

## **Report to Policy Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

# **Conservative Budget Amendment Proposals 2023/24**

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor M. Woodvine

**Officer:** Chris Kelsall, Assistant Director of Finance

**07 February 2023**

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### **Reason for Decision**

This Report presents to Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee the Conservative Group proposals for amendments to the Administration's Budget for 2023/24.

### **Executive Summary**

This report presents to the Committee a series of amendments in addition to those proposals already presented by the Administration in the 2023/24 Budget. This report proposes, for the second consecutive year, a freeze in Council Tax for General Purposes. While the Conservatives in Opposition do support spending on Adult Social Care across the Borough, they do not support some of the Administration's policy priorities.

The proposed amendments to the Administration's 2023/24 Budget contained in this Report take into consideration the international situations such as the Russo-Ukrainian War, the United Kingdom's (U.K.) withdrawal from the European Union (EU), and the Covid-19 pandemic that have made the financial situation for all Local Authorities worse than in previous times. While the Conservative Group understand and appreciate the difficulties so many Councils are facing, financially, they do believe further economies could be made in Oldham.

The Conservative Group also believes the generous Local Government settlement set out by the U.K. Government in Westminster has improved the situation very positively. In addition, thanks to the investment from His Majesty's Government in the form of the Household Support and the Council Tax Support Fund, which have eased the burden for families and individuals experiencing cost-of-living pressures, the Conservative Group has been enabled to replenish reserves by discontinuing the Administration's plans to replicate the same service.

Also taken into consideration during the production of the proposed amendments in this report are the parameters in which Oldham Council have to 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.

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The main purpose of the proposals in this report is to ensure that the people living in Oldham do not have to pay a penny more as they compete with the pressures of the cost-of-living situation. The priority of the Conservative Group at this time is to keep taxation at the lowest possible level.

The proposals, while making further Budget reductions, 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 and giving residents much-needed relief in freezing Council Tax in these inflationary times.

This is achievable through significant savings proposals identified within this report that within two years will reduce the Council's base budget requirement by over £3m on an annual basis (of which £2.748m will be delivered in 2023/24). This includes a partial reversal of the Administration's response to the cost of living pressures, which will save some £1.290m in 2023/24. These savings will enable a reduction in the ruling Administration's proposed use of reserves of some £0.662m in 2023/24 (and a further £0.345m in 2024/25). This increased financial resilience can be used to reduce Council Tax increases in future years.

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.

## **Recommendations**

That the Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers and recommends to Cabinet:

1. The proposal to implement no increase in Council Tax for General Purposes in 2023/24.
2. To partially reverse the Administration's proposals (as presented) in respect of the Council's response to the cost-of-living situation to save £1.290m for 2023/24 and a further £0.500m in 2024/25 totalling £1.790m.
3. The savings proposals totalling a further £1.459m for 2023/24 as set out at paragraphs 3.7 to 3.18 in this report.

## Conservative Budget Amendment Proposals 2023/24

### 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 challenging to deliver a balanced budget. With several Councils having approached the Government for financial assistance or 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.
- 1.3 The Conservatives have produced a series of budget amendments to revise key decisions set out by the Administration. The Administration's proposals are ineffective in alleviating the cost-of-living pressures many families are facing; especially from higher gas and electricity bills as well as increases in the price of many other goods associated with the current increased levels of inflation.
- 1.4 In producing this Budget Amendment, the Conservatives are offering several common-sense savings proposals totalling £2.748m for 2023/24. This includes a partial reversal of the Administration's response to cost-of-living pressures (as presented) saving £1.290m in 2023/24 with a further reduction of £0.500m in 2024/25. This will allow the Council to reverse the 1.99% increase in Council Tax for General Purposes for 2023/24 proposed by the Administration and the savings will also enable a reduction in the ruling Administration's proposed use of reserves of up to £0.662m. This additional resource will be available to fund any redundancy costs associated with the proposals contained in this report and will reduce the requirement for future Council Tax increases.

### 2. Current Position

- 2.1 The context of the budget setting process remains as much this year as in previous years impacted by the unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic – the worst in a century – paired with the impossible international situations such as the Russo-Ukrainian War which has plunged many of the world's powers into recession and caused significant levels of disruption which will inevitably continue. These events have manifested in supply shortages in key industries leading to higher prices and rising inflation, not just in the U.K. but also in all developed nations.
- 2.2 So, and with this in mind, the Conservatives in Opposition believe this Council can do more to alleviate the cost-of-living pressures many families and individuals are facing across the Borough of Oldham as the worldwide economy continues to recover. The Conservatives believe this Council should do more to mitigate the impact of inflation by freezing the level of Council Tax for General Purposes. Residents will benefit from retaining a higher proportion of their earned income, awarding them greater purchasing power to meet rising household costs.

