjunction with the Council's Co-operative Agenda and there are no adverse impacts.

12 Human Resources Comments

- 12.1 The proposals included within this report are noted.

-
- 12.2 Options with workforce implications will be assessed should they be approved and discharged in accordance with the organisation's policies and procedures.

13 Risk Assessments

- 2.1 The risks of deliverability have been considered and, as it is an alternative set of budget proposals, the opportunity for testing the risks associated with the proposals are more limited and as advised above, it is therefore necessary to afford a level of caution in presenting these alternatives.
- 2.2 In addition, whilst the budget is already being balanced by the use of one-off measures, increasing this still further increases the Council's financial challenge.

14 IT Implications

- 14.1 There are no specific IT requirements associated with the proposals that have not already been considered.

15 Property Implications

- 15.1 There are no specific property implications associated with the proposals set out in this report.

16 Procurement Implications

- 16.1 Any proposals that impact on the procurement of goods, services etc. will be undertaken in full liaison with the Procurement Service and in compliance with all necessary Council and statutory requirements.

17 Environmental and Health & Safety Implications

- 17.1 There are no adverse environmental or Health and Safety implications associated with the proposals.

18 Equality, community cohesion and crime implications

- 18.1 There are no adverse equality, community cohesion or crime implications associated with the proposals.

19 Equality Impact Assessment Completed

- 19.1 These are not required at the present time for these proposals.

20 Key Decision

- 20.1 No.

21 **Key Decision Reference**

21.1 Not a Key Decision.

22 **Background Papers**

22.1 The following is a list of background papers on which this report is based in accordance with the requirements of Section 100(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. It does not include documents which would disclose exempt or confidential information as defined by the Act:

File Ref: Background papers are contained in Appendices One and Two
Officer: Chris Kelsall, Assistant Director of Finance

23 **Appendices**

23.1 Appendix One: Table of Amendments to the Administration's Revenue Budget Proposals.

23.2 Appendix 2: Budget reduction proformas.

23.3 Appendix Three: Table of Amendments to the Administration's Revenue Budget Proposals.

APPENDIX 1: Conservatives Savings Proposals

Proposal	Rationale	Annual Financial Implication	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
			District Partnerships	Communications	Additional Vacancy Factor	Senior Management	Admin / Efficiencies	Members Allowances	Officers Car Allowances	Increased Income	Events / Improvements
Restructure of the District Teams. (Keeping Caseworkers and Business Support Officers)	The Council is duplicating provision that is provided already elsewhere. This reduction and restructuring will reduce management costs and make the team more efficient and district focused.	£ 787,640	787,640								
To reduce spend on this non-statutory service and proposed a redesign of the communications and research team.	The Council needs to make efficiencies. Core communication of Council services and online digital communications of those services does not need vast amounts of resources.	£ 475,755		475,755							
Reconsideration of Council priorities with regards to the Working for You Newspaper	We will abolish the newspaper as it is a non-essential service which can be better delivered through existing services and delivery.	£ 74,625		74,625							
Marketing and advertising for Town Centre Events	We believe that this is not an efficient use of resources when the Council faces significant financial pressures. The focus must be on core delivery rather than marketing animations for Christmas.	£ 9,043		9,043							
Additional Vacancy Management factor to achieve greater efficiency including limiting the present use of agency staff and consultants.	In previous years the Administration agreed to apply a vacancy factor at a rate of 1.5% to all mainstream employee budgets based on the assumption that some posts would become vacant or would be held vacant during that financial year due to staff turnover. To assist in reducing the number of agency staff and consultants used across the Council further, we propose that a saving of 0.4% on top of the administrations 1%. The Additional Vacancy Management factor of 1.4% to all Council mainstream employee budgets.	£ 399,000			400,000						
Merge Asst Director of HR role with Asst Chief Executives role	We believe that with the changes agreed by full Council in regard to the part time role of the Chief Executive that a rationalisation is needed. The Human Resources Portfolio role should be merged with that of the ACE to improve Council delivery and core messaging to employees, giving the ACE a better insight into the organisation.	£ 115,000				115,000					
Merge Director of Environment with Director of Economy	Merge the two roles together will allow for better strategic use of Council assets and delivery of public services from those Council assets.	£ 133,000				133,000					
Freeze salary increases over £100,000 for 2 years	We believe that as frontline staff face increasing pressures those at the top of the organisation should share the burden and as part of this we propose a salary freeze for two years in order to reflect the more than generous salary paid for by many who may never be able to reach such a wage.	£ 66,000				66,000					
Scrap the car allowance for senior management to zero	To help reduce the impact on Council finances and the Councils commitment to meet its net zero targets we believe that well remunerated officers do not need further remuneration.	£ 5,000				5,000					
Reduction in the General Training Budget	The reduction of in the general training budget is proposed that a budget reduction of £80,000 is implemented in 2024/25 specifically in relation to the General Training Budget in the belief that there is scope for further reductions in this area.	£ 80,000					80,000				
Reduce photocopier charges by 20%	The drive towards paperless workplaces is ongoing as more documents are published online, more flexible working or home working, and office space rationalisation is factored in, then that we need to reduce the amount of paper used and focus on digital delivery. It would also make it easier for auditing purposes and future cost savings.	£ 54,000					54,000				
Reduce postage charges by 15%	The drive towards paperless workplaces is ongoing as more documents are published online, more flexible working or home working, and office space rationalisation is factored in, then that we need to use email where possible and focus on digital delivery. It would also make it easier for auditing purposes and future cost savings.	£ 70,500					70,500				
Reduce staff in the Leaders office by 2 FTE	We believe that as other departments face reductions that the Leader of the Council should also be subject to the same efficiencies. The Council Leader will need to be more focused and more diligent in dealing with work, however we believe a competent individual can manage these changes.	£ 87,000					87,000				
Stationery be centralised in particular locations across the Borough to ensure better VFM through increased understanding of which items are required, volumes etc.	The drive towards paperless workplaces is ongoing as more documents are published online, more flexible working or home working, and office space rationalisation is factored in, then a reduction in stationary would be a sensible saving. It would also make it easier for auditing purposes and future cost savings. Due to the changes of home working, it is a reasonable budget reduction of £0.012m	£ 12,000					12,000				
Trade union facility time	Many organisations facilitate this role outside of work time.	£ 70,000						70,000			

