

Conservative Group Budget Amendment 25/26	
Overview of the amendment	
To provide one hour free parking in all council short term car parks and to not proceed with the planned increase in market pitch fees, while also reducing the burden on reserves across the MTFS.	
Section 151 Officer comments	
<p><i>My view as S151 Officer is that the key element of the MTFS are the next 3 financial years rather than the whole MTFS period purely because of the future uncertainty until there is more information about LGR. As ever, the legal requirement is for the immediate financial year, and this is where I have focused my opinion on the budget put forward and I apply the same focus to my opinion on the amendment.</i></p> <p><i>The figures do not present any issues from a financial perspective however I cannot comment on the service impact or the deliverability of all of them as they are not all in my area of responsibility. I would point out that if consultants were not used in some instances, it may delay the ability to implement some of the corporate priorities or may mean that they are not delivered in the way expected. It would be for the service managers to give their professional view on the impact of those.</i></p> <p><i>From a factual perspective the bids being proposed for elimination numerically match what is in the main budget report and the MTFS. Again, for the years after 2025/26 with respect to building in 2% increases for One Leisure – it does not impact on the forthcoming financial year, and I would expect all fees and charges to be looked at in light of prevailing economic conditions and forecasts for each forthcoming financial year.</i></p> <p><i>The future interest rates are difficult to forecast, however I can say from my professional view, that I am content that we have a prudent estimate in for next year given that the economy is not currently growing. Furthermore, we tend to invest in low risk options (mainly the Government's Debt Management Office) because it has certainty on the preservation of capital, which usually comes with a lower interest rate than higher risk alternatives.</i></p> <p><i>In summary, none of the content of the amendment make me change my overall Section 25 opinion on the overall robustness of the Council's financial position. Should any or all of the amendment be accepted, it would not alter the Council Tax requirement as adjustments would be made through in year budget monitoring and reserves.</i></p> <p><i>Suzanne Jones</i> <i>Corporate Director Finance and Resources (S151 Officer)</i></p>	
Date	25 February 2025

Financials

The impact of these two proposals on the MTFS is £2.7m, calculated as follows:

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	5YR MTFS
Proposal 1: One hour free parking in all council short stay car parks	295,000	590,00	590,000	590,000	590,000	2,655,000
Proposal 2: Do not increase market trader pitch fees as per budget bid	9,000	9,000	9,000	9,000	9,000	45,000
Total Reduction in Income	304,000	599,000	599,000	599,000	599,000	£2,700,000

It is proposed to fund this with the following amendments to the budget and MTFS which have an impact of reducing the overall MTFS requirement by £3.5m:

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	5YR MTFS
Budget Bids to Not Accept						
Embedding Huntingdonshire Futures	(80,427)	(25,796)	(2,000)	(2,000)	(2,000)	(112,223)
Digital Communications Executive	(48,296)	(49,288)	(50,299)	(51,331)	(52,383)	(251,597)
Let's Talk Huntingdonshire	(15,200)	(15,656)	(16,126)	(16,609)	(17,108)	(80,699)
Licensing Officer	(45,603)	(46,540)				(92,143)
Pride in Place Team	(94,727)	(96,624)				(191,351)
Consultants to Eliminate						
Climate Change Strategy	(80,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)	(280,000)
Place Strategy	(60,000)	(5,000)				(65,000)
Local Plan			(81,000)	(81,000)	(81,000)	(243,000)
Other Adjustments						
Food Waste Staffing 6 Months not 12 Months	(300,000)					(300,000)
2% annual One Leisure Increase		(128,254)	(256,508)	(384,762)	(513,016)	(1,282,540)
Interest Rate Assumptions	(219,000)	(195,000)	(64,000)	(130,000)		(608,000)
Net Savings	(943,253)	(612,158)	(519,933)	(715,702)	(715,507)	(3,506,553)

The net effect of these proposals on reserves are as follows:

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	5YR MTFS
	(639,253)	(13,158)	79,067	(116,702)	(116,507)	(806,553)