

FULL COUNCIL – 28 FEBRUARY 2012 AGENDA ITEM 11 - TABLED AMENDMENTS

LIBERAL DEMOCRAT BUDGET 2012 - AMENDMENT ONE

Proposer: Cllr Paul Strang
Second: Cllr Richard Wilson

Putting our young people first

Given the events of 2011 it is clear that youth services in Haringey must be a high priority. Labour's disproportionate 75% cut last year and subsequent vote against a budget amendment to reinvest £900,000 in our young people sent the wrong message to future generations that the Council was not on their side. The Council can no longer afford to ignore the need to help our young people, many of whom face problems including unemployment, gang violence and low school achievement.

Liberal Democrats want the Council to refocus on the borough's young people with a £1 million fund aimed to raise educational attainment, combat youth unemployment and reduce anti-social and criminal behaviour.

Our Youth Fund will increase every year to £2million in 2014/15.

The voluntary sector and charities would be asked to bid to run services aimed at providing youth services, support grass-roots projects and initiatives, help find young people work, and take action to reduce gang membership and violence.

Youth Fund cost £1,000,000

Despite the pressure on front-line services Labour continues to spend £1.395million on producing glossy brochures, and propaganda publications such as 'Haringey People', which was investigated by the External Auditor in 2011. Liberal Democrats believe that the Council should not spend more than £1 million on communications.

Instead of retaining budgets for jobs that are not filled the Council should use this money to take action to combat youth unemployment. We propose deleting 10 currently vacant non front-line posts.

Haringey Council currently fails to adhere to its own car allowance policy, with many non-essential staff getting car allowances they should not be entitled to. Strict application of the rules would save £200,000. We also propose reducing senior management allowances by £50,000.

Capping communications	£395,000
Reduction in vacant posts	£355,000
Strict implementation of current car allowance policy and cut senior management costs	£250,000

LIBERAL DEMOCRAT BUDGET 2012 – AMENDMENT TWO

Propose: Cllr Paul Strang

Second: Cllr Gail Engert

Local residents in charge – Local Neighbourhood Fund

Labour has proposed a one-off £1.2million centrally-controlled ‘slush’ fund with no detail on how it will be spent or what its aims are. Liberal Democrats believe that, at every opportunity, local residents should be put at the centre of change and have a greater say in how their money is spent.

We therefore propose that each local ward would be allocated £50,000 revenue funding, to be administered through the Area Committees, to spend on their priorities whether it is more overtime for local Safer Neighbourhood Teams to tackle crime hotspots, extra maintenance in a local park, or to help the area meet their Area Plan goals.

Local Neighbourhood Fund cost	£950,000
-------------------------------	----------

Recognising the work of low-paid council staff, who often work on the front-line delivering vital services, is important. Low-paid workers in councils have not experienced wage increases similar to those given in central government. Liberal Democrats believe that we need to recognise the great ongoing effort staff make in challenging times. We would therefore propose a one-off bonus of £250 for the lowest-paid staff.

One-off low paid staff bonus	£250,000
------------------------------	----------

We think that the ‘One Borough, One Future Fund’ which we consider as Labour’s slush fund should be used to fund investment in local residents’ priorities.

Labour slush fund saving	£1,200,000
--------------------------	------------

LIBERAL DEMOCRAT BUDGET 2012 - AMENDMENT THREE

Proposer: Cllr Paul Strang
Second: Cllr David Winskill

Protecting our residents

Last year saw unprecedented anger from local residents in response to Labour's plans to close front-line older people's day centres, drop-in centres and luncheon clubs.

Liberal Democrats believe that these services still have a place when caring for our older people. We would provide funding of £240,000 for voluntary, community and charitable organisations to run similar day centres, drop-in centres and luncheon clubs and other valuable services for vulnerable older people at risk of isolation.

Older People Fund revenue cost	£240,000
--------------------------------	----------

Crime and the fear of crime continue to be at the top of local residents concerns. Liberal Democrats believe that cutting crime should be a priority for the Council and we propose an additional £100,000 for local community crime fighting initiatives that have been cut by Labour.

Community crime fighting revenue fund	£100,000
---------------------------------------	----------

Despite 75% cuts to the Youth Service, closure of Older People's services, Children's Centres and 50% reductions in parks maintenance Labour still spends £13.5million a year on running its IT.

Liberal Democrats believe that protecting our residents is a greater priority. We propose to reduce the IT budget by another 5% in addition to those planned. However, we understand the Council's contractual arrangements and would not ask that the full saving is realised in 2012/13. Instead we would ask that the IT budget is reduced by £340,000 in the first year, followed by £590,000 ongoing in the second and third year. This gives the Council time to fundamentally change how its IT works and embrace new technology and ways of working.