APPENDIX 1: Conservatives Savings Proposals

			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Proposal	Rationale	Annual Financial Implication	District Partnerships	Communications	Additional Vacancy Factor	Senior Management	Admin / Efficiencies	Members Allowances	Officers Car Allowances	Increased Income	Events / Improvements
Cut the number of Councillors by 20	To help reduce the cost of politics and with the pressures on frontline staffing and taxpayers bills will believe Oldham has far too many politicians than is necessary.							210,280			
Abolish District Leads Allowances	Most committee members attend meetings without drawing on any additional allowance/s. Given the pressures on Council finances we believe that District Leads of committees should consider it a matter of Civic duty rather than for financial gain.	£ 39,630						39,630			
Scrap Deputy Cabinet posts	These posts are unnecessary and were only introduced when Labour took control of the Council post 2011. The relevant Cabinet portfolio holder should be on top of their brief. This is nothing more than political patronage.	£ 39,425						39,425			
Scrap Chairman's allowances	Most committee members attend meetings without drawing on any additional allowance/s. Given the pressures on Council finances we believe that Chairman of committees should consider it a matter of Civic duty rather than for financial gain.	£ 59,831						59,831			
Sell the ABU 1J number plate & Mayral car		£ 10,000						10,000			
Scrap the Deputy Mayoral Allowance	It is a matter of Civic pride that someone is nominated as the Deputy Mayor of the Metropolitan Borough. Many local Mayors and Parish Chairman do not receive an allowance anywhere near as generous and given the role is remunerated through the basic allowance, we believe that given frontline staff face pressures that so should the politicians.	£ 3,129						3,129			
Reduce Mayoral allowance by 50%	It is a matter of Civic pride that someone is nominated as the Mayor of the Metropolitan Borough. Many local Mayors and Parish Chairman do not receive an allowance anywhere near as generous and given the role is remunerated through the basic allowance, we believe that given frontline staff face pressures that so should the politicians. We note that the current Mayor has led by example by giving away his allowance following a honourable Civic tradition of taking no financial benefit.	£ 8,248						8,248			
Leader of the Opposition allowance 70% cut in allowance	It is a matter of Civic pride that someone is the Leader of the Opposition on Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council. Given the role is remunerated through the basic allowance, we believe that given frontline staff face pressures that so to should the politicians.	£ 11,040						11,040			
Deputy Main Opposition Leader abolition of allowance	It is a matter of Civic pride that someone is the Deputy Leader of the Opposition on Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council. Given the role is remunerated through the basic allowance, we believe that given frontline staff face pressures that so to should the politicians.	£ 6,309						6,309			
Minority Opposition Group Leader abolition of allowance	It is a matter of Civic pride that someone is the Minority Leader of the Opposition on Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council. Given the role is remunerated through the basic allowance, we believe that given frontline staff face pressures that so to should the politicians.	£ 4,731						4,731			
Chairman of the Standards Committee (Abolition of allowance)	The majority of committee members attend meetings without drawing on any additional allowance, given the pressures on finances we believe that Chairman should consider it a matter of Civic duty rather than for any financial gain.	£ 734						734			
Reduce Cabinet Members Allowances by £9000	The official opposition receives no financial remuneration and many Cabinet members attend meetings without drawing on any additional allowance, given the pressures on finances we believe that they should lead by example and see it as a matter of Civic duty rather than for any financial gain.	£ 90,000						90,000			
Abolish District Deputy Leads Allowances	Most committee members attend meetings without drawing on any additional allowance/s. Given the pressures on Council finances we believe that Deputy District Leads of committees should consider it a matter of Civic duty rather than for financial gain.	£ 2,604						2,604			

APPENDIX 1: Conservatives Savings Proposals

Proposal	Rationale	Annual Financial Implication	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
			District Partnerships	Communications	Additional Vacancy Factor	Senior Management	Admin / Efficiencies	Members Allowances	Officers Car Allowances	Increased Income	Events / Improvements
Review of car allowances, as previously promised to reduce the amount paid as a lump sum to staff doing zero or minimal mileage	To help reduce the impact on Council finances and the Councils commitment to meet its net zero targets. Also if it is not being used then there is a clear need to repurpose that allowance.	£ 50,000								50,000	
Reduction in mileage budgets to reflect change in work practices	To help reduce the impact on Council finances and the Councils commitment to meet its net zero targets. Also if it is not being used then there is a clear need to repurpose that allowance.	£ 55,000								55,000	
Advertising on the side of a bin wagon- £1800 per annum per vehicle	This revenue raising option allows the Council to bring in revenue and to do so on vehicles that are seen in around the borough on a regular basis. It is carried out on busses and other modes of public and privately owned vehicles in the UK. Internal Council messaging is wasted when a financial gain can be made by the Council.	£ 32,400									32,400
Advertising on Council land at £1175 per site per annum x12 sites	Many sites that are near to main gateway access points can help generate revenue as it already the case at two sites. With additional sites this will help bring in new additional income to the Council.	£ 14,100									14,100
Allowing adverts (with necessary restrictions) to feature on the Council website through the Council Advertising Network.	This revenue raising option allows the Council to bring in revenue and to do so online. It is carried out by numerous organisations in order to generate revenue. It is a simple and easy revenue raising activity which will help bring in well needed additional income.	£ 10,000									10,000
Advertising on Council owned vehicles - similar to taxis (How many LGV's and Cars are there in the fleet)	Using at least 30 vehicles that are suitable for advertising then and just on an annual period, then a reasonable working assumption of a £250 to £300 markup on a partial/full/wrap advertising which can cost £500 to £1000 for 6 to 8 months is a reasonable return.	£ 9,000									9,000
Increase in fees for Houses of Multiple Occupation Licence	There is a clear increase across the board of HMO's which are putting increased strain on Council resources and community patience. It is time we saw an increase in charges in order to reflect that.	£ 15,000									15,000
Big Bang Bonfire (Redistribution to districts to manage £20,000 - £4000 per the 5 districts £1000 per ward)	Societies, Clubs and Pubs organise many well attended bonfire night displays in the Borough. It is a more efficient use of taxpayer's money to remove the event at Oldham Edge and redistribute the funds to districts where the funding can help support local events whether bonfire night or other events in the year. Many events outside of the Council organised event attracted more people.	£ 35,000									35,000
Ollie and Millie Mascots	We believe that this is not an efficient use of resources when the Council faces significant financial pressures. The focus must be on core delivery rather than paying actors to dress as Owls.	£ 3,000									3,000
LIF Surplus 24/25	We are repurposing the LIF underspend in order to help all residents across the Borough with our Council tax freeze.	£ 140,000									140,000
TOTAL		3,077,743	787,640	559,423	400,000	319,000	373,500	485,960	105,000	80,500	178,000

Appendix 2

Budget Reduction Proformas

Budget reductions

Service Area:	District Partnerships
Budget Reduction Title:	Reduction in the District Partnership Service

Budget Reduction Proposal - Detail and Objectives:

The proposal is that the Council will reduce this service.

Restructure of the District Teams (Keeping Caseworkers and Business Support Officers). This will mean reducing the team by 14 posts of which three are currently vacant.

The Council is duplicating provision that is provided already elsewhere. This reduction and restructuring will reduce management costs and make the team more efficient and district focused.

2022/23 Service Budget and Establishment	£000
Employees	1,321
Other Operational Expenses	429
Income	(146)
Total	1,604

Current Forecast (under) / overspend	-
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Number of posts (Full time equivalent)	-
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	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Proposed Budget Reduction (£000)	(500)	(288)	0
Proposed Staffing Reductions (FTE)	10	0	0

Is your proposal a 'one-off' in 2024/25 or is it ongoing?	On-going
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Section B

What impact does the proposal have on the following?

Property	
None	
Service Delivery	
Yes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced support to Elected Members in each District including the support on bids to LIF, case work, advice and guidance as examples • The teams facilitate partnership working at a place-level including supporting Placed Based Integration which supports demand reduction and for example supports the new adult operating model • Reduction in the support to wider humanitarian programmes including the cost of living and wider health related work • Reduction in support to programmes and development of such things as the Clean Streets programme along with other campaigns • Remove support to key events including – Bonfire night, local community events etc • Reduction in support to Residents First approach to engagement and the support to wider residents engagement • Reduction in supporting the coordination of local partnership meetings and problem solving meetings • Reduction in support to the voluntary sector on community activity, resource support, advice and guidance, and partnerships developing community co-production 	
Future expected outcomes	
Reduced service provision as per the above	
Organisation	
Yes – unable to support key events and link to community	
Workforce	
Yes – a reduction in workforce would be a consequence of the approval of this proposal	
Communities and Service Users	
Yes – see above. Services to communities would be reduced.	
Oldham Cares	
None	
Other Partner Organisations	
No work to build capacity of communities and community organisations	

Who are the key stakeholders?

Staff	Yes
Elected Members	Yes
Residents	Yes
Local business community	No

Schools	No
Trade Unions	Yes
External partners (if yes please specify below)	Yes
Wide range of external partners including the voluntary sector	
Other Council departments (if yes please specify below)	No
N/a	
Other (if yes please specify below)	No
N/a	

Benefits to the organisation/staff/customers including performance improvements
Over two financial years, a cumulative £0.788m reduction in costs to the Council.

