

Conservative Group Motion

THE BUDGET CHALLENGE

PROPOSED: Councillor Luke Lancaster

SECONDED: Councillor Max Woodvine

AMENDMENT PROPOSED: Councillor Luke Lancaster

AMENDMENT SECONDED: Councillor Max Woodvine

The Chancellor of the Exchequer has delivered a ~~h~~Budget which will adversely impact the people who live in ~~the~~ Oldham Metropolitan Borough.

This Council notes that:

- Following the coronavirus pandemic and pressures caused by the Russo-Ukrainian War in recent years, this Labour Government assumed a stable inheritance from the previous Conservative Government – inflation at the 2% target, mortgage rates being cut, low unemployment, lower borrowing than other major economies, second lowest debt across the G7, and the fastest growing advanced economy.
- The supposed ‘£22 billion black hole’ is entirely fictitious, has failed to be evidenced, and is simply a political pretext to raise taxes.
- Despite pre-election promises to the contrary, the UK Government are set to significantly raise taxation to a new historic high point.
- The Budget sets a concerning, high risk increase in state borrowing of £32 billion additional per annum.
- The Budget represents a return to tired ‘tax and spend’ policies which will stifle long-term economic growth, as the Office for Budget Responsibility has forecast.
- With a £25 billion raid through employers’ National Insurance contributions, this Budget is bad for business, and will inevitably lead to higher consumer costs, suppressed wages, and lower employment.
- This Budget will cause further hardship through increases to Capital Gains Tax, Stamp Duty, energy taxes, inheritance and education taxes, and cuts to agricultural and business reliefs.
- Poorer pensioners will particularly suffer through strict means testing of the Winter Fuel Payment, which will result in around 34,000 Oldhamers losing this vital support provision.

This Council resolves to:

1. To instruct the Chief Executive to write to Oldham’s three MP~~s~~s, the relevant government departments, and agencies to reinstate Winter Fuel Payments for all pensioners, without any means testing. All pensioners, regardless of income or other financial factors, should receive this payment automatically in recognition of their lifelong contributions to society through taxes.
2. That the Council will do all it can to help alleviate those who are struggling paying for winter fuel bills this winter, given that the Energy Price Cap has increased by 10%, ~~also~~ adding £150 to the average fuel bill.
3. To instruct the Chief Executive to write to Oldham’s three MPs, the relevant government departments, and agencies to articulate the adverse impact which the national Budget will

inflict on residents of our Borough, to express deep concern about the many tax rises, and to invite an alternative policy direction.