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- 2.3 The Administration has presented an increased series of saving proposals, compared to previous years, as part of the 2023/24 budget setting process which the Conservatives are taking as the starting point for the proposed amendments set out in this report. The Conservatives recognise that, especially for the forthcoming Budget, difficult decisions need to be made to deliver a balanced budget that can be presented to the Committee. Moreover, the Conservatives recognise that further savings are required to reduce the future reliance on reserves as set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy and reduce the need for excessive Council Tax increases in the future.

### **3. 2023/24 Proposals**

- 3.1 The Conservatives in Opposition propose some specific amendments to be considered for the 2023/24 Revenue Budget. These are split into the following areas:

- Helping with cost-of-living pressures
- Additional Investment
- Response to cost-of-living pressures
- Budget Reduction proposals

#### **Helping with cost-of-living pressures**

- 3.2 The Conservative Group's proposal to implement no increase in Council Tax for General Purposes for 2023/24 will reduce Council Tax revenue by £2.086m per annum from 2023/24. Whilst this means it is necessary to identify additional savings to offset these revenue losses, the Conservatives believe the need to help hard-working people with cost-of-living pressures should be the overriding priority and that those people will benefit from reduced Council Tax rates this year, and in the future.

#### **Additional Investment**

- 3.3 Considering the cost pressures and financial challenges that this Council is facing, the Conservatives in Opposition are proposing no additional investment in this report.

#### **Response to cost-of-living pressures**

- 3.4 The Conservatives recommend a partial reversal in 2023/24 of the cost-of-living investment initiatives (as presented) by the Administration of £1.790m reducing to £0.938m in 2024/25. The partial reversal presented by the Conservatives in Opposition will reduce expenditure by a total of £1.290m in 2023/24 leaving £0.500m to continue to offer support the scheme in 2023/24 as it is wound down. A further adjustment to the Administration's presented budget for cost-of-living in 2024/25 would result in this budget being removed in full.

- 3.5 Whilst the Conservatives recognise the importance of providing additional support to vulnerable people impacted by the increases in the cost-of-living, the Conservatives believe that the current proposals do not target resources effectively and that a freeze in general taxation directly benefits a much larger proportion of the Borough's population (many of whom would appreciate the assistance) at source, rather than the Administration's plans to spend monies from all taxpayers on administration and redistributing to a smaller amount of people.

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3.6 It is also noted that the U.K. Government has been conscientious to these needs by providing significant resources to this Council for 2023/24 that can be directly distributed to residents. This includes:

- The Household Support Fund where Oldham's allocation in 2022/23 was £4.838m and expected to be a similar level for 2023/24.
- The Council Tax Support Fund, where Oldham's confirmed allocation for 2023/24 is £0.573m.

### **Budget Reduction Proposals**

3.7 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 provided below with proformas at Appendix Two.

#### **OPP-BR1-301 – Reduction in Executive Management costs through the deletion of the following posts: Deputy Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Executive and Executive Director for Place and Economic Growth (£0.241m in 2023/24, £0.241m in 2024/25)**

3.8 This proposal will reduce a high-cost layer of senior management without adversely impacting upon service delivery. The existing Executive Management can be concentrated with the Chief Executive, and respective Directors can be empowered with decision-making responsibilities, reporting back to the Chief Executive. This will make Directors directly accountable with more decisions being delegated to the Director level.

3.9 The Conservatives in Opposition believe retaining a bloated Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is not sustainable as residents are struggling to be burdened with increases in Council Tax every year and equally want to see priority given to good statutory service provision.

3.10 This proposal will save £0.482m in salary and associated on-costs with £0.241m saved in 2023/24 on the assumption that posts become deleted mid-way through the year. Redundancy costs will be incurred, which can be met out the increased reserves available as a result of these proposals - as referred to in paragraph 1.4 of this report.

#### **OPP-BR1-302 – Discontinuation of the District Partnerships (£1.088m in 2023/24, £0.456m in 2024/25)**

3.11 The Conservatives in Opposition believe that this is an expensive, non-statutory service that cannot be justified with the current financial pressures this Council is facing. All resources in this area should be diverted to services that deliver more tangible and noticeable benefits to residents.