Section C

Key Risks and Mitigations

Risk	Mitigation
Adverse impact of communities due to the reduction of the services identified above	Emphasis to be placed on increased use of the voluntary sector to deliver such programmes albeit this would also see a reduction in voluntary sector support.
Lack of support for Elected Members	Members to engage directly with service managers and officers.
Loss of placed based coordination and delivery	Cease placed based working

Key Development and Delivery Milestones

Milestone	Timeline
Staff and Trades Unions consultation completed	May 2024
Proposals implemented	July 2024

Section D

Consultation required?	Yes Timeline to be determined
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	Start	Conclusion
Staff	TBC	TBC
Trade Union	TBC	TBC
Public	TBC	TBC
Service Users	TBC	TBC
Other	TBC	TBC

Equality Impact Screening

Is there potential for the proposed budget reduction to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following?

Disabled people	Yes
Particular Ethnic Groups	No
Men or Women (including impacts due to pregnancy / maternity)	No
People who are married or in a civil partnership	No
People of particular sexual orientation	No
People who are proposing to undergo, undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	No
People on low incomes	Yes
People in particular age groups	Yes
Groups with particular faiths and beliefs	No

EIA required? (choose YES if any of the above impacts are YES)	Not at this point
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Section E

Finance comments
The budget reduction proposal will generate an additional saving of £0.788m from 2025/26 onwards. Due to the requirement to undertake staff consultation, there would be a reduced impact in 2024/25.

Signed RO	05/02/2024
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Signed Finance	05/02/2024
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BR1 - Section A

Portfolio:	Reform and Regeneration
Service Area:	Communications and Research
Budget Reduction Title:	Communications and Research Service Redesign

Budget Reduction Proposal - detail and objectives:

The role of the Communications and Research service is to communicate and engage with a wide range of audiences both within Oldham and beyond; in order to ensure residents are aware of Council news and services; to attract visitors and investors; and to enable our residents and stakeholders to participate in decision-making.

The Communications and Research service currently has 18 permanent FTE staff working across disciplines including digital and web, design, social media, video creation, media relations, internal communications, media relations, marketing, engagement and consultation. One of these posts is currently vacant.

Our proposal is to reduce spend on this non-statutory service and proposed a redesign of the communications and research team. The Council needs to make efficiencies and the core communication of Council services and online digital communications of those services does not need vast amounts of resources. We would reduce staffing resources to save £0.475m per annum. This is in addition to the £75k proposed by the current administration.

We believe any impact on essential areas can be mitigated by prioritising resources appropriately and have not been presented with any evidence to the contrary.

This reduction would be supplemented by a further saving of £0.075m through ceasing the publication of the three issues of Oldham Council, Working for You'

In addition, it is proposed to save £9k through ceasing marketing and advertising for town centre events.

2023/24 Service Budget and Establishment	£000
Employees	927
Other Operational Expenses	75
Income	(5)
Total	997

Current Forecast (under) / overspend	-
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Number of posts (Full time equivalent)	18
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	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Proposed Budget Reduction (£000)	(350)	(209)	

Proposed Staffing Reductions (FTE)	9	0	0
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Is your proposal a 'one-off' in 2024/25 or is it ongoing?	Ongoing
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Section B

What impact does the proposal have on the following?

Property
No impact
Service Delivery
Such significant savings to the Communications would destabilise the service's ability to deliver effective communications to the people of Oldham, and mean some core communications activity could not be delivered.
Future expected outcomes
<p>Reducing the number of staff would mean that the Communications service would have to focus only on some essential elements of the service, which are chiefly reactive communications such as responding to media enquiries.</p> <p>This would mean the team would be unable to proactively engage with residents and communities via social and digital media; produce videos, undertake as much research and public engagement, or put out press releases with positive news stories about the council's work. This could then lead to a knock-on reputational risk due to a reduction in positive, proactive, communications teamed with far less direct engagement with residents and communities.</p> <p>The team would also be unable to carry out campaigns work for essential areas such as adoption, foster care recruitment, social work recruitment and more, which could severely impact on our ability as a Council to deliver critical services such as caring for vulnerable young people.</p> <p>The aim of launching the Oldham Council: Working for You council newspaper was primarily to provide essential information, such as contact numbers and guidance on help and support available to households, to those without access to the Internet.</p> <p>Ceasing the publication of Oldham Council: Working for You could therefore lead to people who do not have access to our website or social media channels being unable to access the information they need, and struggling to get in touch with Council departments.</p>
Organisation
Such a significant reduction in the Communications budget would mean non-essential communications internally would have to be ceased. This would lead to the organisation as a whole being less informed and less able to be effective ambassadors who understand our values and behaviours, or our aims and objectives for the borough – hampering colleagues' ability to serve local leaders and put residents first.
Workforce
Removing almost a third of the staffing in the service would create increased pressure on staff that remain, as well as removing technical specialisms such as design, video production and web expertise.
Communities and Service Users
<p>Reduced communications activity – including social media – would leave residents less well informed about what the Council provides, including critical information such as making safeguarding referrals, getting help with housing, or accessing the range of support available through the Cost of Living crisis.</p> <p>Adding advertising to the website would also have a detrimental effect on the customer experience. At present, the Communications team focuses on trying to simplify web content and create interfaces that are designed to assist the resident in their tasks.</p>

Selling advertising space would undermine that effort, decrease usability and make it more difficult for service users – particularly our most vulnerable residents – to complete tasks online.
Children and Young People
No specific impact
Oldham Cares
Reduced partner communications would leave partners unclear of the role of the Council on key partnership projects, and less able to collaborate effectively.
Other Partner Organisations
Reduced partner communications would leave partners unclear of the role of the Council on key partnership projects, and less able to collaborate effectively.

Who are the key stakeholders?

Staff	Yes
Elected Members	Yes
Residents	Yes
Local business community	Yes
Schools	N/A
Trade Unions	N/A
External partners (if yes please specify below)	N/A
Other Council departments (if yes please specify below)	
Other (if yes please specify below)	

Benefits to the organisation/staff/customers including performance improvements
A budget reduction of £0.559m across 2024/25 and 2025/26

Section C

Key Risks and Mitigations – include any interdependencies

Risk	Mitigation
The Communications and Research team will be unable to meet demand.	Services will be fully engaged in the redesign process, ensuring the service continues to meet business needs and focus on key priorities during this time of change.

Proactive communications would be vastly reduced.	A tightly defined and agreed set of core priorities would have to be agreed across the organisation with an acceptance that many existing communications activities would cease.
A reduction in communication opportunities could lead to some areas delivering their own messaging.	Utilise other avenues for communication within the organisation or partners.
Inappropriate advertisements appearing on the Council website through automatic advertising placement.	Increased officer time would need to be spent managing this aspect of the website, to ensure no adverts appear on the site that are controversial or inappropriate. The cost of this may outweigh revenue brought in by the advertising.

Key Development and Delivery Milestones

Milestone	Timeline
Undertake a formal review and consultation with impacted services and staff.	Q1 2024/2025
Implement a restructure of the Communications and Research service	Q2 2024/2025

Section D

Consultation required?	TBC
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	Start	Conclusion
Staff	TBC	TBC
Trade Union	TBC	TBC
Public	N/A	N/A
Service Users	N/A	N/A

Other	N/A	N/A
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Equality Impact Screening

Is there potential for the proposed budget reduction to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following?

Disabled people	N/A
Particular Ethnic Groups	N/A
Men or Women (including impacts due to pregnancy / maternity)	N/A
People who are married or in a civil partnership	N/A
People of particular sexual orientation	N/A
People who are proposing to undergo, undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N/A
People on low incomes	N/A
People in particular age groups	N/A
Groups with particular faiths and beliefs	N/A

EIA required? (choose YES if any of the above impacts are YES)	NO
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Section E

Finance comments
The combined proposal would generate savings of £0.559m per annum from 2025/26. Due to the requirement to undertake staff consultation, there would be a reduced impact in 2024/25.

