

## **OFFICERS' COMMENTS ON ALTERNATIVE BUDGET PROPOSAL BY COUNCILLORS EATON & FOZOL MIAH**

The following sets out comments by officers on a proposal offered up in the budget amendment. Members of the Council should take this advice into consideration when considering and debating the amendment in question.

### **Proposal**

Use of unallocated capital funding and earmarked reserves

### **Corporate Director's Comments (Corporate Director- Resources)**

The £2.9m in available capital funding is set out in the Budget Pack on page 327 (paragraph 9.4). £2.340m of this is set aside for housing purposes.

Earmarked reserves are held for various purposes against identified risks or future expenditure. Appendix F in the Budget Pack (pps 305- 310) sets out general advice on reserves.

In relation to these specific reserves;

- The Single Status reserve was established to pay backfunded costs of the single status agreement reached with the staff side in 2007. As time goes by the risk of further calls on the reserve diminishes and is now considered to be fairly low. If this reserve is utilised then any funding required for the Single Status agreement would need to be found from other sources; most likely General Fund Reserves.
- The Chief Executive's Reserve has been held by successive Chief Executives as against the risk of unforeseen circumstances requiring urgent action by the Chief Executive. (An example might be a serious case of child death requiring an urgent investigation). The allocation proposed here would reduce the size of the reserve by half but would leave sufficient resources for most imaginable situations.

Any use of reserves can only be seen as providing temporary one-off funding and again the proposals are consistent this. Using reserves of any kind diminishes the Council's capacity to deal with risk and to allocate funding in emergencies and therefore increases the risk profile of the budget.

### **Any additional comments of the Chief Finance Officer**

See above

**Any additional comments of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal Services)**

None

### Equality Impact Assessment: Test of Relevance

TRIGGER QUESTIONS	YES / NO	IF YES PLEASE BRIEFLY EXPLAIN.....
Does the change reduce resources available to address inequality?	NO	
<b>CHANGES TO A SERVICE</b>		
Does the change alter access to the service?	NO	
Does the change involve revenue raising?	NO	
Does the change alter who is eligible for the service?	NO	
Does the change involve a reduction or removal of income transfers to service users?	NO	
Does the change involve a contracting out of a service currently provided in house?	NO	

**CHANGES TO STAFFING****Does the change  
involve a  
reduction in staff?****NO****Does the change  
involve a redesign  
of the roles of  
staff?****NO**

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**Proposal**

To apply 1.04 million earmarked reserves to support apprenticeships, leadership training and new graduate employment initiatives over 3 years. That the Corporate Directors of Development and Renewal and Children's Services bring forward proposals to be included the Mayor's forthcoming employment strategy

**Corporate Director's Comments**

Proposals to utilise this resource in the manner set out in the motion will be brought forward alongside publication of the councils employment strategy no later than the end of the first quarter of 2011/12.

**Any additional comments of the Chief Finance Officer**

Any use of reserves can only be seen as providing temporary one-off funding and again the proposals are consistent this. Using reserves of any kind diminishes the Council's capacity to deal with risk and to allocate funding in emergencies and therefore increases the risk profile of the budget.

**Any additional comments of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal Services)**

None



### Equality Impact Assessment: Test of Relevance

TRIGGER QUESTIONS	YES / NO	IF YES PLEASE BRIEFLY EXPLAIN.....
Does the change reduce resources available to address inequality?	yes	It increases the likelihood that we will be able to support people out of work, into a job.
<b>CHANGES TO A SERVICE</b>		
Does the change alter access to the service?	No	
Does the change involve revenue raising?	No	
Does the change alter who is eligible for the service?	No	
Does the change involve a reduction or removal of income transfers to service users?	No	
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The following sets out comments by officers on a proposal offered up in the budget amendment. Members of the Council should take this advice into consideration when considering and debating the amendment in question.

**Proposal**

To offer additional school subsidy for the Junior Youth Service and extended schools provision at the level of 2011/12. To do this by offering a ninth school £15K start up funding on the same basis as the Mayor's budget proposal and an additional £5K per school on the basis that they maintain prevailing charging policies for 2011/12. In so doing this Council will continue to support working and non working families who require after school childcare. The proposal is to support this service with a total of £0.06 million pounds in 2011/12.

