

**REPORT OF the Deputy Chief Executive**

**REPORT TO COUNCIL**

**DATE: 25<sup>th</sup> February 2015**

**SUBJECT: REVENUE BUDGET 2015/16 – GREEN AMENDMENT**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. This report provides Members of Council with comments on the robustness of the proposals contained in the amendments to the Budget Motion in the name of Councillor David Blackburn.

**2. ROBUSTNESS OF ESTIMATES**

- 2.1 The Local Government Act (Part II) 2003 places a requirement on the Council that when making decisions on the setting of the Council's budget and the Council Tax, they must consider a report from the Council's statutory finance officer (The Deputy Chief Executive) on the robustness of the budget and the adequacy of reserves within the proposals. The report of the Deputy Chief Executive at item 6 (i) on the Council Summons includes at section 9 comments to this effect in respect of the proposed Budget Motion.
- 2.2. Given this requirement, in considering any proposed amendment to the Budget Motion, Members must also consider the comments of the Deputy Chief Executive on the robustness of the proposals. These comments supplement those contained in the main report.

**3. PROPOSED AMENDMENT**

- 3.1 Councillor Blackburn's amendments to the Budget Motion set out his proposals showing areas of additional spend and the sources of funding which are largely self explanatory. In considering these amendments, the Deputy Chief Executive would wish members of Council to be aware of the following:

- (a) In amendment 8, a 2% increase in income generated from reviewing the level of fees and charges is proposed. Whilst there may be some customer resistance it is considered that within the overall context of the Council's budget, this assumption is reasonable.
- (b) In amendments 8, 9, 10 and 11 the cumulative effect is to increase the use of general fund reserves by £862k which would result in general fund reserves of £20.3m as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 which is within the tolerance limit under the risk based reserves strategy.

3.2 Should these budget amendments be approved, they will be subject to the Council's procedures for further consultation and will need to be informed by Equality Impact Assessments as appropriate.

#### **4. OVERALL CONCLUSION**

The Budget Motion to Council reflects a significant reduction in funding and as such contains savings proposals which carry varying degrees of risk. This is set out in section 9 of the main budget report and in each of the specific Directorate reports attached.

In conclusion, the amendments to the Budget Motion in the name of Cllr David Blackburn will not materially impact on the overall robustness of the Council's estimates for 2015/16 or the adequacy of its general fund reserves as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016.