Signed RO	
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Signed Finance	5 February 2024
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BR1 - Section A

Portfolio:	Finance & Corporate Resources
Service Area:	Finance
Budget Reduction Title:	Introduction of a Vacancy Factor

Budget Reduction Proposal - Detail and Objectives:

The Council currently prepares its budget estimates on the approved FTE establishment of each service and cost centre. The proposal is to apply a vacancy factor at a rate of 1% to mainstream employee budgets. Some posts will become vacant during 2024/25 due to staff turnover and it is a legitimate and reasonable action to create a budget reduction proposal to take advantage of this movement in staffing and the consequent impact of the recruitment process. The Council has a detailed recruitment review process. This should ensure the timing of the recruitment to posts is managed appropriately.

The staff budget is forecast to increase to c. £140m by 2024/25. Based on the estimated staffing budget requirements for 2024/25 this will generate a saving of approximately £1.4m.

This proposal differs from the Administration's proposal of £1.0m because it removes the contingency, which we believe is unnecessary. The saving can be delivered through more effective vacancy management.

The additional saving will therefore be £0.4m.

Directorates will be expected to manage any recruitment to permanent or temporary posts whilst remaining aware of their vacancy management targets.

2023/24 Service Budget and Establishment	£000
Employees	124,000
Other Operational Expenses	0
Income	0
Total	124,000

Current Forecast (under) / overspend	0
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Number of posts (Full time equivalent)	
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	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Proposed Budget Reduction (£000)	(400)	0	0
Proposed Staffing Reductions (FTE)	0	0	0

Is your proposal a 'one-off' in 2024/25 or is it ongoing?	Ongoing
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Section B

What impact does the proposal have on the following?

Property
There is no anticipated impact on property.
Service Delivery
There is no anticipated impact on service delivery, service staffing budgets will be managed within available resources.
Future expected outcomes
There is no anticipated impact on future expected outcomes.
Organisation
There is no anticipated impact on the organisation, service staffing budgets will be managed within available resources.
Workforce
There is no anticipated impact on the workforce.
Communities and Service Users
There is no anticipated impact on communities and service users.
Children and Young People
There is no anticipated impact on children and young people.
Oldham Cares
There is no anticipated impact on Oldham Cares apart from Council staffing budgets within Adult Social Care carrying and managing the vacancy factor.
Other Partner Organisations
There is no anticipated impact on partner organisations.

Who are the key stakeholders?

Staff	Yes
Elected Members	No
Residents	No
Local business community	No
Schools	No
Trade Unions	No
External partners (if yes please specify below)	No
N/a	
Other Council departments (if yes please specify below)	No
N/a	
Other (if yes please specify below)	No

N/a	
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Benefits to the organisation/staff/customers including performance improvements
A £1.4m contribution to the achievement of the 2024/25 budget reduction target.

Section C

Key Risks and Mitigations – include any interdependencies

Risk	Mitigation
Service budgets will overspend in 2024/25 due to non-achievement of the vacancy management target.	There is an expectation that a percentage of posts will be vacant in year through natural turnover of staff, and services through to directorates will manage recruitment and cover arrangements accordingly.
Individual budget areas with low staff turnover will fail to meet the vacancy target.	Information on the achievement of vacancy management targets will be made available at service and directorate level to allow a wider analysis of progress against targets and allow offsets between over and under achieving service / directorate areas.

Key Development and Delivery Milestones

Milestone	Timeline
Vacancy management targets are calculated and allocations communicated to service and budget	March 2024
Vacancy management targets are reviewed in line with any organisational change prior to the commencement of the 2024/25 financial year	March 2024 – April 2025
Vacancy management targets are applied to individual budgets prior to the commencement of the 2024/25 financial year.	April 2025

Production of vacancy management information is built into financial monitoring procedures.	May 2025
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Section D

Consultation required?	No
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	Start	Conclusion
Staff	N/a	N/a
Trade Union	N/a	N/a
Public	N/a	N/a
Service Users	N/a	N/a
Other	N/a	N/a

Equality Impact Screening

Is there potential for the proposed budget reduction to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following?

Disabled people	No
Particular Ethnic Groups	No
Men or Women (including impacts due to pregnancy / maternity)	No
People who are married or in a civil partnership	No
People of particular sexual orientation	No
People who are proposing to undergo, undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	No
People on low incomes	No
People in particular age groups	No
Groups with particular faiths and beliefs	No

EIA required? (choose YES if any of the above impacts are YES)	No
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Section E

Finance comments
This change in the costing methodology for staffing budgets will generate an additional saving of £0.4m. However, any flexibility in fast tracking urgent appointments will be removed as a result of this proposal. Vacancy management targets and their achievement will be closely monitored as part of the budget monitoring process.

Signed RO	05 February 2024
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Signed Finance	05 February 2024
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Service Area:	Chief Executives/ Place & Economic Growth
Budget Reduction Title:	Reduction in the Senior Management Team

Budget Reduction Proposal - Detail and Objectives:

The proposal will merge the following roles, delivering a saving of £248,000.

- Assistant Director of HR with assistant Chief executive
- Director of Economy with Director of Environment

This will remove a high-cost layer of senior management without adversely impacting upon service delivery.

We believe that with the changes agreed by full Council in regard to the part time role of the Chief Executive that a rationalisation is needed. The Human Resources Portfolio role should be merged with that of the ACE to improve Council delivery and core messaging to employees, giving the ACE a better insight into the organisation.

Merge the two roles together will allow for better strategic use of Council assets and delivery of public services from those Council assets.

The salaries of all staff earning in excess of £100,000 will pay will be frozen for 2 years, delivering a saving of £66,000. We believe that as frontline staff face increasing pressures those at the top of the organisation should share the burden and as part of this we propose a salary freeze for two years in order to reflect the more than generous salary paid for by many who may never be able to reach such a wage.

Finally, we will scrap the car allowance for senior management, delivering a saving of £5,000. This will help reduce the impact on Council finances and the Councils commitment to meet its net zero targets we believe that well remunerated officers do not need further remuneration.

2022/23 Service Budget and Establishment

	£000
Employees	248
Other Operational Expenses	
Income	
Total	248

Current Forecast (under) / overspend

-

Number of posts (Full time equivalent)

-

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Proposed Budget Reduction (£000)	(200)	(119)	0
Proposed Staffing Reductions (FTE)	2	0	0

Is your proposal a 'one-off' in 2024/25 or is it ongoing?

On-going

Section B

What impact does the proposal have on the following?

Property
None
Service Delivery
None
Future expected outcomes
None
Organisation
A change to the way executive decisions are taken
Workforce
A requirement for a new senior management team comprising the Chief Executive and directors
Communities and Service Users
None
Oldham Cares
None
Other Partner Organisations
None

Who are the key stakeholders?

Staff	Yes
Elected Members	No
Residents	No
Local business community	No
Schools	No
Trade Unions	Yes
External partners (if yes please specify below)	No
Other Council departments (if yes please specify below)	No
N/a	
Other (if yes please specify below)	No
N/a	

Benefits to the organisation/staff/customers including performance improvements

Over two financial years, a £0.480m reduction in the costs of the Council.

Section C

Key Risks and Mitigations

Risk	Mitigation
A decline in the effectiveness of the setting the Council's strategy and key decision making.	Directors to take on the roles previously undertaken by the posts removed.
A reduction in senior management capacity in the Council.	Directors and other senior staff can take on the roles previously undertaken by the posts removed.
N/a	N/a

Key Development and Delivery Milestones

Milestone	Timeline
Staff and Trades Unions consultation completed	May 2024
Proposals implemented	July 2024
N/a	N/a

Section D

Consultation required?	Yes Timeline to be determined
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	Start	Conclusion
Staff	TBC	TBC
Trade Union	TBC	TBC
Public	TBC	TBC
Service Users	TBC	TBC
Other	TBC	TBC

Equality Impact Screening

Is there potential for the proposed budget reduction to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following?