**Corporate Director's Comments**

We have sign up from 9 schools who are very committed to operating after school childcare services. These schools have been assisted with a specialist business planner to put in place a robust plan which demonstrates the viability of the service in term time between 4 and 6pm. We have also given schools training on how to claim the Working Families Tax Credit to which families on low incomes can have recourse for help with fees. Informal discussions with two Schools has indicated that with the additional proposed subsidy of 5K they would be prepared to offer the service at prevailing fees to working and non working parents in 2011/12.

**Any additional comments of the Chief Finance Officer**

None

**Any additional comments of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal Services)**

None



**Equality Impact Assessment: Test of Relevance**

<b>TRIGGER QUESTIONS</b>	<b>YES / NO</b>	<b>IF YES PLEASE BRIEFLY EXPLAIN.....</b>
Does the change reduce resources available to address inequality?	No	
<b>CHANGES TO A SERVICE</b>		
Does the change alter access to the service?	No	
Does the change involve revenue raising?	Yes	This proposal is designed to ensure after school childcare remains at prevailing rates during 2011/12.
Does the change alter who is eligible for the service?	No	
Does the change involve a reduction or removal of income transfers to service users?	No	
Does the change involve a contracting out of a service currently provided in house?	No	
<b>CHANGES TO STAFFING</b>		
Does the change involve a	No	

<b>reduction in staff?</b>		
<b>Does the change involve a redesign of the roles of staff?</b>	<b>No</b>	

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The following sets out comments by officers on a proposal offered up in the budget amendment. Members of the Council should take this advice into consideration when considering and debating the amendment in question.

**Proposal**

To allocate £3.5 million of capital to increase affordable housing in the borough

**Corporate Director's Comments**

All the potential measures are achievable if funding is available.

Knock – through ----these are determined not only by demand but also be availability i.e. where there are voids, drying rooms etc. that can be utilised, and any engineering or building control/planning constraints

**Any additional comments of the Chief Finance Officer**

None

**Any additional comments of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal Services)**

Knock through require legal agreements.



### Equality Impact Assessment: Test of Relevance

TRIGGER QUESTIONS	YES / NO	IF YES PLEASE BRIEFLY EXPLAIN.....
Does the change reduce resources available to address inequality?	Yes	This proposal should help reduce poor quality and overcrowded property in the Borough
<b>CHANGES TO A SERVICE</b>		
Does the change alter access to the service?	Yes	This proposal should help reduce poor quality and overcrowded property in the Borough
Does the change involve revenue raising?	No	
Does the change alter who is eligible for the service?	No	
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### **Proposal**

**Alternative use of 585-589 Commercial Road (former Renault Garage)**

### **Corporate Director's Comments**

This site is owned by the Council and a desktop valuation has been undertaken that it is worth approximately £5m on the current market.

The site is currently in use as a car pound, used for storing vehicles which have been removed from the streets until they can be reclaimed by their owners. The intention is to change the policy on removing vehicles unless they present a danger or obstruction to the highway. A smaller site will need to be identified to securely store this smaller number of vehicles. Once this has been done the Commercial Road pound will no longer be required, and it should be possible to release it to other purposes during 2011/12.

Making the land available as part of a housing development is a potential use for the land.

### **Any additional comments of the Chief Finance Officer**

The sale or transfer of the land will need to be the subject of a separate Cabinet decision as part of the approval of a housing scheme. Any further financial implications would need to be set out in that report.

### **Any additional comments of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal Services)**

The sale of land is subject to S123 of Local Government Act 1970 to achieve best consideration.



### Equality Impact Assessment: Test of Relevance

TRIGGER QUESTIONS	YES / NO	IF YES PLEASE BRIEFLY EXPLAIN.....
Does the change reduce resources available to address inequality?	NO	
<b>CHANGES TO A SERVICE</b>		
Does the change alter access to the service?	NO	
Does the change involve revenue raising?	YES	The sale of the land would generate a capital receipt for the authority which could be used as part of a housing scheme or for other purposes.
Does the change alter who is eligible for the service?	NO	
Does the change involve a reduction or removal of income transfers to service users?	NO	
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