

Labour amendment to the 2015/16 budget

This Council is deeply concerned by the effect of continued reductions in services to the people of Suffolk: in particular to the children and young people whose safety, education and training are vital to the future of the County; and to vulnerable elderly residents who deserve our care and who also need our support in order to remain as independent as possible. This Council will therefore seek to minimise reductions of services.

This Council remains acutely aware of the financial constraints within which it is forced to operate, and deplores the approach of the Government which has imposed stiffer reductions on Local Government than on the rest of public spending.

At the same time, this Council notes that on April 1 2010 the overall level of its reserves stood at £77.8m (County Council, 17-02-2011, App B, P60), and the County Reserve was £10.6m. As of 31st March 2014 the actual overall reserves stood at £165.8m (Cabinet, 27-01-2015, App B, P265), of which £39.8m is stated to be capital.

As prudential guidelines require the minimum balance on the County Fund General Reserve to be about 1% of the net budget, which would currently amount to £5m, and as the level of reserves in 2010 was regarded as being adequate for the 2010-11 budget plans, this Council resolves to use the increase in the overall reserves, to be spent down in a controlled way, to maintain and, where necessary, enhance its most vital services, and to that end resolves to make the following alterations to the Revenue Budget 2015-16 and the Capital Programme 2015-18:

Reinstatement of Revenue reductions made to the 2014-15 budget, previously proposed by the Labour Group amendment 13-02-2014

- 1. ACS Workforce Development budget** **£0.10m**
To enhance staff training opportunities, including in the private and voluntary sectors where services are being provided on behalf of ACS
- 2. ACS Non-Care Purchasing budget, Staff training element** **£0.10m**
To enhance regular staff training in order to promote retention
- 3. Supporting People – now Housing Support** **£1.00m**
To enable suitable accommodation for care leavers, marginalised adults, young families, people experiencing domestic abuse, and support services for sheltered accommodation, thus reducing the need for more expensive interventions later
- 4. Library Service Book Fund** **£0.07m**
To reverse the cut to the library book fund already made, which has led to an increase in the number of people waiting for books
- 5. Learning Improvement Service & Non-Statutory Services** **£0.50m**
To enable the local authority to provide schools with the support they need irrespective of the status of the school

6. Increased Educational Welfare Officers **£0.25m**
To enhance the number of Educational Welfare Officers in order to ensure children are in school and to work with families to identify the reasons behind their absence

7. CYP Inclusive Services fund for Autism & ADHD **£0.25m**
To provide an enhanced diagnostic service for families of children and young people with ADHD and Autism and to enable them to access the services they need

Reversal of Proposed cuts to Services resulting from Transformation Projects in the Budget Book, and reinvestment of any genuine efficiency savings from the projects into enhanced services

SLCC: (Cuts to be restored from £6m allocated to this project)

8. New Approach to Home Care Support (Annex D 6.a) **£1.00m**
To ensure adequate funding for domiciliary care, and to enable transfers from hospital to home

9. Managing down demand (Annex D 6.e and f) **£0.50m**
To prevent withdrawal of services for young people with high needs and to prevent the rise in costs for existing customers

MEIC: (viz Responses to Scrutiny Committee Recommendations- 26 November 2014)

10. External services for Care Leavers **£0.50m**
To restore the financing of support services for those who leave care

11. County Youth Services **£0.10m**
To retain an element of community service support given to young people

12. Suffolk Family Focus **£0.20m**
To ensure retention of the three locality managers at threat of redundancy, protect the work done to build relationships between agencies, retain ability to use data effectively, and enable prospective £8m payment by results

13. Children's Centres Premises **£0.10m**
To reverse the proposed £100,000 saving, in order to keep all the children's centres open

14. Children's Centres Staff **£0.15m**
To protect staff budget, with any efficiency savings reinvested in the provision of further services

15. Welfare Officers for Children's Centres **£0.10m**
To reinstate the 5 posts of welfare benefits advice workers for Children's Centres, so that an effective benefits advice programme can be provided at the centres

16. Travel (Annex D 15.a-c) **£0.3m**
To ensure that charges for discretionary travel and charges to low income families do not limit the opportunities available for young people to further their studies

Other Savings

17. Welfare Rights & Disability Advice – restore in full **£0.10m**
To ensure the two posts that are currently vacant are filled to allow those that need the services to get the benefits they are entitled to.

18. Voluntary Sector Grants **£0.10m**
To reverse the cuts to voluntary sector organisations that help provide services to those who need them

19. Library Service **£0.12m**
To reverse the need to cut the book fund further thereby increasing waiting times

20. Culture, Heritage & Sport Organisations **£0.10m**
To enable a diversity of cultural, heritage and sport organisations

21. Relationship with Schools including LIS **£0.30m**
To ensure the adequate funding of the Learning Improvement Service

Proposed revenue enhancements

22. School/Academy Pyramid transformation project 6 x 1/2m + 1 x £100k **£3.50m**
There are seven secondary schools/academies in Suffolk that are currently rated as Inadequate by Ofsted. In addition to work being done through Raising the Bar, a project will be set up to work with each of these school pyramids to provide support not only in the secondary schools, but also in the feeder primary schools and in the wider communities which the schools serve

And that the cost of the amendments to the revenue budget numbers 1-22 should be financed by a reduction in the Contingency Reserve of £9.44 million.

23. To enhance home to school or training travel for young people from disadvantaged families **£1.0m**
To provide post-16 pupils from disadvantaged families – who were in receipt of free school meals or were Looked after Children - with free travel to their nearest place of study or their place of training up to the age of 18

And that the cost of this amendment to the revenue budget should be financed by a reduction in the earmarked reserve for Home to School Transport.

Proposed Capital enhancement

24. Three Main Towns Minor Capital Schemes Fund **£1.50m**
Ipswich, Lowestoft and Bury St Edmunds to have a local minor capital highway schemes fund

And that the cost of this amendment should be financed from the On Street Parking Account/ Capital Reserves.

Summary of amendment

Proposed Changes	£ Million
<u>Reinstatement of Revenue reductions</u>	
ACS Workforce Development budget	0.10
ACS Staff training budget	0.10
Supporting People – now Housing Support	1.00
Library Service Book Fund	0.07
LIS & Non-Statutory Services	0.50
CYP Educational Welfare Officer fund	0.25
CYP Inclusive Services fund for Autism & ADHD	0.25
Subtotal	(2.27)
<u>Reversal of Proposed cuts to Services</u>	
New Approach to Home Care Support (Annex D 6.a)	1.00
Managing down demand (Annex D 6.e and f)	0.50
External services for Care Leavers	0.50
County Youth Services	0.10
Suffolk Family Focus	0.20
Childrens Centres Premises	0.10
Childrens Centres Staff	0.15
Welfare Officers for Childrens Centres	0.10
Travel (Annex D 15.a-c)	0.30
Welfare Rights & Disability Advice – restore in full	0.10
Voluntary Sector Grants	0.10
Library Service	0.12
Culture Heritage & Sport Organisations	0.10
Relationship with Schools including LIS	0.30
Subtotal	(3.67)
<u>Proposed revenue enhancement</u>	
School/Academy Pyramid transformation project 7 x £0. 5m	3.50
Subtotal to be financed from Contingency Reserve	(9.44)
Enhanced home to school /training travel	1.00
Financed from School Transport Earmarked Reserve	
<u>Proposed Capital enhancements</u>	
3 Main Towns Minor Capital Schemes Fund	1.50
Financed from on-Street Parking Account/ Capital Reserve	
Subtotal	(1.50)
Total	£11.94m