Disabled people	No
Particular Ethnic Groups	No
Men or Women (including impacts due to pregnancy / maternity)	No
People who are married or in a civil partnership	No
People of particular sexual orientation	No
People who are proposing to undergo, undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	No
People on low incomes	No
People in particular age groups	No
Groups with particular faiths and beliefs	No

EIA required? (choose YES if any of the above impacts are YES)	No
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Section E

Finance comments
The budget reduction proposal will generate a total saving of £0.314m from 2025/26 onwards. Due to the requirement to undertake staff consultation, there would be a reduced impact in 2024/25.

Signed RO	05/02/2024
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Signed Finance	05/02/2024
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APPENDIX 3: CONSERVATIVE CAPITAL PROPOSALS

Proposal	Rationale	Annual Financial Implication
Emerging priorities 2024/25 Repurpose from emerging priorities		
Capital investment in Environmental measures	The Borough has seen an increase in fly tipping. As part of our commitment to help reduce and tackle the issue we believe we need to tackle the problem with more preventative measures, enforcement and the use of technology. We will work with department heads to target these resources effectively and efficiently to help deliver the best results with data and patterns where hotspots are prevalent.	£ 235,000
Capital investment in District Town Centres	Royton and Shaw have been long neglected by the Council, in the Precinct in Royton and the High Street in Shaw. We believe that working with the ward Councillors, businesses, the public and Parish Council that a business case can be presented which helps with public realm improvements, security and public access. Businesses are investing in these areas despite of the Council, so it is only fair that we back that investment up with the capital needed to help secure the long term use of our Highstreets.	£ 300,000
Capital investment in Neighbourhoods	We believe that our neighbourhoods are key to the overall health of our towns. As such we would focus on using this funding to help alleviate problems on our roads, parks or footpaths in particular around Thornham and High Crompton, with each allocated an equal share of the total. Working with ward members, residents, officers and stakeholders it will be used to help improve these areas with properly targeted schemes. This will be for local wards and or districts to decide. Devolving power to neighbourhoods.	£ 200,000
Highways	Many of the Borough's roads are not in a fit and proper state due to years of neglect. We want to invest in them in order to help reduce potholes, improve safety and help make sure that our roads are fit for the future.	£ 1,308,000
Emerging priorities 2025/26 Repurpose from emerging priorities		
Capital investment in District Town Centres	Royton and Shaw have been long neglected by the Council, in the Precinct in Royton and the High Street in Shaw. We believe that working with the ward Councillors, businesses, the public and Parish Council that a business case can be presented which helps with public realm improvements, security and public access. Businesses are investing in these areas despite of the Council, so it is only fair that we back that investment up with the capital needed to help secure the long term use of our Highstreets for another year in order to maximise the impact of the funding.	£ 1,000,000
Capital investment in Neighbourhoods	We believe that our neighbourhoods are key to the overall health of our towns. As such we would focus on using this funding to help alleviate problems on our roads, parks or footpaths around Derker/Greenacres/Westwood/Whitegate/Moorside/Heyside/Wrigleyhead/Firwood Park/Lees/Austerlands/Royley, with each allocated an equal share of the total. Working with ward members, residents, officers and stakeholders it will be used to help improve these areas with properly targeted schemes. This will be for local wards and or districts to decide. Devolving power to neighbourhoods.	£ 1,100,000
Highways	Many of the Boroughs roads are not in a fit and proper state due to years of neglect. We want to invest in them in order to help reduce potholes, improve safety and help make sure that our roads are fit for the future.	£ 1,000,000
Capital investment in Environmental measures	The Borough has seen an increase in fly tipping. As part of our commitment to help reduce and tackle the issue we believe we need to tackle the problem with more preventative measures, enforcement and the use of technology. We will work with department heads to target these resources effectively and efficiently to help deliver the best results with data and patterns where hotspots are prevalent.	£ 468,000
New Health Centre for Saddleworth	Saddleworth with a growing population is in desperate need of a new health centre. With the backing of ward members, the Council, Parish Council, NHS and other stakeholders we will look to make that a reality. By investing in a new health centre that can stand the test of time.	£ 3,225,000
Emerging priorities 2026/27 Repurpose from emerging priorities		
Capital investment in Environmental measures	The Borough has seen an increase in fly tipping. As part of our commitment to help reduce and tackle the issue we believe we need to tackle the problem with more preventative measures, enforcement and the use of technology. We will work with department heads to target these resources effectively and efficiently to help deliver the best results with data and patterns where hotspots are prevalent.	£ 410,000

Agenda Item 7

Minutes of the meeting of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee

held on Wednesday 13 December 2023

at the Tootal Buildings, Broadhurst House, 1st floor,

56 Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 6EU

Present:

Councillor Nadim Muslim	Bolton Council (Chair)
Councillor Peter Wright	Bolton Council
Councillor Imran Rizvi	Bury Council
Councillor John Leech	Manchester City Council
Councillor Basil Curley	Manchester City Council
Councillor Jenny Harrison	Oldham Council
Councillor Colin McLaren	Oldham Council
Councillor Tom Besford	Rochdale Council
Councillor Patricia Dale	Rochdale Council
Councillor Lewis Nelson	Salford City Council
Councillor Arnold Saunders	Salford City Council
Councillor Naila Sharif	Tameside Council
Councillor Mike Cordingley	Trafford Council
Councillor Nathan Evans	Trafford Council
Councillor Fred Walker	Wigan Council
Councillor Joanne Marshall	Wigan Council

Also in attendance:

Councillor Nazia Rehman	GM Assistant Portfolio Lead for Resources & Investment
Councillor Tom Ross	GM Portfolio Lead for the Green City Region

Officers in attendance:

Eamonn Boylan	GMCA
Gillian Duckworth	GMCA
Laura Blakey	GMCA
David Taylor	GMCA
Nicola Ward	GMCA
Elaine Mottershead	GMCA

O&SC 55/23 Welcome and Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Russell Bernstein, Councillor Jill Axford, Councillor Helen Hibbert, Councillor Mandie Shilton-Godwin and Councillor Shaun Ennis.

O&SC 56/23 Chair’s Announcements and Urgent Business

The Chair announced that there would be a short reflective session (5-10 minutes) at the rise of this meeting to reflect on the work of the Committee.

Members were reminded that there would be an informal briefing session on 10 January 2024 at 12noon-1pm with a focus on GM Budgets.

O&SC 57/23 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received in relation to any item on the agenda.

**O&SC 58/23 Minutes of the GMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee
held on 22 November 2023**

Resolved/-

That the minutes of the GMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 22 November 2023 be approved as a correct record.

O&SC 59/23 Greater Manchester Investment Funds Update

Councillor Nazia Rehman, GM Assistant Portfolio Lead for Resources and Investment presented this item supported by GMCA Officers Eamonn Boylan and Laura Blakey. The report presented a snapshot of Greater Manchester investment funds operating across business loans, commercial properties, and housing development loans. The funds were initially established in 2013 following the receipt of approximately £100m of Regional Growth Fund and Growing Places monies which were principally invested on a recycling basis. The funds had now grown to approximately £470m. The funds represented a success story for Greater Manchester Combined Authority, with investments of over £1.2b into commercial property, residential development and businesses,

supporting the development of over 9,500 new homes and creation of approximately 108,000 jobs across a range of sectors.

The Housing Investment Loan Fund originated from a £300m fund but has now delivered on £829m worth of investment. However, there had been no commitment from Government as to whether the scheme would be continued post 2025.

The Business Funds had lent over £110m since establishment, re-investing any income into further loans to those businesses who were often unable to access other lenders. Despite the recognition that the funds were higher up the risk curve than traditional lenders, any risks to the investments had been minimalised through a strong set of criteria and rigorous approval process.

In relation to commercial property loans, an innovative approach had been applied to the individual funds criteria, enabling GM to have invested over £350m to date via this scheme.

