

## The Green Budget Amendment 2015-2016

We intend to raise the Council Tax to **5%** (just £0.70p extra per week to the average ratepayer's bill than the Cabinet's proposal) that will bring in an extra £9,206,000. It will trigger a referendum which they say will cost £638,000.

We believe at some stage with the continuing decline in Revenue Support Grant the Council will inevitably have to put it to the people that a slightly higher rate than 1.99% rise is needed if horrendous cuts are to be avoided.

To get us to just under £10 million to put back into services we are also suggesting a reduction in pay budgets that can be achieved by reversing the 7% rise in Directors salary pay given in 2014/15 and held to a 1% increase in line with other Council workers; and that the 19% increase in Councillor allowances budget planned for April are also capped at an increase of 1%. That will generate £90,000 and £100,000 respectively. With services reducing by 25% over the next 3 years this is not the time for large executive pay increases.

The range of County services is shrinking rapidly so we have suggested the Cabinet is reduced by 2 members saving another £40,000. New ideas such as hiring rooms in County Hall and selling off a few of the painting to local galleries will also generate £150,000.

We are also suggesting increasing parking charges by an extra £1 per day in the Park and Rides plus giving extra concessions to season ticket holders using park and rides to increase usage. A very small extra charge of 5% generally on parking and CPZ charges is also suggested. That brings in another £225,000.

By not making people redundant we expect to also gain £350,000 in not having to pay redundancy charges.

Having put together a package of money that amounts to nearly £10 million in revenue we are suggesting that the bulk of it (94%) is focused on Adult Social Care, to protect children, the disabled, the elderly, the homeless, the sick and the poor.

**The focus is very clear, to stop the most direct and harmful cuts on the most vulnerable in our community.**

We are suggesting the following:

- Saving the Children's Centres by stopping this year's cut (£1million)
- Stopping the cuts in the Adult Learning Disability Service (£6.1 million)
- Returning the Homelessness Fund in full (£500,000)
- Restoring the cuts in the Citizens Benefits Advisory Services ( £300,000)
- Stop the cuts in the Care Home Placement Service (£490,000)

- Restore the carers short break respite service (£200,000)
- Reversing the cuts in the Physical Disability Service (£98,000)
- We want to reduce the cuts to schools, rural transport and the movement of the disabled to day centres by putting back £500,000 to subsidize the transport services and £150,000 to reduce the cuts on rural bus subsidies.
- The threat to further reduce the library service is taken away by restoring the expected 2015-16 cut (£95,000)

We also see certain things as vital if we are to make any social progress such as restoring the grant for free ESOL English classes (£60,000). We also consider providing a tiny amount for wildlife officers to enable them to actually do something on issues the Council has agreed must be addressed such as bee colony collapse (£35,000). We also want officers to investigate by a feasibility study, the idea of the County putting its money in the local NHS and buying out some of the crippling PFI contracts (£39,000).

On the capital side although it will cost us £400,000 per year to repay a prudential loan we would want to spend £3 million on a real cycle separation network for Oxfordshire and £7 million on insulation schemes that would dramatically reduce energy bills. On insulation our £7 million investment will result in £21 million pounds worth of insulation work due to Energy Company matched funding.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**We RECOMMEND Council to approve:**

- 1) A budget for 2015/16 and medium term financial plan for 2016/17 – 2017/18 as amended in Green Group Annex 1;**
- 2) The Council Tax and precept calculations for 2015/16 set out in Annex 2 and in particular:**
  - i) a precept for 2015/16 of £296,759,302m; and**
  - ii) a Council Tax for Band D equivalent properties of £1,268.83**

***COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS***

*Leader of the Green Group*

**Green Group Budget Amendments**

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	TOTAL
Proposed Council Tax Increase	5.00%	3.00%	3.00%	
Band D Council Tax	£1,268.83	£1,306.89	£1,346.10	
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Cabinet Net Pressures (+) / Savings (-)</b>	<b>-4,767</b>	<b>2,955</b>	<b>-5,337</b>	<b>-7,149</b>
<b><u>Corporate</u></b>				
Additional amount to spend from having a 5.0% Council Tax increase in 2015/16	-8,508	-342	-356	<b>-9,206</b>
Cost of Referendum in 2015/16	638	-638		<b>0</b>
Hire out rooms in County Hall for meetings and private functions in the evenings and weekends	-50			<b>-50</b>
Reverse the Senior Director increases awarded in 2014/15	-90			<b>-90</b>
One-off saving from reduced redundancy costs	-350	350		<b>0</b>
Cost of Prudential Borrowing of £10m to fund Insulation schemes (£7m), Benelux Cycle Network and improvements to Dangerous Roads (£3m)		400		<b>400</b>
Employers Parking Levy		-1,500		<b>-1,500</b>
Contribution to Capital (each year) to fund a Benelux Style Cycle network (see also capital programme amendments below)		1,500		<b>1,500</b>
<b><u>Children, Education &amp; Families</u></b>				
Do not make 2015/16 saving in integrating Children's Social Care and Early Intervention (16CEF4)	1,000			<b>1,000</b>
Short Breaks for Disabled Children and Carers	200			<b>200</b>
<b><u>Social &amp; Community Services</u></b>				
Do not make savings in Learning Disabilities (16SCS2)	100	2,500	3,500	<b>6,100</b>
Advice and Advocacy Groups	300			<b>300</b>
Physical Disabilities	98			<b>98</b>
Social Fund for the Homeless	500			<b>500</b>
Care Home Placement Service - aid transfer from hospital to community	490			<b>490</b>
Free ESOL Classes	60			<b>60</b>
<b><u>Environment &amp; Economy</u></b>				
Increase Park & Ride Charges by £1 per day	-400			<b>-400</b>
Subsidy for parking season ticket holders	200			<b>200</b>
Increase on all other Parking Charges plus new income from additional CPZ	-225			<b>-225</b>
Increase in the charge for Processing Licenses and Planning Applications above the proposed increase	-6			<b>-6</b>
Increase in the general charges	-50			<b>-50</b>
Do not make savings in the integrated transport unit from transport for older people (£0.500m) and reduce savings needed from rural bus subsidies (£0.140m). (16EE10)	650			<b>650</b>
Bee Colony Promotion Wildlife Officer	35			<b>35</b>

