

Supplemental Note: Explanation of Differences Between Cabinet Budget Papers (10 February 2026) and Council Budget Papers (25 February 2026)

This note provides clarification on the differences identified between the budget, MTFs and Capital Programme papers considered by Cabinet on 10 February 2026 and those subsequently published for Council on 25 February 2026.

These explanations respond to concerns raised regarding whether material amendments were made after Cabinet approval. Members will note commentary provided at both O&S and Cabinet that the reports would continue to be refined up to consideration by Council.

Members should also be aware that several preceptors were late or delayed in providing requests to us, as such in practical terms, there were always likely to be changes necessary.

The differences fall into three categories:

1. Capital Programme updates
2. Revenue budget corrections and updates
3. Income updates from the Local Government Finance Settlement

In all instances, the changes are either:

- Minor corrections,
- Adjustments based on updated information becoming available post Cabinet, or
- Changes already approved through existing processes.

None constitute material departures from the decisions made by Cabinet.

1. Capital Programme Changes

Three changes to the capital programme appear in the Council papers that were not included in the Cabinet version. These all relate to Parks, Countryside and Climate and were approved in year at Star Chamber.

Total impact: £0.640m, within an overall capital programme of £89m (<1%).

Projects affected

- Paxton Pits Vehicle Replacement – new project £0.040m
- Countryside Investment Opportunities – increase of £0.550m
- Hinchingsbrooke Café Refurbishment – increase of £0.050m

These changes have been approved through the appropriate internal process and whilst they should have been reflected earlier, their late appearance is a timing and coordination issue, not a policy change.

2. Revenue Budget Movements

The Council papers show a movement in Net Expenditure from £29.124m to £28.058m: a difference of (£1.066m), explained below.

	Council	Cabinet	Movement	
Democratic Services and Monitoring Office	2.173	2.137	0.036	Rapid Monitoring Officer advice for the Monitoring officer
Economy, regeneration & Housing	(0.188)	(0.458)	0.270	Removal of parking charge increase
Finance	6.489	7.881	(1.392)	Removal of one off pension payment
Property and Facilities	(1.720)	(1.740)	0.020	Correction of void pressures from £533k to £553k
	6.754	7.820	(1.066)	

Item 1 - £0.036m: Specific Monitoring Officer advice for the Monitoring Officer. Approved by the Corporate Leadership Team.

Item 2 - £0.270m: Removal of the £270k parking charge increase. A correction to the budget based on the December 2025 decision; this approved bid was incorrectly omitted from the budget presented to Cabinet. This is a corrective action to align with a previous Council decision.

Item 3 – (£1.392m): Removal of the annual additional payment to the pension fund. This expenditure will no longer be incurred from 2026/27 as it is incorporated into the ongoing % increase in the employers' pension contribution from 17.3% to 18.6%. It was not obvious in the actuarial report that this one-off payment would no longer be payable. Clarification was obtained after the Cabinet papers were published.

Item 4 – £0.020m: Correction of a typo in the approved unavoidable pressure (rental void pressures). This should have been included in the Cabinet papers at £0.553m but was mistakenly included as £0.533m. Corrected to £0.553m in the Council papers.

These movements do not represent changes in policy, rather the correction of technical or clerical matters.

Total impact: (£1.066m), within an overall net MTFP budget of £114.352m (<1%).

Savings Target

Savings increased from (£2.884m) to (£3.970m). Movement of (£1.086m). This change is wholly explained by Items 1–3 above.

3. Income Updates – Business Rates (NNDR)

The National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) 2026/27 income figure was updated from:

- **(£9.349m)** (Cabinet papers) → **(£8.780m)** (Council papers)

This, and a reduction in NNDR income across the medium term, reflects the transition from the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement published on 17 December 2025, to the Final Settlement published on 9 February 2026.

The level of national Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) income available to Councils can change between the provisional and final Local Government Finance Settlements because it is dependent on Government calculations and national factors outside the Council's control. These include updates to the national business rates multiplier, revised estimates of appeals and reliefs, and changes to the total funding available in the national pool. As these adjustments are determined centrally by the Government and applied uniformly across all billing authorities, the Council has no ability to influence the figures and must incorporate any revisions into the budget once the final settlement is issued.

Conclusion

The differences between the Cabinet and Council versions of the budget papers arise from:

- Technical corrections,
- Updates based on finalised information,
- Previously approved capital adjustments, and
- Correction of clerical errors.

None of the changes represent new proposals, unapproved policy decisions, or material departures from the budget endorsed by Cabinet.

The overall strategy, priorities, and financial position remain consistent with the recommendations approved on 10 February 2026.

Monitoring Officer Statement

Finance has prepared this supplemental note to clarify the reasons for the differences between the 2026/27 budget, MTFs and Capital Programme papers presented to Cabinet on 10 February 2026 and those presented to Council on 25 February 2026.

The changes identified do not constitute material amendments to the decisions taken by Cabinet.

None of the changes alter the policy direction, financial strategy or substantive decision taken by Cabinet. The budget presented to Council remains consistent with the recommendations agreed by Cabinet, with all updates falling within normal delegated and constitutional provisions used routinely during the budget-setting process.

The Corporate Director (Finance and Resources) and Section 151 Officer has sufficient authority within their Statutory and Constitutional obligations to present these changes to Council.

This statement is published to ensure transparency and to provide assurance to Members that proper process has been followed, the integrity of the Council's financial governance has been maintained, and the statutory requirement to present a lawful, balanced budget to Council has been met.