Greater Manchester's unique flexible approach to investment delivered exponential outcomes through investments and recycling. Officers gave a presentation (as circulated) and invited comments and questions..

- There was a query about the process, balance, and protocols for internal and external fund managers. It was confirmed that, for example, with the Life Sciences Fund, investments were made according to agreed management principles set out in the procurement document. The document included what was meant by Life Sciences, what types of businesses they could and could not invest in, the location of the business and the type of investment. There was some flexibility and if an opportunity had arisen outside of those parameters, then permission could be sought from the Board of Directors to progress by providing a clear business case.
- There was interest in how other local authorities had invested (their Regional Growth Funds etc) and whether they had taken a different approach. It was confirmed that many others had taken the approach of providing grants i.e. Growing Places. Greater Manchester had taken a unique approach to primarily recycle equity or loan

investments which proved to have a greater impact in the long-term. Others were now looking at this as good practice.

- The report appeared to show that core funds had made a loss and members were interested in whether there were any lessons learnt from this. It was confirmed that each time an investment had not gone as expected, there had been reflective sessions to assess whether risks could be mitigated further.
- With reference to the Life Science Fund, it had been stated that the performance data was unavailable. Officers explained that it would not be available until the end of the 15-year term. Whilst all 40 businesses were still in the system, the value of the portfolio was in constant flux and until the businesses exited, the true value of the fund could not be known.
- The Committee recognised the Social Impact Funds as a significant amount of money and sought assurances that this was spread across each of the GM Local Authorities. Officers offered to provide further information but gave assurance that there was a good split across GM established by independent fund managers.
- Officers confirmed that the green agenda was high on the criteria for investment across funds, in particular the Housing Investment Fund, where a specific request had been made to further incentivise green projects within the next potential round of the fund.
- Members queried that there had been no defaults on some funds to date. It was clarified that not all defaults would be known because the income did not come to GMCA. For example, on the City Deal receipts, the income was directed to Homes England.
- A pie chart in the presentation gave a percentage investment spread across local authorities which illustrated that 57% of investment funds had been made to schemes within the borough of Manchester City Council. Officers clarified that the proportionate rates reflected economic viability and that individual Councils were not doing anything specific that had resulted in either a higher or lower percentage of investment, it was often influenced by local market conditions. There was a core set of general criteria across all funds that had to be met to start the process. Local authorities, however,

were encouraged to bring innovative proposals even if it was outside of the criteria as support could be provided from the GMCA. The Brownfield Land Fund was one tool that could further address the increase of viable schemes in all GM boroughs.

- A member asked about democratic accountability and the fact that any decisions were drawn to the attention of elected members at a late stage in the process i.e. at GMCA. There did not appear to be earlier opportunity for scrutiny by elected members, particularly when there might be potential reputational or ethical considerations. Officers clarified that the Leaders who hold specific portfolios on behalf of the GM Mayor were consulted throughout the process. In addition, where there were any physical schemes, they were not progressed by the GMCA but through the relevant planning local authority in the usual way. Whilst the final decision would be at a GMCA Committee, there would have been member engagement beforehand. Members suggested that there be further political accountability when determining where surplus investment be targeted to ensure greater democratic accountability.
- A member raised concern that the investments GMCA were making could be considered “too safe”, lacked innovation and did not include borrowing when this might be expected. The designs for Farnworth town centre were highlighted as a good example of investment by GMCA. It was clarified that whilst risk mitigations were in place, they did not hamper progress. There was not a specific policy to prevent borrowing but the decision had been taken not to use this approach as there needed to be a substantial income stream to pay it back. As an example, developments for the metrolink were originally through borrowed money but there was an obvious future income stream for sustainability. Officers offered to circulate the Farnworth scheme to members for further information.
- A member raised concern about a potential new Government and the affect this may have on the Housing Investment Fund post 2025. Officers confirmed that there were ongoing discussions with Government colleagues and pipeline projects were being prepared across GM in preparation for the potential extension of the fund.
- There was a discussion around the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector and potential investment opportunities. In response, it was noted that there was work ongoing between the GMCA and the Greater Manchester Centre for Voluntary

Organisations (GMCVO) to support them in accessing loan opportunities.

- It was noted that page 23 of the agenda pack outlined successful tangible outcomes and there was a question about whether similar outputs for the next 12 months were expected. Officers confirmed that expectations remained positive although there was an in and out flow to business funds dependent on current markets.
- Clarity was provided regarding investments not being made solely by GMCA but in partnership with others. There was not a policy to dictate that GMCA could not be a sole investor but this had been a decision taken to mitigate risk in some instances. Private sector interest and support was usually sought although it was noted that there was no requirement for a 50-50 match in funding.
- There was an example given of a proposal recently approved by Wigan's Planning Committee that could not have taken place without these investments into previously derelict industrial sites and officers were thanked for their work in this matter.

The Chair and members thanked the team for presenting a comprehensive report on a very complex topic. In summary, they were reassured by the fact that GMCA had not borrowed monies for investment loans but sought to recycle funds instead. There were prudent processes in place and there were tangible results in housing, support for local businesses, working with local authorities and creating social impact that reflected the spirit of the purpose of devolution.

Resolved/-

1. That the contents of the report and presentation be noted.
2. That further information would be provided to Cllr Harrison in relation to the social impact funds spread across GM.
3. That officers would consider potential opportunities for further political engagement in the allocation of surplus funding to increase democratic accountability.
4. That further details of the Farnworth town centre scheme be shared with members of the Committee.

Councillor Tom Ross, GM Portfolio Lead for the Green City Region presented this item and, after a short introduction, invited comments and questions:

- Reference was made to Section 6 in the Part A report and implications for a contract extension in light of the new National Waste Strategy, for example, with the deposit return scheme. This would come into effect in 2026 and potentially there could be a change in law where any loss of income was claimed back. If procurement was undertaken in 2026, additional costs could be incurred because the changes could not be quantified at that point.
- Clarity was sought on consideration of an in-house option. The definitive factor to discount this option had been that GMCA would be considered as a new provider and would be unable to get insurance. The level of risk this would pose was unacceptable.

Resolved /-

1. That the comments from the GMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the report and outcomes be noted.
2. That the recommendations below, which will be considered by the GMCA at their meeting on the 15 December 2023, be noted:
 - a. To note the contents of the report
 - b. To approve the initiation of discussions with the current contractor to extend the Waste and Resource Management Services (WRMS) and Household Waste Recycling Centre Management Services (HWRCMS) contracts in accordance with contract clauses.

O&SC 61/23 Work Programme & Forward Plan of Key Decisions**Resolved /-**

That the Forward Plan of Key Decisions and Overview & Scrutiny work programme be noted.

O&SC 62/23 Dates of Future Meetings

The schedule for the future meetings was noted:

24 January 2024	1-3pm
7 February 2024	1-3pm
21 February 2024	1-3pm
20 March 2024	1-3pm

O&SC 63/23 Exclusion of the Press and Public

That, under section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public should be excluded from the meeting for the following items on business on the grounds that this involved the likely disclosure of exempt information, as set out in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

O&SC 64/23 Options Appraisal for Provision of Future Waste Disposal Services

Clerk's Note: This item was considered in support of the report considered in Part A of the agenda (minute reference 60/23).

Resolved /-

1. That the comments from the GMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the options appraisal methodology and outcomes be noted.
2. That the recommendations below, which will be considered by the GMCA at their meeting on the 15 December 2023, be noted:
 - a. To note the contents of the report;

- b. To approve the initiation of discussions with the current contractor to extend the Waste and Resource Management Services (WRMS) and Household Waste Recycling Centre Management Services (HWRCMS) contracts in accordance with contract clauses.