3.12 Overall, this proposal will save some £1.2m in salary costs together with some £0.4m in grant awards and other expenditure per annum, giving rise to a saving of £1.088m in 2023/24 and a further £0.456m in 2024/25. The Conservatives believe the current structure is not working and services provided by the staff in the District Partnerships

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could and should be exercised by Elected Members. For such undertakings, Elected Members should be capable and willing to directly correspond with responsible Officers in order to progress Ward casework, independent from the District Partnerships. The Districts have not proven effective in co-ordinating strategic direction with the constituent Elected Members.

- 3.13 It is acknowledged that this proposal reduces expenditure on community activities – but this is a matter of heart and mind, not money. The Conservatives have not seen evidence of the tangible benefits that this service provides and again do not believe this expenditure can be justified in the current financial climate.
- 3.14 The Conservative Group believes that activities of this nature are most effectively advanced by the local Voluntary, Community, Faith, and Social Enterprise sector (VCFSE) across the Borough, and that Oldham Council operations in the space are counterproductive as they are largely perceived as being wasteful, with residents' expectation that the majority of their Council Tax contributions are spent on statutory services.
- 3.15 Redundancy costs will be incurred, which can be met out the increased reserves available as a result of these proposals, as referred to in paragraph 1.4 of this report.

**OPP-BR1-303 - Reconsideration of Council priorities with regards to Strategic Customer Service (£0.130m in 2023/24)**

- 3.16 The Conservatives in Opposition believe that there is further scope in this area to reduce spend on this non-statutory service and re-prioritise this to other areas due to its ineffective use of funds. The Conservatives also believe that this reduction would have no adverse effects.
- 3.17 Similar to the District Partnership proposal, this service performs functions which the Conservative Group believe the vast majority of people are not most concerned that the Council should be doing well. The Conservatives want the Council to perform its basic functions well, efficiencies made in non-statutory staffing costs, and residents to have some respite in their bills rather than being treated as a source of income to be squeezed.
- 3.18 As such, the Conservatives propose to eliminate unnecessary expenditure in this area, which is allocated for spending with outside organisations rather than within this Council. This would generate a saving of £0.130m in 2023/24 through removing the Strategic Customer Services budget.

**4. Summary of Proposals**

- 4.1 Bringing together all of the proposals set out in Section 3 of this Report would generate a saving of £2.748m in 2023/24 and further £0.345m in 2024/25. This would enable a balanced budget position to be achieved without the Administration's proposed increase in Council Tax for General Purposes for 2023/24. Moreover, all proposals together will allow for a reduction in the use of reserves of £0.662m in 2023/24 (subject to incurring redundancy costs) and £0.345m in 2024/25 that will help obviate the need for future Council Tax increases.

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4.2 The proposals set out in this report are summarised at Appendix One. The Budget Reductions are detailed at Appendix Two.

## **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 budget amendments (as presented) are robust and deliverable.

5.2 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. The proposal not to increase the level of Council Tax for general purposes is possible but not a recommended approach as it increases the budget challenge and reduces financial resilience for 2024/25 and later years.

(Anne Ryans)

## **6. Options/Alternatives**

6.1 With regard to the proposals set out in this report, the options available to the Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee 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 Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee 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 Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 7 February 2023 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 There are no immediate legal issues arising from the report save that where the proposals involves potential redundancies, appropriate HR processes will need to be followed in accordance with the Council's policies and procedures. Where community activities are potentially impacted an appropriate equalities impact assessment

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should be undertaken in order to seek to mitigate any potential adverse impacts of such proposals.

## **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**

13.1 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.

13.2 The reduction in the level of Council Tax the Council can generate in future years represents a risk to future financial resilience.

## **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 Any adverse equality, community cohesion or crime implications associated with the proposals would be assessed and mitigated when Equality Impact Assessments are undertaken.



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**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: Summary of Amendments to the Administration's Revenue Budget Proposals.