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Annex 1**

	2015/16 £000	2016/17 £000	2017/18 £000	TOTAL £000
<b><u>Chief Executive's Office</u></b>				
Reduce the number of Members on the Cabinet by two	-40			<b>-40</b>
Do not fund the pressure arising from the decision to increase Members Allowances - limit the increase to 1% (16CEO1)	-100			<b>-100</b>
Do not make Libraries saving (16CEO3)	95			<b>95</b>
Commission a feasibility study to assist NHS PFI buyouts	39			<b>39</b>
<b>Revised Net Pressures (+) / Savings (-)</b>	<b>-10,181</b>	<b>5,225</b>	<b>-2,193</b>	<b>-7,149</b>
<b>Change to Cashflow Position</b>	<b>-5,414</b>	<b>2,270</b>	<b>3,144</b>	<b>0</b>

<b>Budget Reserve</b>	2015/16 £'000	2016/17 £'000	2017/18 £'000
Opening balance	6,625	7,255	2,511
Previously agreed contribution	-9,551	-9,700	0
Contribution arising from new proposals	10,181	4,956	7,149
<b>Closing balance</b>	<b>7,255</b>	<b>2,511</b>	<b>9,660</b>

<b><u>Amendments to the Capital Programme</u></b>	2015/16 £000	2016/17 £000	2017/18 £000	TOTAL £000
Capital receipt generated from sale of County Heritage assets	-100			<b>-100</b>
<b><u>Transport Programme</u></b>				
Benelux Style Cycle Network and Improvements to Dangerous Roads	2,850	1,500	1,500	<b>5,850</b>
Additional Controlled Parking Zone	125			<b>125</b>
A40/Collingwood Road Signalised Junction	125			<b>125</b>
<b><u>Environment &amp; Economy Programme</u></b>				
Insulation Scheme	7,000			<b>7,000</b>
<b>Total amendments to the Capital Programme *</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>1,500</b>	<b>1,500</b>	<b>13,000</b>

\* Funded by £10m prudential loan and income from Employer's parking levy (2016/17 onwards)

## Council Tax and Precepts 2015/16

### Council Tax Data

1. In order to set its budget for 2015/16, the council needs to calculate its council tax requirement. This is the amount that the council needs to raise from council tax to meet its expenditure after taking account of the income it will accrue from the following
  - (a) the amount to be received from specific grants.
  - (b) the amount to be received from Revenue Support Grant and the Business Rates Top Up under the Business Rates Retention Scheme.
  - (c) the amount to be received for the County Council's share of Non-Domestic Rating Income.
  - (d) any surpluses/shortfalls on the council tax collection funds for earlier years and the estimated position for the current year.
  - (e) the amount expected to be received from fees, charges and contributions.
  
2. In order to set its council tax for the forthcoming year, the council needs to calculate its council tax requirement and have available the council tax base, expressed in terms of Band D equivalent properties.
  
3. Based on the final information on funding and assuming a council tax requirement of **£296,759,302** the calculation of the Band D Council Tax for 2015/16 is as follows:

### Council Tax Calculation 2015/16

	£m
County Council net expenditure after specific grants	433.049
Less: Revenue Support Grant	-62.305
Business Rates Top Up	-37.085
Non-Domestic Rating Income	-29.428
Collection Fund Adjustments	-7.472
<b>Council Tax Requirement (R)</b>	<b>296.759</b>
Council Tax Base (assuming losses on collection) (T)	233,884
<b>Band D Council Tax (R/T)</b>	<b>£1,268.83</b>

The calculation of the council tax for the other bands is shown below in Table 1. Table 2 analyses the tax base over each district council area and allocates the estimated County Council precept to each area relative to their tax base.

**Table 1**

**Council Tax by Property Band for Oxfordshire County Council**

Assuming a Band D council tax of £1,268.83, the council tax for other bands is as follows:

Property Band	Property Values	Band D Proportion	2015/16 £ p
A	Up to £40,000	6/9	845.89
B	Over £40,000 and up to £52,000	7/9	986.87
C	Over £52,000 and up to £68,000	8/9	1,127.85
D	Over £68,000 and up to £88,000	9/9	1,268.83
E	Over £88,000 and up to £120,000	11/9	1,550.79
F	Over £120,000 and up to £160,000	13/9	1,832.75
G	Over £160,000 and up to £320,000	15/9	2,114.72
H	Over £320,000	18/9	2,537.66

**Table 2**

**Allocation of Precept to Districts**

The County Council precept (£296,759,302) is the sum of the council tax income required to fund the Council's budget.

District Council	Tax Base Number	Assumed Precept Due
		£
Cherwell	48,253.00	61,224,853.99
Oxford City	42,658.70	54,126,638.32
South Oxfordshire	54,233.60	68,813,218.69
Vale of White Horse	47,563.10	60,349,488.17
West Oxfordshire	41,175.81	52,245,103.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>233,884.21</b>	<b>296,759,302.17</b>

Formal approval is required under the council tax legislation for:

- The County Council's precept, allocated to district councils pro rata to their share of the council tax base for the County Council;
- The council tax figures for the County Council for a Band D equivalent property and a calculation of the equivalent council tax figure for all other bands.

The information must be given to district councils by 1 March 2015.