

Independent Group Budget Amendments Part Two - Figures		
SAVINGS		
Description	Impact	Policy Decisions & Comments by the Independent Group
Reduce spend on corporate supplies, services, hospitality and catering	1,200,000	Fair and effective distribution of cuts and resources. This is based on the analysis of 2016/17/18 figures and the current allocation. Total current allocation is about £4m.
Freeze on vacant posts above £50,000 - excluding frontline & statutory, e.g. teachers, social workers, children services, and those in sensitive/critical and statutory posts. No current staff affected	2,000,000	Does not affect anyone currently in the post, or for which an interview has taken place - excludes statutory roles, social workers, teachers, children services or essential front-line or those on London Living Wage. Currently there are 122 such posts over £65k. 74 of them are above £80k.
Reduce further increase in Mayor John Biggs' Office budget which has shot up to over £615,000 now from £569,000 in December 2015	150,000	Fair distribution of funds and cuts. Mayor's personal office budget has actually increased further by £36,000 since 2016/17 and up £46,000 since December 2015. Personal example instead of criticism of others.
Remove Mayor John Biggs' personal publicity budget	25,000	No need for more money for Mayor and less for residents for his vanity projects. Carry out any engagement duties within the existing budget and spend which has gone up anyway.
Stop increases in communication and media, e.g. £250k hike in 'secret campaigns fund' for the election year, other vanity projects for Mayor, plus £127k spin doctor - unnecessary increases and spend just before the election year for personal publicity - waste of taxpayers' money when the Mayor John Biggs is cutting front-line services and lecturing others about accountability and transparency	627,000	£250k for campaigns funds leading into the election year and just before the election in May 2018! Mayor's pictures on billboards and dustcart - vanity projects. Hypocrisy - Mayor is cutting vital services and staff are squeezed. This saving can easily be achieved by a reduction in the spend on non statutory consultations, publications, campaigns, non essential communications etc. as well as removing the spin doctor post at £127k when the administration is cutting key services. This will mean we still have all the staff to 2016 level with long standing hard working staff in the team who carry out an excellent job.
Reverse Mayor John Biggs' personal salary increase of 11.78% (extra £12,000 in his pay packet), the Conservative group leader's salary increase of 40%, as well as the Independent Group and others group increases. Members' Allowances reversed to pre-18th-May 2016 level	111,000	Fairness distribution of cuts and funds. Mayor John Biggs has given himself 12% personal salary increase - an extra £12,000 in his pay packet over the term. Whatever spin Mayor John Biggs chooses to put on this, the official 12% increase needs to be reversed, and paid back. Hypocritically, John Biggs' Labour group proposed, voted for and passed a motion to reduce this salary when in the opposition, but when in power, John Biggs has now increased it - agreed by the same group of Cllrs.
Remove the Mayor's 3 personal advisers who are being paid two salaries by the Council	21,000	Mayor John Biggs do not need to pay two salaries to his party councillors to keep them on side. Hypocritically, when in opposition, John Biggs' Labour Group passed a motion to stop such appointments, now in power, they have done the opposite. What happened to the self-proclaimed transparency, consistency and accountability?
Reduce expenditure on highly-paid consultants and/or highly paid agency staff – in last two years, the spend is £52m	10,000,000	We do not think spending nearly £6m on just budget consultants to achieve savings is the best value for money. Neither the current spend where the Council has been recruiting highly paid consultants/agency at £650 a day is sustainable or fair. This saving will be clearly focussed on general fund.
Scrap THH and bring it in house. Bring housing providers in-house which are selling the family silver and have failed to provide good service to residents. Bring ALMO back in house	5,000,000	We are paying £31-£32m of residents money just in 'Management Fee' alone to THH. In fact the total money paid to THH has gone up, after quiet and clever reprofiling of headings in last 2 years despite claims to the contrary. Bring ALMO in-house to provide strategic overview, monitoring, direction and control. This will not only create efficiencies on various fronts but also provide more housing stock management/funding options. This will also help the council deliver more effectively in an important policy area of housing. Scope for more hybrid savings to both general fund as well as HRA/capital in future.
