

Council 15 February 2019

Amendments to the Budget

Amendment No. 1 – Proposed by Councillor Mike Henderson and seconded by Councillor Roger Truelove

“Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

CAB funding is at present £133430 pa from SBC from whom it receives the vast majority of its funding as is the case in every Borough throughout the land. This has not been increased for at least 8 years despite rapidly increasing demands from some of the most needy people in Swale, especially those in poverty. The core of CAB operations depends on SBC and should be a priority responsibility.

I propose that CAB should be put back to at least the real funding position it had 8 years ago. To keep up with basic inflation over that period requires an increase of £33000. Additionally the new requirement for pension enrolment will cost £3500 from April 2019. Staff are at the lowest pay levels across Kent CAB offices and require a 3% pay rise to allow any chance of recruiting much needed staff. This would cost a further £3500.

I propose therefore an increase of base budget funding of £40000 pa which does not provide so much as a penny piece for the greatly increased demand that CAB faces. This may allow at least some restoration of services to meet the acute demand from Swale residents. This funding should be taken from reserves which are at a level which can readily afford this modest increase”.

Amendment No. 2 – Proposed by Councillor Roger Truelove and seconded by Councillor Angela Harrison

"As an initial step to enhancing our public places for the benefit of local people and visitors to Swale, we propose the following one-off expenditures

1. Barton's Point Coastal Park-replacement of toilet and shower block £200K
2. Minster Leas-provision of ancillary facilities to complement installation of more beach huts £150K
3. Milton Creek Country park-provision of outdoor classroom for arts projects, education and holiday programmes £350K
4. Oare Gunpowder Works-provision of small café kiosk and rustic playground £300K

To be funded by the release of £1 million from the Business Rates Volatility fund to ensure that some of this flexible fund is used to benefit local people.

These developments will require additional officer support, so we propose the recruitment of a Grade 7 Project officer at a salary of £44.049K funded by the removal from the proposed budget of £54.280K for Spatial Planning salaries, and thus saving £10K on the base budget."

Amendment No. 3 – Proposed by Councillor Mike Henderson and seconded by Councillor Roger Truelove

"I propose that SBC includes into the 19/20 budget expenditure of £50000 to commence the provision of electric vehicle charging points in all three main centres of the Borough. There is a central government pot of money which will meet 75% of the cost of such work and therefore this would allow a total expenditure of £200000 in the next financial year. Such a programme would demonstrate a significant commitment by SBC to a programme to help the environment, reduce CO2 pollution, and stimulate the expansion of electric vehicles within Swale. This should initially be expenditure for a single year the cost of which should be taken from reserves".

Amendment No. 4 – Submitted by Councillor Mike Henderson and seconded by Councillor Roger Truelove

"I propose that the following sums be added to the capital budget for 19/20.

1. That £1M be provided for refurbishment and updating of facilities at Faversham Swimming Pools. This is sorely needed as the indoor pool and its building has received no substantial maintenance funded by SBC since it was built over 25 years ago. It would also provide fairness when considering that a similar amount of capital has been committed to each of the Sittingbourne and Sheerness leisure centres.

2. That £4M be provided as a capital sum to be used for the provision of truly affordable rented housing in the Borough to be committed in 19/20 and with the resulting houses or flats being provided within 3 years from now. The proposal purposefully does not specify whether these should be built by recreating a Housing Revenue Account within SBC, or by working with a Housing Association, or through a Community Land Trust or by other means.

Funding for this should either be taken from reserves or provided through a loan whichever the head of finance considers most appropriate".