

**Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26+  
Amendment from the Opposition Conservative Group**

**Additional investments to tackle anti-social behaviour,  
fly-tipping and financial hardship**

Proposer: Cllr Matt Hartley. Seconder: Cllr Charlie Davis.

*Insert the following additional decisions:*

- 1.20. Note that the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) should reflect the views of local residents and taxpayers as far as possible, as well as responding to new issues, challenges and opportunities as they arise.
- 1.21. Note that '**anti-social behaviour** in my community' was by far and away the most-selected issue in a list of 'most important issues the Borough will face' by residents in the Council's 2025/26 Budget consultation (30% of responses) – and further note that 'tackling crime and community safety on a local level' was also top-ranked as the issue residents felt requires more attention when deciding the Budget (17% of responses).
- 1.22. Note that **fly-tipping** is a deeply entrenched problem in the borough, which feedback from residents suggests is worsening in many areas, and further note that 'the cleanliness of streets and the local area' was the third-ranked issue requiring more attention when deciding the Budget (13% of responses by residents to the Budget consultation) and the second-ranked when considering only those issues addressable through the General Fund.
- 1.23. Note that, despite proposed mitigations, **financial hardship** is set to increase in Greenwich following the Council's decision to cut the maximum level of Council Tax Support from 100% to 80% from 2025/26 onwards, and that low-income households will require ongoing support following this change to avoid falling into financial difficulty.
- 1.24. Agree, therefore, to address these three important issues by making the additional investments outlined in *Additional Appendix A*, funded by delivering the additional ongoing efficiency savings

(reducing communications spending and the cost of local politics) outlined in *Additional Appendix B*.

1.25. Note that the decision at 1.24 has no net effect on the Medium Term Financial Strategy, as outlined in Table 1.

*Table 1: Net effect of additional proposals outlined at decision 1.24*

<b>Additional proposal</b>	<b>25/26 (£m)</b>	<b>26/27 (£m)</b>	<b>27/28 (£m)</b>	<b>28/29 (£m)</b>
Additional Community Safety Enforcement Officers to tackle anti-social behaviour	0.230	0.230	0.230	0.230
Additional mobile CCTV cameras to tackle fly-tipping and ASB hotspots	0.200	0.100	0.100	0.100
New ongoing investment in the Greenwich Supports Council Tax Hardship Fund	0.070	0.270	0.280	0.280
Reducing communications spending & other efficiencies	(0.500)	(0.500)	(0.500)	(0.500)
Cutting the cost of local politics	-	(0.100)	(0.110)	(0.110)
<b>Net effect on MTFS</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

*Insert the following additional appendices as Additional Appendix A and Additional Appendix B.*

## **Additional Appendix A: Additional Ongoing Investment Proposals**

- A.1. Note the detail of the additional ongoing investment proposals below, subject to agreement at paragraph 1.24.
- A.2. Additional Community Safety Enforcement Officers to tackle anti-social behaviour

There are currently 8 Community Safety Enforcement Officers and 3 supervisors in the Safer Spaces team. These officers provide a visible presence mostly in the borough's high footfall areas, work with the police, enforce against anti-social behaviour (using the Public Spaces Protection Order and other legislation) and engage with the community to reduce the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour.

Alternative funding for 2 of these 8 Community Safety Enforcement Officers has been sought by the Council from AEG, and if secured these 2 roles would be ringfenced to Greenwich Peninsula to support work around the O2 Arena (leading to a reduction in coverage elsewhere). In November 2024, however, the service reported that negotiations with AEG were "not proving fruitful". The Cabinet's MTFs proposals approved in 2024/25 note that "if this income cannot be secured, the Community Safety Enforcement Team will be reduced by two staff members".

Given the clear feedback from residents in the Budget consultation that tackling anti-social behaviour should be a priority, this additional investment of **£0.230m a year** removes the risk that 2 posts will need to be removed by the Council – and further allows the recruitment of 2 additional posts to increase coverage across the borough's high footfall areas.

Links to Corporate Plan:

- Mission 5 – Everyone in Greenwich is safer, and feels safer
- Mission 12 – Town centres, high streets and shopping parades are vibrant, prosperous, well-maintained places that meet the needs of local people

### A.3. Additional mobile CCTV cameras to tackle fly-tipping/ASB hotspots

The council currently has a limited stock of mobile CCTV cameras which are deployed mostly to tackle anti-social behaviour, with capability to deploy these units across the borough currently limited by this resource constraint.

This additional investment would enable the procurement of 15 additional mobile CCTV cameras during 2025/26 at a one-off **cost of £0.150m** in 2025/26, with a **£0.100m full-year** running and staffing cost from 2025/26 onwards. These additional mobile CCTV cameras would be available for deployment across the borough to tackle both fly-tipping and anti-social behaviour, but will be prioritised to tackle fly-tipping in 2025/26 and 2026/27 with an aim of getting to grips with the borough's fly-tipping hotspots, based on feedback collected from residents and ward councillors.