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GOVERNANCE, STRATEGY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY BOARD

WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24

Thursday 22 June 2023	Performance Report Quarter 4 – 2022/23	To scrutinise the Council's performance against agreed performance measures	Portfolio – Leader of the Council. Assistant Chief Executive.	Service performance reporting
	Absence Trends Across the Authority	To scrutinise sickness levels and undelying issues, across the Council	Portfolio – Leader of the Council. Assistant Chief Executive.	Service performance reporting
Thursday 5 October 2023	Performance Report – Quarter 1, 2023/24	To scrutinise the Council's performance against agreed performance measures	Portfolio – Leader of the Council. Assistant Chief Executive.	Service performance reporting
	Local Government Ombudsman – Annual Report	To scrutinise the Council's position regarding complaints and complaints pursued through to the Ombudsman.	Portfolio – Finance and Low Carbon. Anne Ryans, Director of Finance/Paul Entwistle, Director of Legal Services	Consideration of Annual Report
	Treasury Management Quarter One Report 2023/24	Review of treasury management performance in 2023/24 (Quarter 1: April – June 2023)	Portfolio – Finance and Corporate Services Anne Ryans, Director of Finance.	Budget performance reporting
	Treasury Management 2022-23 Review	Review of performance in 2022/23	Portfolio – Finance and Corporate Services	Budget performance reporting

			Anne Ryans, Director of Finance.	
	Revenue Monitor and Capital Investment Programme 2023/24 Quarter 1	To scrutinise the Council's financial performance against the agreed Budget.	Portfolio – Finance and Low Carbon. Anne Ryans, Director of Finance.	Budget performance reporting
Thursday 22 November 2023				
Thursday, 14 th December 2023	Performance report – Quarter 2, 2023/24	To scrutinise Council performance against agreed performance measures.	Portfolio – Leader of the Council. Assistant Chief Executive.	Service performance reporting
	Miocare Group – Annual report	To scrutinise the performance of the MioCare Group	Portfolio – Health and Social Care Deputy Chief Executive. Rob Jackson, Managing Director, MioCare Group	Annual Report consideration/service performance reporting
	Revenue Monitor and Capital Investment Programme 2023/24 Quarter 2	To scrutinise the Council's financial performance against the agreed Budget.	Portfolio – Finance and Corporate Resources Sarah Johnston, Director of Finance.	Budget performance reporting
	Partnership Risk Dashboard	To assess the overall risk on partnerships to the Council.	Portfolio – Finance and Corporate Resources. Sarah Johnston, Director of Finance.	Budget performance reporting

Thursday 25 January 2024 (Administration Budget)	Revenue, Monitor and Capital Investment Programme	To scrutinise the Council's financial performance and proposals	Sarah Johnston, Director of Finance.	
	Revenue Budget report 2024/25 and Medium Term Financial Strategy	To scrutinise the Council's financial performance and proposals	Sarah Johnston, Director of Finance.	
	Capital Strategy and Capital Programme	To scrutinise the Council's financial performance and proposals	Sarah Johnston, Director of Finance.	
	Treasury Management Strategy 2024/25	To scrutinise the Council's financial performance and proposals	Sarah Johnston, Director of Finance.	
	Housing Revenue Account	To scrutinise the Council's financial performance and proposals	Sarah Johnston, Director of Finance.	
Thursday 8 February 2024	Opposition Budget	Liberal Democrat Group's Budgetary proposals 2024/25		
		Conservative Group's Budgetary proposals 2024/25		
	Performance report Quarter 3, 2023/24	To scrutinise Council performance against agreed performance measures	Portfolio – Leader of the Council. Assistant Chief Executive.	Service performance reporting.

Thursday, 21 st March 2024	Review of Oldham Community Leisure and the operation of the Leisure Contract	Scrutiny of OCL and their key performance indicators	Portfolio – Culture and Communities Deputy Chief Executive. Neil Consterdine, Assistant Director Youth, Leisure and Communities	Scrutiny of performance as presented in the Annual Report
	Corporate Health and Safety Policy	To scrutinise the Council's health and safety arrangements	Portfolio – Neighbourhoods Executive Director – Place & Economic Growth Neil Crabtree - Head of Service	Service performance reporting.
	Revenue Monitor and Capital Investment Programme 2023/24 Quarter 3	To scrutinise the Council's financial performance against the agreed Budget.	Portfolio – Finance and Corporate Resources Sarah Johnston, Director of Finance.	Budget performance reporting
	Poverty Truth Commission	To examine progress with the work of the Commission	Portfolio -Health and Social Care Amanda Richardson	Service Performance reporting

PENDING ISSUES

The impact of the proposed health integration on the Council and its future operations.	To be confirmed	Budget and Performance Monitoring.
Employment and Skills – draft action plan	Possibly October or December 2023	Scrutiny of action plan. Jon Bloor – Assistant Director (Economic Growth)
Update on contract monitoring within the Council for a selected operational area	Appropriate Portfolio Holder and Director responsible for the Service.	Issues and scheduling to be determined by the Committee

Update on contract monitoring within the Council for a selected operational area (report on the performance of E-on)	To scrutinise the Council's health and safety arrangements	Scrutiny of the street lighting contract that the Council has with Eon – Director of Environment/Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods

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NOTICE OF KEY DECISIONS AND PRIVATE REPORTS – COVERING DECISIONS SCHEDULED TO BE TAKEN FROM 1 FEBRUARY 2024

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
HL-01-23	Corporate Response to the Housing Crisis	Deputy Chief Executive - Place	26 th February 2024	Cabinet
<p>Description: A report detailing the Council’s response to the Housing Crisis</p> <p>Background Documents: Appendices – Various</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private: public and private? NOT FOR PUBLICATION by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and it is not in the public interest due to the commercial confidentiality of the information.</p>				
89 NEI-03-24 New!	Dropped Kerb Policy	Director of Environment	26 th February 2024	Cabinet
<p>Description: A report that details a borough-wide dropped kerb policy for the Council.</p> <p>Background Documents: Appendices – Various</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private: public and private? NOT FOR PUBLICATION by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and it is not in the public interest due to the commercial confidentiality of the information.</p>				
87 NEI/02/24 New!	Don't Trash Oldham	Director of Environment	26 th February 2024	Cabinet

NOTICE OF KEY DECISIONS AND PRIVATE REPORTS – COVERING DECISIONS SCHEDULED TO BE TAKEN FROM 1 FEBRUARY 2024

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
Page 69	<p>Description: a report to consider funding options and costs for the Swimming Pool Support Fund, on behalf of Oldham Community Leisure.</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private:</p> <p>Background Documents: Appendices – Various</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private: public and private? NOT FOR PUBLICATION by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and it is not in the public interest due to the commercial confidentiality of the information.</p>			
	JSC-14-23	Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund - Workforce Fund and Urgent and Emergency Care Support Fund	Director of Adult Social Care	26 th February 2024
Page 69	<p>Description: A report outlining the utilisation of the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund and the Workforce Fund and Urgent and Emergency Care Support Fund.</p> <p>Background Documents: Appendices – Various</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private: public and private? NOT FOR PUBLICATION by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and it is not in the public interest due to the commercial confidentiality of the information.</p>			
	FLC-17-23	Adoption and publication of Oldham Council's Social Value Policy	Deputy Chief Executive -	26 th February 2024

NOTICE OF KEY DECISIONS AND PRIVATE REPORTS – COVERING DECISIONS SCHEDULED TO BE TAKEN FROM 1 FEBRUARY 2024

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
<p>Description: a report to consider approving the adoption and publication of a corporate social value policy to support Oldham Council and the wider Borough.</p> <p>Background Documents: Appendices – Various</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private: Social Value Policy - Public</p>				
ECR-02-23	Oldham Green New Deal Delivery Partnership - Grant acceptance and appointment of Independent Assurance Provider	Deputy Chief Executive (Place)	26 th February 2024	Cabinet
<p>Description: a report outlining the Borough’s Green New Deal Partnership and a request that Cabinet appoint an Independent Assurance Provider.</p> <p>Background Documents: Appendices – Various</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private: public and private? NOT FOR PUBLICATION by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and it is not in the public interest due to the commercial confidentiality of the information.</p>				
ECR-31-23	Gallery Oldham ‘Priority Maintenance Works’	Director of Economy	26 th February 2024	Cabinet

