

BUDGET COUNCIL: 25 FEBRUARY 2026
AMENDMENT PROPOSED BY THE CONSERVATIVE GROUP TO THE 2026/27
BUDGET

(1) Proposed amendments to the revenue budget

	2026/27 £m
1% reduction in the proposed 4.99% council tax increase	1.242
Recurrent additional investment in highways maintenance (£160k relating to potholes and £160k relating to gully clearance and street-cleaning)	0.320
Recurrent additional investment in cemetery maintenance	0.030
6 month delay in recruiting to back-office vacant posts based on current turnover levels	-0.500
Increase in strategic workforce saving focusing on accelerating workforce efficiency savings through digital and process review but underwritten by an additional 1% increase in the staffing budget vacancy factor which may require additional measures to be put in place in terms of delaying recruitment to vacant posts should the additional saving not be fully deliverable through additional efficiencies	-1.000
Removal of non-statutory advertising and marketing budgets	-0.062
Additional 1 day voluntary unpaid leave offered to all staff	-0.030
Total cost of proposed amendments	0.000

The proposed changes to the revenue budget do not affect the 2026/27 budget gap of £3.977m which is being met from the budget stabilisation reserve, but will increase the forecast funding gap recurrently by £62k in 2027/28 and £125k in 2028/29 due to the future assumed 4.99% council increases in the MTFs being applied to a lower council taxbase due to the 1% lower council tax increase proposed in 2026/27.

View of the Director of Finance (S151)

The proposals have been validated as being deliverable financially in 2026/27.

In validating the proposals, I have been mindful that:

- The proposed 6 month delay in recruiting to back-office posts becoming vacant through staff turnover will directly impact capacity in affected services including HR, DDAT and Finance which enable and support wider service transformation and existing and proposed new savings plans.
- The proposed lower council tax increase of 3.99% will lead to a permanently lower council taxbase and therefore an increasing forecast funding gap in future years. The local government 3 year finance settlement is based on an assessment of council's core spending power (funding available to them) and assumes council's will increase council tax by the maximum permissible without recourse to a referendum, which is 4.99% for the next 3 years..

In the intervening period the council will need to take steps to address the structural deficit to ensure it can maintain a sustainable financial position.