Income generation - Utilise current networks, position and resources to develop and increase advertisement and other potential revenue streams and commercial focus in terms of all council premises and facilities, committee rooms, council chamber, idea stores, roundabouts, schools, sports facilities and others assets	2,000,000	This proposal was proposed last year by us and has partially been taken up by the Mayor but its scope, projections and vision remain meek and uninspiring. When you cut so much, so fast, you need to show courage and vision about income generation, growth and invest to save proposals all of which is lacking in the current budget proposals by John Biggs.
Increase in planning advice and charges for big multi-million pound developers – not ordinary residents and community groups	£450,000	Fair increase in fees and charges.

Increase fire-works display to three smaller venues/events at £20,000 each and the coverage of festive lighting with reduced contracts costs and efficient lighting across the Borough, with sponsorship, and close to self-funding principle rather than current budget of £145k	£100,000	Current budget of £260k is neither robust nor the best or social value for money. Other parts of the borough neglected and treated like poor cousins.
Reduce spend on external recruitment consultants , e.g. Penna and Greenpark etc.	£100,000	In-house means through HR, advertisement or professional career and specialist websites unless where it is clearly demonstrated to be extremely hard.
Reduce Transformation budget of £25m , including up to £15m for severance (part of one off reserve allocation in the current budget)	£10,000,000	This is absolutely senseless timing and waste of public money without understanding the context of the budget cuts on residents. At most, use £15m for any essentials projects if really needed. Only £4m is actually need to be spend per year for this at present, so £12m over the next 3 years should be more than enough. Majority of the money going to consultants and agency. We understand this is a one-off contribution but it will allow enough time for the Council to review and reinvigorate its strategic policy and finance approach to where residents are put first and the service delivery is citizen-focussed. Along with other proposals in our budget, it will ensure a overarching policy direction that ensures that we meet all our commitments prudently while putting residents first.
Reduce ICT budget of £25m on a contract (already a one off reserve allocation in the current budget). The current ICT contract is over £10m already, and the current spend by John Biggs will take the ICT contract spend to more than £35m	£10,000,000	We understand that there's a need of 'some' investment in ICT but this proposal is without any details, not even half-baked, and probably waste of a lot of money at completely the wrong time, again without any understanding of the context of the cuts on the residents. Use essentials/urgent areas for any ICT upgrade. No proper details nor any type of plan given to justify this huge fund either. We understand this is a one-off contribution but it will allow enough time for the Council to review and reinvigorate its strategic policy and finance approach - where residents are put first and the council is citizen-focussed. Along with other proposals in our budget, it will ensure a overarching policy direction that can ensure that we meet all our commitments proudly and prudently.
Reduce Town Hall subscriptions	12,000	No need in the current climate of cuts.
Income generation - Night Levy	30,000	As agreed by the Council - income generation. Use it to better manage night-time economy and reduce corresponding amount of the savings in the service area. We have not had the final confirmation amount despite requests but we have enough resilience and robustness in our alternative budget for any minor adjustments, if needed, and still being balanced and fully costed. This could be increased to £100k.
Reduce separate film office budget. Increase potential income by having more income generation/optimisation - linking to our strategic theme of income generation, growth and invest to save approach	45,000	To be done by in-house by communications/publicity team with parking who arrange suspension of bays etc. This was and is the case in other boroughs.
Reduce contingency	1,500,000	£3.1m is too high a contingency, any unforeseen situations can be easily overcome by high levels of reserve, growth, underspend and increase in business rates collection and unexpected funding increases like the last year.
New Homes Bonus	10,000,000	New income in addition to £12.5m NHB last year in the MTFs. The council has received over £100m in NHB for the work done by previous Mayor Lutfur Rahman administration. 2015-16 - £24.837m (includes £7.024m Local Enterprise Partnerships) - £17.813m included within the MTFP budget in 2015/16). 2016-17 - £28.641m (£21.617m was included within the MTFP budget for 2016/17; £7.024m is set aside now separately but none of this is going to be used in 2017/18. The Council is already using NHB for various purposes. We nevertheless have unallocated NHB. If the choice before us is to use the money to help our residents and tax payers now or put it away in some fund that does not do that, we are minded to help the residents while we put in place other measures to increase the funding, attract investment and growth, and build up our campaign to lobby the Government for a fairer grant settlement/resources.