23.2 Appendix Two: Business Cases for Conservative Budget Reduction Proposals

## Conservative Group

## Summary of Amendments to the Administration's Revenue Budget Proposals

	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000
<b><u>Budget Pressures – Foregone Income/Additional Costs</u></b>		
<u>Helping with cost-of-living pressures</u>	2,086	
<b>Total Additional Budget Pressures</b>	<b>2,086</b>	

<b><u>Measures to Balance the Budget</u></b>		
<u>Reversal of Administration Proposals</u>		
Cost-of-living support package	(1,290)	352 <sup>1</sup>
<u>Budget Reduction Proposals</u>		
OPP-BR1-301 – Executive Management	(241)	(241)
OPP-BR1-302 – District Partnerships	(1,088)	(456)
OPP-BR1-303 – Strategic Customer Services	(130)	-
	<b>(2,748)</b>	<b>(345)</b>
Redundancy costs associated with the above	TBC	
<b>Reduced Contribution from reserves required to maintain a balanced revenue budget position</b>	<b>662</b>	<b>345</b>
<b>Total Measures to Balance the Budget</b>	<b>(2,086)</b>	<b>-</b>

<sup>1</sup> The ruling Administration proposes to reduce expenditure in respect of its Cost of Living Response from £1.290m in 2023/24 to £0.938m in 2024/25. The £0.352m addition in the table above does not represent new investment but simply reflects that the Conservative's proposed budget amendment of £1.290m in 2023/24 will reduce to the £0.938m in 2024/25 so that it eliminates the ruling Administration's proposed investment in that year.

# **Appendix Two**

## **Business Cases for Conservative Budget Reduction Proposals**

# **Budget reductions**

<b>Service Area:</b>	<b>Chief Executive/ Place &amp; Economic Growth</b>
<b>Budget Reduction Title:</b>	<b>Reduction in the Executive Management Team</b>

**Budget Reduction Proposal - Detail and Objectives:**

The proposal is to delete the following posts:

- Deputy Chief Executive
- Assistant Chief Executive
- Executive Director for Place and Economic Growth

This will remove a high-cost layer of senior management without adversely impacting upon service delivery. The existing Executive Management can be concentrated with the Chief Executive, and respective Directors can be empowered with decision-making responsibilities, reporting back to the Chief Executive. This will make Directors directly accountable with more decisions being delegated to the Director level.

<b>2022/23 Service Budget and Establishment</b>	<b>£000</b>
Employees	482
Other Operational Expenses	-
Income	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>482</b>

<b>Current Forecast (under) / overspend</b>	-
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<b>Number of posts (Full time equivalent)</b>	-
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	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>
<b>Proposed Budget Reduction (£000)</b>	(241)	(241)	0
<b>Proposed Staffing Reductions (FTE)</b>	3	0	0

<b>Is your proposal a 'one-off' in 2023/24 or is it ongoing?</b>	On-going
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## Section B

What impact does the proposal have on the following?

<b>Property</b>
None
<b>Service Delivery</b>
None
<b>Future expected outcomes</b>
None
<b>Organisation</b>
A change to the way executive decisions are taken
<b>Workforce</b>
A requirement for a new Senior Management Team comprising the Chief Executive and directors
<b>Communities and Service Users</b>
None
<b>Oldham Cares</b>
None
<b>Other Partner Organisations</b>
None

Who are the key stakeholders?

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

**Benefits to the organisation/staff/customers including performance improvements**

Over two financial years, a £0.482m reduction in the costs of the Council.

## Section C

### Key Risks and Mitigations

Risk	Mitigation
A decline in the effectiveness of 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	July 2023
Proposals implemented	September 2023
N/a	N/a

## Section D

Consultation required?	Yes
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	Start	Conclusion
Staff	April 2023	July 2023
Trade Union	April 2023	July 2023
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 £0.482m from 2024/25 onwards.

Signed RO	31/01/2023
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Signed Finance	31/01/2023
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Service Area:	District Partnerships
Budget Reduction Title:	Stopping the District Partnership Service

**Budget Reduction Proposal - Detail and Objectives:**

The proposal is that the Council will stop undertaking this service.

The recorded savings takes into account the Administration's proposal to reduce individual Member's ward budgets by £1,000 (from £5,000 to £4,000) from 2023/24 onwards (a total saving of £0.060m).

**2022/23 Service Budget and Establishment**

	£000
Employees	1,321
Other Operational Expenses	429
Income	(146)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,604</b>

Current Forecast (under) / overspend

-

Number of posts (Full time equivalent)

-

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Proposed Budget Reduction (£000)	(1,088)	(456)	0
Proposed Staffing Reductions (FTE)	15	0	0

Is your proposal a 'one-off' in 2023/24 or is it ongoing?

On-going



## Section B

What impact does the proposal have on the following?

