

Budget Amendment from the Conservative Group.

Proposed by: Anne Jobson OBE

Seconded by: Peter Holland

We note the budget put forward, but would wish to make the following amendments
In the knowledge that there is a potential significant funding gap of £3.5m together with the bulk of the increase in National Insurance contributions. The amendments below will be funded as set out in the TABLE ONE.

- (i) A grant of £50,000 for the year 2025/26 is proposed to fund the CAB with on-going work being undertaken to ensure that grant funding is available in future years. For the avoidance of doubt this is in addition to any rent relief already proposed to CAB.
- (ii) Car Parking in Exeter is expensive and is considered a deterrent to coming into the City. Sunday is the quietest day and by reducing Car Parking to £2.50 for 4 hours it is considered that this will encourage residents and visitors into the City, which should benefit the retail and hospitality sectors.
- (iii) The loan repayments totalling £671,000.00pa in respect of St Sidwell's Point are funded entirely from ECC Revenue without contribution from St Sidwell's Point. It is believed that over a 5 year period St Sidwell's Point should increase its revenue so that at least 25% of the loan repayments are met from St Sidwell's Point Income. Therefore, an increase in income of £30,000 is proposed for the current year
- (iv) CIL Charging does not charge developers who seek to build co-living units at the same rate as PBSA's. It is considered that both should be charged the same and that developers who wish to build housing for couples and families and particularly social and affordable housing should be encouraged. It is acknowledged that this will have to go through the necessary consultation and is unlikely to be introduced until Q3 and therefore a modest increase of £55,000 is proposed for the current year.
- (v) PBSA's contribute nothing by way of business rates to the City. Any PBSA should at least be paying the appropriate amounts in Trade Waste to ECC (regardless of whether they use the service). In the event that Co-Living units become largely council tax exempt as they are occupied by students then consideration in the future should be given to charging them the same. For the avoidance of doubt this does not apply to accommodation run by and managed by Exeter University. No figure has been added, but work should be undertaken immediately with a view to bringing in any additional charges at the earliest opportunity.
- (vi) It is with regret that the closure of Northbrook Pool is proposed. It is hoped that Trade Waste Charges can be ascertained and if significant enough that Northbrook Pool can be reprieved.
- (vii) That there be a reduction in the grant to the Phoenix Arts Centre of £20,000. This is in view of their increasingly commercial operation.

TABLE ONE

Funding Gap – Budget Gap

Savings required	£3,500,000
CAB – grant	£ 50,000
National Insurance (net)	£ 531,000
TOTAL	£4,081,000

Funded by

Membership of Business Rates Pool	(£ 900,000)
Reduce pay award by 1% to 3%	(£ 300,000)
Straightforward Options* ¹	(£ 600,000)
Use EPR Tax	(£1,410,000)
Service Review Proposals* ²	(£ 420,280)
Other Income increase* ³	(£ 50,000)
Car Parks* ⁵	(£ 50,000)
Changes to CIL Charging	(£ 55,000) – only after Q3
Adjustment to Leisure Budget	(£ 286,000)
Reduction in Grant to NPO * ⁶	£ 20,000
TOTAL	(£4,097,280)

*1 – Straightforward Options

- (i) Stop budgeting for Pension Contributions where individual is not in pension scheme (£100,000)
- (ii) Remove duplication in Culture (£200,000)
- (iii) (Implement digitalisation (£300,000)

*2 – Service Review Proposals

- (i) Cease cash collection & petty cash across ECC (£78,500)
- (ii) Additional HMO Income following fee review (£20,000)
- (iii) Additional Market Income (£25,000)
- (iv) Additional Tourism Reduction (£29,000)

- (v) Guildhall Income – only required if borrowing (£166,000)

***3 - Other Income Increase**

- (i) £30,000.00 being 1st in a 5 year programme to raise income at SSP to cover at least 25% of cost of loan repayments of £671,000.00
- (ii) Carbon Literacy training sessions are sold raising an estimated £20,000.00pa
- (ii) A question has been raised as to the amount PBSA's pay in respect of Trade Waste and it is proposed that all non University owned/managed PBSA pay a trade waste charge. No figures are available but once known this figure should be inserted prior to sale/disposal of assets.

***4 - Adjustment to Leisure Budgets**

- (i) Closure of Northbrook Pool £286,000

***5 – Car Parks**

- (i) commercial activity in car parks eg Distribution Storage/Vending Machines (£50,000)
- (ii) Sunday is the quietest day for parking and there is a general view that parking is too expensive and is acting as a deterrent for people who would otherwise come into the City. It is proposed that on a Sunday parking charges be reduced to £2.50 for 4 hours (1-day = £5.00) which it is hoped will encourage better use. This is hoped will increase income by a minimum of £50,000. However no allowance has been made for the current year.

***6 – NPO**

- (i) The Phoenix currently receives £51,000 in rent relief and a £57,000 per annum grant. It is increasingly operated as a commercial venture. It is considered that the rent relief ensures that the public service use of the various studios can continue, but that the grant should be reduced by £20,000.00