Year One IT revenue saving	£340,000
Year Two IT revenue saving	£590,000

LIBERAL DEMOCRAT BUDGET AMENDMENT FOUR

Proposer: Cllr Paul Strang

Second: Cllr Nigel Scott

Investing in our parks and reducing Labour's stealth taxes

The scale of opposition to Labour's unprecedented 50% cut to the parks service was shown in a petition signed by more than 2,000 local residents. Liberal Democrats believe that our open spaces should be protected and should not be used as a political pawn. We propose £288,000 of investment in our parks, every year to ensure our parks continue to be places we treasure. We would also reverse Labour's cuts to the Green plaque heritage scheme, allowing this community-led initiative to resume.

Parks and heritage revenue investment	£288,000
---------------------------------------	----------

Whilst we welcome Labour's u-turn on Council Tax, the Council has chosen to increase the financial burden on local residents by increasing fees and charges on many services. We are proposing to freeze charges that we believe either unfairly target certain groups or would be detrimental to improving the local economy like business, visitor and trade permits. We would freeze:

- Parking charges for all but the most polluting cars, Visitor permits, Business charges, Meals on wheels charges, Library charges and Allotment charges

Reducing Labour's stealth taxes revenue cost	£104,000
----------------------------------------------	----------

Labour's have failed to deliver on their promise to cut middle-management, so that each manager supervises at least 5 staff. Their failure means that the Council is more bureaucratic and costly to run than necessary. We propose to reduce the numbers of middle managers who are not meeting the Council's own span of control standard by 5% - a reduction of 12 posts. Investment in parks, heritage and reducing Labour's stealth taxes would be funded by reducing 7 posts.

Middle Management Saving	£392,000
--------------------------	----------

LIBERAL DEMOCRAT BUDGET AMENDMENT FIVE

Propose: Cllr Paul Strang
Second: Cllr Katherine Reece

Investment in Children's Centres

Liberal Democrats believe that support in the early years of a child's life should be a top priority. Last year Labour cut £6.519million from the Children's Centre and Early Years budget and funding was withdrawn from Tower Gardens, North Bank, Highgate and Rokesley Children's centres. Whilst reform was needed to make the services more efficient and reduce costs, Labour's cuts went too far.

A campaign by headteachers, staff and local families helped save some services but more money is needed to secure universal access for families to local children's centre services. We propose an £210,000 investment in helping children's centres, whose funding was reduced, to provide support and the time required to reopen and find new sources of funding that will lead to a sustainable future for a universal Children's Centres' service in the borough.

Children's Centre revenue cost	£210,000
--------------------------------	----------

Liberal Democrats are committed to long-term change to our Haringey's Fostering Service. The Council still relies too heavily on expensive out-of-borough foster placements. Not only are in-borough foster placements cheaper, more importantly, they provide better outcomes for our children. The initial financial investment needed to recruit more in-borough foster carers is soon offset by the savings made as the balance between expensive out-of-borough care shifts to new Haringey-based foster carers.

Whilst we understand that this will be a challenge for the Children's Service given the savings targets that are already in the budget, the outcomes, both for local children and the Council's finances means it is a challenge worth setting.

Foster care revenue cost	£700,000
Foster care revenue saving	£600,000

Trade unions provide an important role in public service but Liberal Democrats believe that front-line services should be prioritised over hidden union subsidies. Haringey Council, until Liberal Democrats proposed reductions in funding, spent millions of pounds on union representatives. The Council however continues to provide trade unions with free offices, rather than charge a commercial rate as they would to other organisations in the borough. Haringey Council staff pay over half a million pounds in union dues a year – so the unions can afford to pay for their own office space.

Trade Union rent recovery	£30,000
---------------------------	---------

The balance of the investment in Children's Centres would be funded by reductions of 5 middle manager posts that do not meet the Council's own span of control standard

Middle Management Saving	£280,000
--------------------------	----------

Liberal Democrat budget proposals 2012/13 – Medium term financial plan

Our spending priorities	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
• Protecting vulnerable older people	£240,000	£240,000	£240,000
• Reprioritise young people	£1,000,000	£1,200,000	£2,000,000
• Protecting our parks and heritage	£288,000	£288,000	£288,000
• Helping community action on crime	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000
• Improving foster care	£700,000	£835,000	£960,000
• Reversing Labour's stealth taxes	£104,000	£104,000	£104,000
• Local Neighbourhood Fund	£950,000	£1,000,000	£1,000,000
• One-off low paid staff bonus	£250,000	£0	£0
• Protecting the future of Children's Centres	£210,000	£210,000	£210,000
General Fund Spending	<u>£3,842,000</u>	<u>£3,977,000</u>	<u>£4,902,000</u>

Where we would save money and reduce Labour's waste

• Cap communications budget at £1 million	£395,000	£395,000	£395,000
• Long-term action to improve foster care	£600,000	£1,685,000	£2,610,000
• Reduction in IT spending	£340,000	£590,000	£590,000
• Reduce unfilled posts	£355,000	£355,000	£355,000
• Cut middle management costs	£672,000	£672,000	£672,000
• Car allowance and senior management costs	£250,000	£250,000	£250,000
• Reversing Labour's slush fund	£1,200,000	£0	£0
• Charging rent to trade unions	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000
General Fund saving	<u>£3,842,000</u>	<u>£3,977,000</u>	<u>£4,902,000</u>