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and S106 reconfiguration and use	12,000,000	Expected CIL was £51m for three years last year. S106 in 15/16 alone was £19m and there's £33.7m unallocated NHB between 2017 and 2020 - all of which has been haphazardly distributed without any masterplan. We understand that this is one off contribution. We believe that this amount could have been higher but this is a prudent figure.
In-built contract inflation is up to 6% in some contracts above £1m - not the best value for money - a technical adjustment. Also, including Renewal Negotiation Savings	800,000	Technical adjustment as well as renegotiation and renewal savings.
Fair and proportionate reduction of cost in the printing , webcasting, proposed new microphones etc. in the Democratic Services with half of the savings used for invest to save technology	100,000	Use part of this money to trial a small pilot scheme for certain paperless committees to begin with, as part of existing/or updated ICT contracts arrangements. Currently IT contract is £10.4m, with additional £15m to £25m allocated in the current budget. The printing cost is £50k alone. Environment friendly, easy to manage for staff and efficient.

Streamlining of Democratic Services, Members Services and Council Complaints Teams for better performance, service delivery and efficiency	1,000,000	There's some duplication and waste. Efficient, streamlined service providing better and quicker response to Members, residents, constituents and officers. Similar plans were already proposed and considered by the council under this administration in 2016/17.
Utilisation of Landlords Licensing Income	500,000	So far the council has raised over £2m with more expected. This is ring-fenced but should be allocated for more innovative and effective use in the service for to help tenants and landlords with various aspects, with corresponding cut in the same service area reduced.
Adjustment based on anticipated out-turn figure	1,500,000	There's a underspent. Based on the evidence in previous years, the contribution to budget, reserve or savings can be anything between £500k to £3m instead of being taken back and adjusted. This year, there is a underspend of at least £1.5m.
Non budgeted and unallocated income from S106, CIL and RTB receipts. Also, the unexpected new funding and income. True and prudent finance snapshot in conjunction with reprofiling of current spend on council housing, community safety and other priority projects for the benefit of residents	10,000,000	Examples of extra money and income actually received, anticipated or formally advised since the last budget are: IBCF £7,017,000, Adult Social Care = £900,000, Business Rates = £8m, Growth income in fees and charges = £419k, Growth income in council tax base = £7.9m inclusive of growth in tax base and 2% ASC precept as well as other smaller increases, not to mention HRA, capital receipts and other factors. In addition, critically, other monies available to the council are : CIL = £74m, S106 = £101m, RTB = £44m - from which uncommitted and available to spend are: CIL = £38m, S106 = 9m but a lot more in reality, RTB = £26m. In addition there will be further new developments and growth funding like new Land and Housing Bonus preliminary announced by the Government which are not counted here.
New Investment and Return Strategy - Adjust the current figures in the budget to reflect more realistic, prudent, achievable yet a challenging target for better return on public investment	5,000,000	The council has appointed a new portfolio manager and have embarked upon more innovative strategy as suggested by Independent Group in 2016 budget discussion and input. This budget proposal need more reflection, more accurate figures, more prudent yet challenging return value over three years between 2018-21.
TOTAL (SAVINGS)	84,271,000	
SPENDING		
Description	Impact	IG Comments/Policy decisions by the Independent Group
Stop Mayor John Biggs' decision to increase the Council Tax by another 2% . There has been 9% Council Tax increase since 2016 under this Mayor while he has awarded himself and his cabinet pay increases.	1,800,000	Protecting our residents in hard times. For The Many! ASC is still paid as Council Tax increase in their bill by residents so it is not fair or true to claim that there is no Council Tax increase. Council has also received almost £1m for adult social care which was not expected previously.
Stop Mayor John Biggs' decision to cut 18 council-run youth centres. Reverse youth centre cuts, protect and invest in our youth staff + strengthen current monitoring and management	1,800,000	TUPE has not saved staff as Independent Group highlighted in 2016/17. This decision has made the situation worse reducing council-run youth centres from 26 to only 8. This was always a gimmick based on unsubstantiated political rhetoric by Mayor John Biggs. After the comments by the Mayor/Cabinet member in the council meetings that this was only an 'interim measure', they went ahead and shut down the youth centres. We have no confidence in the rationale provided.