<b>Property</b>	
None	
<b>Service Delivery</b>	
Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removal of all ward councillor budgets</li> <li>• No support to Elected Members in each District including the support on bids to LIF, no Elected Member budgets, case work, advice and guidance as examples</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Removal of the support to wider humanitarian programmes including the cost-of-living and wider health related work</li> <li>• Removal of support to programmes and development of such things as the Clean Streets programme along with other campaigns</li> <li>• Remove support to key events including – Bonfire Night, Remembrance Sunday, Royal celebrations (Jubilee etc.), local community events etc</li> <li>• Remove support to Residents First approach to engagement and the support to wider residents engagement</li> <li>• Reduction in supporting the co-ordination of local partnership meetings and problem solving meetings</li> <li>• No support to the voluntary sector on community activity, resource support, advice and guidance, and partnerships developing community co-production</li> </ul>	
<b>Future expected outcomes</b>	
Reduced service provision as per the above	
<b>Organisation</b>	
Yes – unable to support key events and link to community	
<b>Workforce</b>	
Yes – a reduction in workforce would be a consequence of the approval of this proposal	
<b>Communities and Service Users</b>	
Yes – see above. Services to communities would be reduced	
<b>Oldham Cares</b>	
None	
<b>Other Partner Organisations</b>	
No work to build capacity of communities and community organisations	

Who are the key stakeholders?

<b>Staff</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Elected Members</b>	<b>Yes</b>

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

<b>Benefits to the organisation/staff/customers including performance improvements</b>
Over two financial years, a cumulative £1.544m reduction in costs to the Council.

## Section C

### Key Risks and Mitigations

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
Adverse impact of communities due to the ceasing 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
No Elected Member personal budget	Recognition that there is a reduced offer

### Key Development and Delivery Milestones

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Staff and Trades Unions consultation completed	July 2023
Proposals implemented	September 2023

## Section D

<b>Consultation required?</b>	<b>Yes</b>
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	<b>Start</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>
<b>Staff</b>	April 2023	July 2023
<b>Trade Union</b>	April 2023	July 2023
<b>Public</b>	TBC	TBC
<b>Service Users</b>	TBC	TBC
<b>Other</b>	TBC	TBC

### Equality Impact Screening

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

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

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

<b>Finance comments</b>
The budget reduction proposal will generate an additional saving of £1.544m from 2024/25 onwards. This is in addition to the £0.060m already proposed by the Administration.

<b>Signed RO</b>	31/01/2023
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<b>Signed Finance</b>	31/01/2023
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Service Area:	Chief Executive
Budget Reduction Title:	Removal of the Strategic Customer Budget

**Budget Reduction Proposal - Detail and Objectives:**

Expenditure within the Strategic Customer Services budget to cease from 2023/24 onwards.

2022/23 Service Budget and Establishment	£000
Employees	-
Other Operational Expenses	130
Income	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>

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)	(130)	0	0
Proposed Staffing Reductions (FTE)	0	0	0

Is your proposal a 'one-off' in 2023/24 or is it ongoing?	On-going
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## Section B

What impact does the proposal have on the following?

<b>Property</b>
None
<b>Service Delivery</b>
Key initiatives as highlighted in the risks section will cease which will have a negative impact on how we engage with our residents and our workforce.
<b>Future expected outcomes</b>
None
<b>Organisation</b>
None
<b>Workforce</b>
As above.
<b>Communities and Service Users</b>
None
<b>Oldham Cares</b>
None
<b>Other Partner Organisations</b>
None

Who are the key stakeholders?

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

**Benefits to the organisation/staff/customers including performance improvements**

A £0.130m reduction in the cost of Council service provision.

## Section C

### Key Risks and Mitigations

Risk	Mitigation
The loss of key initiatives which in the past have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Supported staff wellbeing through an enhanced wellbeing offer; and</li><li>- Delivered key projects aligned to the priorities of the Council – i.e. The Big Conversation events, listening and gaining feedback from residents and Oldham Council Working For You.</li></ul>	Cease initiatives however, this will have an impact on how the Council engages with our residents and staff
N/a	N/a
N/a	N/a

### Key Development and Delivery Milestones

Milestone	Timeline
Budget amended and expenditure halted	01 April 2023
N/a	N/a
N/a	N/a

## Section D

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

### 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

<b>Finance comments</b>
The budget reduction proposal will generate a total saving of £0.130m from 2023/24 onwards.

Signed RO	31/01/2023
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Signed Finance	31/01/2023
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