

SNP Council Budget Amendment 2024 / 2025

Proposer / Seconded: John Ross, Maureen Chalmers

As an amendment to Item 2 'Overall Position of Revenue Budget and Level of Local Taxation for 2024/2025', the Council is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):

- (1) that the Budget Gap of £20.570 million (section 4.1), be noted;
- (2) that the assumptions detailed at paragraph 7.2, used to arrive at the Budget presented in section 7, be noted;
- (3) that the amount of savings, the level of Council Tax and the Use of Reserves to be used to balance the 2024/2025 Budget (detailed in section 6), are agreed as follows
- (4) that the budget figures detailed at section 7 (based on the assumptions in section 7.2 and 7.3) are to be updated following agreement of the Budget, be noted;
- (5) that the potential impact of savings beyond 2024/2025 (section 9), be noted; and
- (6) that the Revenue Budget for 2024/2025, including the base budget allocations to Resources, as shown in Appendix 3, be approved, subject to Members' decision on recommendation 3.

Savings agreed: £7.306m

It is proposed that the savings outlined below totalling £7.306m million be agreed.

In accepting the following savings, the SNP Group has sought to minimise the harmful effects of service reduction, protect communities where possible from the Cost-of-Living Crisis and reflect the views of as many of our residents as possible.

Saving Ref.	Description	Value £m
CER01	Bulky Waste – Remove Free Bulk Uplift	£0.460m
CER05	Christmas Events	£0.045m
CER07	Food Waste Liners	£0.100m
CER12	Grass Cutting	£0.900m
CER13	Weedkilling	£0.550m
CER14	Winter Shrub Cover	£0.700m
CER15	Hanging Baskets	£0.144m
CER16	Gala Day Support	£0.055m
HTR04	Scheme Assisted Housing	£1.052m
M&O 01	Overtime	£0.300m
M&O 02	Charging	£0.200m
M&O 03	Alternative Work Patterns	£0.075m
M&O 04	Mechanical Sweeping	£0.150m
M&O 05	Central Admin Support	£0.375m
M&O 06	Early Learning	£2.150m
M&O 07	Additional Income	£0.050m
TOTAL		£7.306m

Council Tax Increase: CT Freeze - £7.869m

We welcome the Scottish Governments Council Tax Freeze and note that South Lanarkshire's funding allocation exceeds the amount which would have raised if the council had increased Council Tax by 5%. This freeze will be welcomed by many households who feared an even higher increase than the 5.5% imposed by this council last year, adding additional pressures during a cost-of-living crisis.

The Scottish Government has baselined the council tax freeze funding so the Council can include in the budget strategy for 2025/2026 and beyond.

Investments: £605k

Leisure and Culture provides so many benefits to our communities promoting individual and community wellbeing, tackling inequalities, and providing safe inclusive spaces for community led activities, informal learning, community development, sport and cultural activities. The work they do is central to delivery of the Community Plan and the Child Poverty Action Plan.

Residents' responses to surveys provide a clear steer to elected members. SLLC services such as libraries, sports centres, swimming pools and community halls are highly valued. So, instead of reducing our funding to SLLC we propose to protect services with an increase of £0.605m in 2024-25.

Use of £6.000m uncommitted Funds

In order to protect front line jobs and services, we propose using all the funding available to us in setting out our budget. This includes using the £6m probable outturn underspend as set out in the Executive Committee Report on 24th January 2024, [Agenda Item 3 Recommendations 5] in 2024-25 rather than keeping in reserve for future years' budget strategies.

In doing so we note the SG decision to baseline the council tax funding of £7.869m and also the potential Barnett Consequential from additional UKG funding dependent on the outcome of the Spring Statement.

Appendix – Balanced Budget Reconciliation

Budget Gap from Officers' Report <i>(Section 5.1)</i>		£20.570m
Agreed Savings:		

Total Savings (A)	£7.306m	£7.306m
Proposed Council Tax Increase 0%	£7.869m	£7.869m
= Total Savings and Increase from Council Tax		<u>£15,175m</u>
Balance After Savings and Council Tax (Budget Gap) / Investment Opportunity		<u>£5.395</u>
Further Investment Proposed:		
SLLC	£0.605m	£0.605m
Total Further Investment Proposed (B)		(£0.605m)
<i>Add: Use of Reserves Proposed (C)</i> £6m Probable Outturn Underspend		£ 6.000m
Budget Gap – should be zero		£0.000m

Restatement of Net Expenditure Figure (report section 7.4)

Net Expenditure Figure within Revenue Budget Paper (sections 7.4 and associated appendices)	£956.076m
Add Back Assumed Level of Savings in Budget Paper (section 7.2)	£12.701m
Adjusted Net Expenditure Figure (before savings)	£968.777m
<i>Deduct: Actual Savings Taken from Table above (A)</i>	(£7.306m)
<i>Add: Any Further Investment Proposed (from Table above (B))</i>	£0.605m
Revised Net Expenditure figure for Revenue Budget (D)	£962.076m

Restatement of Net Sum Funded by Council Tax (Table 2, report section 7.5)

Revised Net Expenditure Figure for Revenue Budget for 2024/2025 (from Table above (D))	£962.076m
<i>Deduct: Government Grant</i>	£750.533m
<i>Deduct: Use of Reserves / Underspends in the Budget Strategy (£47.500m plus C from Table above)</i>	£53.500m
= Resultant Net Sum to be Funded Locally from Council Tax	£158.043m