Stop Mayor John Biggs's gimmick of deferred cuts to nurseries, children centres and children services + stop privatisation proposals that were part of the 2017/18 budget but now being kicked into the long grass due to election only to be implemented after May 2018	2,400,000	Reserves all cuts to nurseries that will result in privatisation, potential fee increase for parents, negatively impact on the teacher to pupils ratio and support for the SEN or result in future closures of our nurseries.
Re-open a new nursery in Tower Hamlets	700,000	Queen Mary nursery was shut down after promise that it will not happen by the Mayor/Cabinet Member. Use partial capital support if required Alternatively, use one of the youth centre buildings, or a youth centre cum nursery, or any of the property on the disposal list.
Reverse cuts to the Council Tax subsidy for the poorest and self-employed - actually providing 100% support, by reversing the cut of £1.4m imposed by Mayor John Biggs	1,400,000	Only available from 2018/19 as the Mayor and his group has already decided to make this cut of £1.4m for 2017/18. Will consult as required before implementation.
Reverse, invest, retain the Community Safety Coordinator + Invest in the CCTV upgrade in Housing Estates and crime hotspots - stopped by Mayor John Biggs	700,000	Protecting residents, providing leadership.

Invest to Save Team - set up an immediate team to work closely with neighbouring boroughs to work together - explore selling the services and expertise in appropriate areas that does not affect services for the residents, front-line services or staff. Invest to save, In-source where possible.	250,000	Making prudent savings that does not affect our front line services or staff.
Increase Partnership Police Officers to 50. Invest in dedicated community policing by working with the Borough Commander and jointly purchase 'new and additional' full dedicated partnership police officers - helping and working with the community safety team	1,800,000	Making Tower Hamlets safer. Use any available match funding and 1-4-1 schemes. Invest to reduce crime. Invest to protect residents. Invest to make Tower Hamlets a better and safer place to live and work for all.
Tower Hamlets Community Fund	1,000,000	Support for community, third sector and voluntary organisations.
Hate Crimes Team - Invest resources in hate crimes that are on increase - monitoring and prosecution of culprits	150,000	Challenge and prosecute people who commit hate crimes. Provide reassurance.
Invest in combating drug related crimes and rehab: Drug Dealer a Day + Restart Nafas - combating drug crime and helping recovery and rehab	1,000,000	Tackling increase drug related crimes and emergencies/health issues head on.
Income generation – Invest to save team	250,000	Bring an inward investment, income optimisation and growth. Working closely with other teams, local stakeholders and neighbouring councils.
Save Our High Street & Markets Fund - Help small businesses, entrepreneurs, markets, local high street shops that face closures due to astronomical increases to business rates/re-evaluation increasing their costs, forcing them to shut down	2,000,000	Support, fund, lobby and create a sustainable long term support network.
Out of Hours Burial & Coroner Services + reinstate burial subsidy cut in 2016/17	500,000	Supporting residents in meeting out of hours burial needs and obligations.
Young People's Fund	2,000,000	Supporting our young people find jobs, gain life and career skills and opportunities, find placements, support them in making decisions and provide educational and other development opportunities.
Education Bursary (EMA & University Subsidy)	400,000	A new hybrid model supporting education, excellence, aspiration, hard work and ambition.
Fight Child & Pensioner Poverty Together	2,000,000	Allocating specific resources to fight child and pensioners' poverty in a borough where nearly half of the children still live in poverty and elderly suffer silently in old age due to cuts and lack of support.
Fight Poverty Together	4,000,000	Support for residents who are struggling/hit by austerity or Biggs budget cuts.
Tower Hamlets Brexit Fund - Mitigate Brexit Impact - Promote and protect Tower Hamlets - Attract and retain new start-ups and businesses to the borough, using our strategic location as City-fringe and proximity to Canary Wharf	1,000,000	Help sustain, retain and attract businesses which will in turn help business rates, create jobs and bring prosperity for residents. Protect and project Tower Hamlets as the place for businesses and entrepreneurs working closely with various stakeholders.
Create an additional 1,000 car parking spaces across the borough	620,000	Supporting residents with investment in local infrastructure. Part of it be funded from s106 and CIL.
Plant 1,000 trees across the borough	700,000	Total cost is £900,000 with 3 year care plan. To construct the tree pit, supply plant and maintain the tree for 3 years is approx. £900.00 per tree. We will get at least £200,000 in responsible corporate funding and our adopt a tree scheme.