NOTICE OF KEY DECISIONS AND PRIVATE REPORTS – COVERING DECISIONS SCHEDULED TO BE TAKEN FROM 1 FEBRUARY 2024

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
	Description: a report detailing Gallery Oldham’s main priority maintenance works for 2024/25 Background Documents: Appendices – Various Document(s) to be considered in public or private: public and private? NOT FOR PUBLICATION by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and it is not in the public interest due to the commercial confidentiality of the information.			
FCR-02-24	Enforcement Agency Services	Director of Finance	26 th February 2024	Cabinet
1691	Description: Description: A report detailing arrangements for Enforcement Agency Services in the Revenues and Benefits Service. Background Documents: Appendices – Various Document(s) to be considered in public or private: public and private? NOT FOR PUBLICATION by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and it is not in the public interest due to the commercial confidentiality of the information.			
HSC-20-23	Proposal for additional funding received from smokefree generation allocation	Director of Public Health	26 th February 2024	Cabinet
	Description: a report seeking approval for additional funding provided through a new section 31 grant and will be ring fenced for local authority led stop smoking services and support under proposed smokefree legislation. Background Documents: Appendices – Various Document(s) to be considered in public or private: Public			

NOTICE OF KEY DECISIONS AND PRIVATE REPORTS – COVERING DECISIONS SCHEDULED TO BE TAKEN FROM 1 FEBRUARY 2024

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
FCR-03-24 NEW!	Contractual Arrangements – Synergy Education Management System Contract Renewal 2024	Deputy Chief Executive	26 th February 2024	Cabinet
<p>Description: a report requesting authority to enter into a call-off contract under a procurement compliant framework agreement in accordance with Contract Procedure Rules to support the ongoing use of Synergy Education Management System for 3 years with the option to extend by a further 2 years.</p> <p>Background Documents: Appendices – Various</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private: public and private? NOT FOR PUBLICATION by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and it is not in the public interest due to the commercial confidentiality of the information.</p>				
FLC-17-23	Report of the Director of Finance – Revenue Monitor and Capital Investment Programme 2023/24 Quarter 3	Director of Finance	18 th March 2024	Cabinet
<p>Description: a report providing an update on the Council’s 2023/24 forecast revenue budget position and the financial position of the capital programme as at the period ending 31 December 2023 (Quarter 3)</p> <p>Report of the Director of Finance – Revenue Monitor and Capital Investment Programme 2023/24 Quarter 3</p> <p>Background Documents: Appendices – Various</p> <p>Report to be considered in Public</p>				

NOTICE OF KEY DECISIONS AND PRIVATE REPORTS – COVERING DECISIONS SCHEDULED TO BE TAKEN FROM 1 FEBRUARY 2024

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
FLC-19-23	Report of the Director of Finance - Local Taxation and Benefits Discretionary Policies 2024/25	Director of Finance	18 th March 2024	Cabinet
<p>Description: a report to confirm the Council's Local Taxation and Benefits Discretionary Policies for 2024/25 Document(s) to be considered in public or private: Proposed Report Title: Local Taxation and Benefits Discretionary Policies 2024/25</p> <p>Background Documents: Appendices</p> <p>Report to be considered in public</p>				
FLC-18-23	Report of the Director of Finance – Treasury Management 2023/24 – Quarter 3 Report	Director of Finance	18 th March 2024	Cabinet
<p>Description: a report detailing the Quarter 3 review of Treasury Management activity during the third Quarter of 2023/24.</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private: Proposed Report Title: Report of the Director of Finance – Treasury Management Review 2023/24 – Quarter 3 Report</p> <p>Background Documents: Appendices to the report</p> <p>Report to be considered in Public</p>				
NEI-04-24 New!	Street Lighting Attachments Policy	Director of Environment	18 th March 2024	Cabinet

NOTICE OF KEY DECISIONS AND PRIVATE REPORTS – COVERING DECISIONS SCHEDULED TO BE TAKEN FROM 1 FEBRUARY 2024

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
<p>Description: a report requesting that the Cabinet formulates and agrees a Streetlighting attachments policy</p> <p>Background Documents: Appendices – Various</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private: Public</p>				
FLC-05-23	Report of the Director of Finance – Debt Recovery Policies	Director of Finance	18 th March 2024	Cabinet
<p>NDescription: a report that seeks to provide clear guidance for Council Officers, local taxpayers, and organisation who use Council Services on recovery of monies owed to the Council.</p> <p>NDocument(s) to be considered in public or private: Proposed Report Title: Report of the Director of Finance – Debt Recovery Policies</p> <p>Background Documents: Appendices – Various</p> <p>Report to be considered in Public</p>				

Key:

New! - indicates an item that has been added this month

Notes:

1. The procedure for requesting details of documents submitted, or listed to be submitted to decision takers for consideration, is to contact the Contact Officer on the email address contained within the Key Decision Sheet for that item. The contact address for

NOTICE OF KEY DECISIONS AND PRIVATE REPORTS – COVERING DECISIONS SCHEDULED TO BE TAKEN FROM 1 FEBRUARY 2024

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
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documents is Oldham Council, Civic Centre, West Street, Oldham, OL1 1UH. Other documents relevant to those matters may be submitted to the decision maker and contact details are contained within the Key Decision Sheet.

2. Where, on a Key Decision Sheet, the Decision Taker is Cabinet, the list of its Members are as follows: Councillors Arooj Shah (Leader of the Council and Chair of the Cabinet), Elaine Taylor, Shaid Mushtaq, Abdul Jabbar MBE, Fida Hussain, Barbara Brownridge, Mohon Ali, Peter Dean and Chris Goodwin.
3. Full Key Decision details (including documents to be submitted to the decision maker for consideration, specific contact officer details and notification on if a report is likely to be considered in private) can be found via the online published plan at: <http://committees.oldham.gov.uk/mgListPlans.aspx?RPId=144&RD=0>
 - a. Corporate Response to the Housing Crisis: Not for publication by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and it is not in the public interest due to the commercial confidentiality of the information.
 - b. : Not for publication by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and it is not in the public interest due to the commercial confidentiality of the information.
 - c. rtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and it is not in the public interest due to the commercial confidentiality of the information.
 - d. proval to extend the Parking Contract with NSL: rtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and it is not in the public interest due to the commercial confidentiality of the information.
 - e. Swimming Pool Support Fund – OCL Utilities: rtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and it is not in the public interest due to the commercial confidentiality of the information.
 - f. Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund - Workforce Fund and Urgent and Emergency Care Support Fund: rtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and it is not in the public interest due to the commercial confidentiality of the information. Adoption and publication of Oldham Council's Social Value Policy: rtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and it is not in the public interest due to the commercial confidentiality of the information. Oldham Green New Deal Delivery Partnership - Grant acceptance and appointment of Independent Assurance Provider: rtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and it is not in the public interest due to the commercial confidentiality

NOTICE OF KEY DECISIONS AND PRIVATE REPORTS – COVERING DECISIONS SCHEDULED TO BE TAKEN FROM 1 FEBRUARY 2024

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
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of the information. Gallery Oldham 'Priority Maintenance Works': true of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and it is not in the public interest due to the commercial confidentiality of the information. true of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and it is not in the public interest due to the commercial confidentiality of the information. Proposal for additional funding received from smokefree generation allocation: true of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and it is not in the public interest due to the commercial confidentiality of the information: true of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and it is not in the public interest due to the commercial confidentiality of the information. Contractual Arrangements – Synergy Education Management System Contract Renewal 2024: true of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and it is not in the public interest due to the commercial confidentiality of the information.