

## Conservative Group Proposed Amendments to BUDGET 2026/27 (REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS)

Proposer: Cllr Ralph Muncer  
 Seconder: Cllr David Barnard

The Conservative Group propose the following amendments:

Ref No	Directorate	Description of Proposal	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
			£'000	£'000	£'000
R1	Chief Executive	<del>Transfer to a specific earmarked reserve to support the process and impacts of Local Government Reorganisation.</del>	1,000	1,000	-
R8	Customers	<del>Communications staffing. Budget is requested to retain the capacity that has been created by having a Communications Apprentice. This would be a two-year fixed-term full time contract as a Communications Assistant from June 2026 until June 2028. Role is required with the increased workload associated with Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), increased filming requests, our Newsflash redevelopment project and the Museum Storage Project.</del>	29	36	8
R9	Customers	<del>Process mapping tool. A process mapping tool is required for the Digital Business Analyst and wider team to use to map processes, and to enhance efficiencies across the Council. The tool will be used to create a library of process maps ahead of LGR. The tool will go towards identifying time saving across the organisation.</del>	13	13	-
R10	Customers	<del>IT Services staffing costs. Due to the significant increase in workload, rapid technology advancements, heightened importance of cybersecurity, and the transition from a virtual environment to laptop end user devices, it is essential to make the current temporary Developer role a permanent position within the IT department. This change will ensure continuity, maintain service quality, and support the department's ability to meet ongoing and future operational demands as well as effective preparedness for the transition to a new unitary authority.</del>	61	61	61
R15	Environment	<del>Creation of fixed term Climate Project Apprentice post to support the delivery of Sustainability Strategy actions and outcomes related to the Climate Emergency. There are 29 actions in the strategy related to reducing emissions for both the council's own operations and the wider district. The officer would help with delivery of these actions, which could have wider benefits for residents around health related to warmer homes, reduced air pollution related to transition to cleaner vehicles / machinery, and potentially saved costs from energy efficiency</del>	-	16	-

		measures in council buildings. Investment value is an estimate with the new role subject to job evaluation. Being funded from the apprentice budget for the first 18 months.			
R21	Governance	<del>Recruitment to a fixed-term Policy and Strategy Officer post until March 2028. The team, currently comprising a Team Leader, officer, and apprentice (contract ending early 2026), supports the Policy &amp; Strategy Service Action Plan and various Council and service priorities across multiple directorates. This new role will expand the team's capacity to deliver good governance, transparent decision-making, equality and environmental impact assessments, and administration of Assets of Community Value, while also absorbing increased workload from Local Government Reorganisation. Additionally, the officer will be responsible for leading external grants identification, application, monitoring, and impact reporting in support of Council objectives. The post is career graded, with the investment value representing the maximum cost of the appointment.</del>	46	46	-
R22	Governance	<del>Increase of hours for the Safeguarding Team Leader from 30 hours to 37 hours per week. The increase in hours is crucial given the growing complexity of safeguarding demands across the Council. The expanded role will provide ongoing support and expertise to officers and councillors, ensuring that safeguarding is fully embedded into Council culture and practice. Key responsibilities will now include delivering bespoke inhouse safeguarding training, hence reducing reliance on external trainers and reducing pressure on corporate training budgets, while ensuring staff are confident and prepared to address safeguarding concerns. The Team Leader must also ensure compliance with new legislation, county-wide protocols, and recommendations from County Boards and Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs).</del>	12	12	12
R38	Enterprise	<del>Additional marketing support for Town Hall and Museum.</del>	34	34	13
R40	Enterprise	<del>Outreach work in relation to museum storage project. Grant bid has been submitted for this initiative, investment value is in lieu of grant income funding this expenditure.</del>	82	43	-

R43	Environment	Feasibility work on remodelling of Grange Recreation Ground in Letchworth.	150	-	-
R44	Environment	To reinvigorate the planting and overall presentation of Broadway Gardens. Some existing planting has begun to decline and areas now require attention to ensure they remain visually appealing, resilient, and fit for the future. The funding will support the introduction of sustainable and drought tolerant planting that enhances biodiversity while providing vibrant colour and seasonal interest throughout the year.	-	18	-
R47	Chief Executive	Other strategic priorities: initial funding for early work and feasibility reviews for other existing and emerging priorities, including Great Ashby allotments.	20	-	-
R51	Governance	Provision for an additional Executive Member to represent Local Government Reorganisation during 26/27 and 27/28. Actual use will depend on the Leader's decision over Cabinet structures.	9	9	-
R52	Governance	Putting in place security for key evening Committee Meetings (estimated 35 per year) to help protect staff, Councillors and the public.	7	7	7
CO N 1	-	0.5 WTE Rural Enforcement Officer to enforce parking restrictions within our rural communities and provide assistance to Community Safety Officers in tackling matters such as fly-tipping. Cost of this additional post will be partially offset by increase in PCN notices issued.	22	22	22
CO N 2	-	Council Tax Cut by 1% in FY 2026/27 with a Council Tax Freeze in 2027/28. And then assume new Unitary would increase by 2.99% per year	551	980	1,015
		<b>CUMULATIVE IMPACT OR CHANGES</b>	<b>(890)</b>	<b>(293)</b>	<b>936</b>
		<b>NET FUNDING POSITION (ADMINISTRATION PROPOSALS)</b>	<b>3,636</b>	<b>3,704</b>	<b>(176) SURPLU S</b>
		<b>REVISED FUNDING POSITIONS (WITH THESE AMENDMENTS)</b>	<b>2,746</b>	<b>3,411</b>	<b>760</b>