PGCE Bursaries for teachers with a focus on Special Needs, BAME, white working class and other underrepresented participation as per PSE Duty and One Tower Hamlets	400,000	The Council had an undergraduate and PGCE bursaries scheme costing approximately £300k. Savings were agreed in 2015/16, to be taken from 2016/17 onwards. PGCE and undergraduate bursaries are no longer being offered and Savings of £230k were agreed/delivered. The remainder of the base budget was used to fund GCSE programmes for teaching assistants and tuition fees for a Foundation Degree course. In addition, it funded the salary of a deaf teacher and specialist deaf projects. To reintroduce the scheme - it would cost in the region of £200-250k. We will retain that plus provide additional support.
Invest in additional council youth centres to ensure there is a youth centre in every ward - starting with 3 new youth centres in Canary Wharf, Stepney and other wards - closed down by Mayor John Biggs	1,500,000	Supporting our young people. Providing positive engagement and recreational facilities for our young people, helping them stay away from drugs and gangs. Part of the funding will come from Capital and other sources already available.

Tower Hamlets Fairness Commission - Implication and genuine use of the Social Value Act in delivering and procuring services for residents, robust and proactive implementation of One Tower Hamlets policy and other legislative responsibilities. Invest to save	150,000	This area desperately need political and policy level priority which has been lacking under this administration. Despite pressure from us, current administration lacks leadership to avail the full potential. As a Local Authority we must invest in this area and give the Social Value Act and One Tower Hamlets the same status as the Best Value Act which is not happening at present. Not only will it delivery better and fairer financial returns but also strengthen our societal, ethical, moral and corporate responsibilities.
New Tower Hamlets Technology & Enterprise Quarter/Zone backed up with a new council strategy and action team	3,000,000	Dealing with both the threat and opportunities of automation, AI, coding and robotics working in partnership with key stakeholders and schemes. Develop a strategy and team that embrace the exciting opportunities but also the threat to protect by training, developing and equip staff and residents - particularly women, young people, elderly, those at risk or have potential, skills or need support.
Additional Support for Children Attainment who have been lagging behind in schools (e.g. White working class, Somali, others)	300,000	Supporting our children in building a good foundation.
Reinstate and improve "free homecare" stopped by Mayor John Biggs	1,500,000	Reinstate the free homecare as was the case under the previous administration. Similar scheme is in operation by Hammersmith and Fulham Council. Free Homecare has now been abolished by John Biggs.
Investment in renewable/green schemes , solar powered bins and electric charging points	1,000,000	Protecting the environment, investing in green and renewable energy and reducing pollution.
More Outdoor Gyms in Tower Hamlets	750,000	More outdoor gyms will mean better public health with supporting measures to tackle obesity, improve health and mental health. This will also help those who can't afford gym membership. We started a similar initiative under our administration and some are currently underway.
TOTAL (REVENUE SPENDING)	35,070,000	
NET SAVINGS	49,201,000	
CAPITAL SPENDING		
Community Safety and Local Infrastructure Projects and support	10,000,000	Allocation of uncommitted/re-profiling of the Council's Capital, HRA and other funds to be spend on community safety and infrastructure priorities identified by the residents, council research and analysis. Support for other items identified.
New Tower Hamlets Technology & Enterprise Quarter/Zone - capital element	5,000,000	Dealing with both the threat and opportunities of automation, AI, coding and robotics working in partnership with key stakeholders and schemes. Develop a strategy and team that embrace the exciting opportunities but also the threat to protect by training, developing and equip staff and residents - particularly women, young people, elderly, those at risk or have potential, skills or need support.
Council Homes and Affordable Housing	30,000,000	Using appropriate and permitted capital, HRA, S106,CIL and RTB funds. Working on our Master Plan approach integrating many strands of our policy level decision-making for Tower Hamlets and taking into account WOC and other initiatives - build, accelerate, develop and update council housing with infrastructure as well as genuinely affordable housing in our Master Plan Phase 1 using any existing council assets and more. Also a big push to bring empty properties back in use.
TOTAL (CAPITAL SPEND)	45,000,000	
NET REVENUE BUDGET- contribution to Reserves, mitigate risks or help residents.	4,201,000	This amount can be returned to Council Reserves, used to mitigate any risks or to help our residents.