Links to Corporate Plan:

- Mission 5 – Everyone in Greenwich is safer, and feels safer
- Mission 9 – Neighbourhoods are vibrant, safe and attractive with community services that meet the needs of local residents
- Mission 12 – Town centres, high streets and shopping parades are vibrant, prosperous, well-maintained places that meet the needs of local people

### A.4. New ongoing investment in the Greenwich Supports Council Tax Hardship Fund

Despite the proposed mitigations, financial hardship is set to increase amongst low-income households as a result of the Council's decision in January 2025 to reduce the maximum level of support available through the Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) Scheme from 100% to 80%. The 100% Scheme that has been in operation since 2020 lifted up to 15,000 low income households out of Council Tax altogether, and the reduction 80% support will mean 12,400 low-income households are dragged into Council Tax in the coming years.

The Cabinet's proposals include establishing a Greenwich Supports Discretionary Council Tax Hardship Fund to help mitigate the impact of the Council Tax Support changes. The MTFS notes that "the resources available for the hardship fund are expected to be sought through a contribution from the Household Support Fund and other sources" and "discussions are ongoing regarding

the hardship funding”. There remains some uncertainty over the source and extent of ongoing funding, aside from £0.7m one-off funding from a national Business Rates Levy surplus distribution which will be used for increased costs across staffing for the hardship fund, debt collection and increased bad debt provision.

This ongoing investment therefore confirms an additional **£0.070m** of funding in 2025/26 rising to **£0.280m a year** from 2027/28 onwards to the Greenwich Supports Discretionary Council Tax Hardship Fund – to further mitigate the impact of increased hardship following the reduction in Council Tax Support.

This represents a total investment of **£0.9 million** over the four-year course of the MTFS, in addition to the as-yet unidentified funding expected to be “sourced” via Cabinet’s proposals.

Links to Corporate Plan:

- Mission 3 – Those in financial need can access the right support, advice and opportunities to improve their situation

A.5. Note that the additional ongoing investment proposals in Additional Appendix A total £0.500m in 2025/26 rising to £0.610m from 2027/28 onwards, as summarised in Table A.

*Table A: Additional ongoing investment proposals*

<b>Additional ongoing investment proposal</b>	<b>Cost 25/26 (£m)</b>	<b>Cost 26/27 (£m)</b>	<b>Cost 27/28+ (£m)</b>
Additional Community Safety Enforcement Officers to tackle ASB	0.230	0.230	0.230
Additional mobile CCTV cameras to tackle fly-tipping and ASB hotspots	0.200	0.100	0.100
New ongoing investment in Greenwich Supports Council Tax Hardship Fund	0.070	0.270	0.280
<b>Total additional ongoing investment</b>	<b>0.500</b>	<b>0.600</b>	<b>0.610</b>

## **Additional Appendix B: Additional efficiency saving proposals**

B.1. Note the detail of the additional efficiency savings proposals, subject to agreement at paragraph at 1.24.

### **B.2. Reducing communications spending & other efficiencies**

This proposal would implement a package of additional non-frontline efficiency savings, mainly comprising reducing communications/PR spending. The measures comprise:

- Reversing the 2023 decision to expand the Communications team (£0.236m) by absorbing the work of the Community Engagement Team within the rest of the communications function's resources, as previously.
- Removing advertising roles that were predominantly focussed on Greenwich Info following the end of the print edition of Greenwich Info (£0.116m), with residual responsibilities reallocated to existing teams
- Ending PR/reputation management service subscriptions and spending on communications / professional photography (£0.032m) and ending the Council's subscription to the Local Government Information Unit (£0.026m)
- Securing external sponsorship to defray event costs to cover a part of the budget for civic events (£0.030m), the Staff Recognition Awards and other events (£0.060m)

Links to Corporate Plan:

- Mission 19 – Our Council works in the most efficient and effective way possible
- Mission 16 – We develop networks with communities, key partners and businesses to meet need and address challenges together

### **B.3. Cutting the cost of local politics**

This proposal would implement further savings from 2026/27 by reducing the cost of local politics. This comprises:

- Ending the Political Assistant system introduced by the Council in 2024 at the end of the current council term in May

2026, upon the expiration of the current fixed term contracts (£0.080m), with a full year effect of £0.090m from 2027/28

- Removing the budget for the Cabinet Assistant Special Allowance which was introduced in 2018/19 and then doubled to four roles in 2024/25 (£0.020m)

Links to Corporate Plan:

- Mission 19 – Our Council works in the most efficient and effective way possible

B.4. Note that the additional efficiency savings outlined in Additional Appendix B total £0.500m a year in 2025/26 rising to £0.610m a year for 2027/28 onwards, as summarised in Table B.

*Table B: Additional efficiency saving proposals*

<b>Additional efficiency saving proposals</b>	<b>Cost 25/26 (£m)</b>	<b>Cost 26/27 (£m)</b>	<b>Cost 27/28+ (£m)</b>
Reducing communications spending & other efficiencies	(0.500)	(0.500)	(0.500)
Cutting the cost of local politics	-	(0.100)	(0.110)
<b>Total additional efficiency savings</b>	<b>(0.500)</b>	<b>(0.600)</b>	<b>(0.610)</b>

*ENDS*

**Housing Revenue Account MTFS and  
Budget & Rent setting for 2025-26**

**Amendment from the Opposition Conservative Group**

**Review of leaseholder charges**

Proposer: Cllr Charlie Davis. Seconder: Cllr Matt Hartley

*After paragraph 1.8, insert the following new paragraph:*

- 1.9. To agree to a Review covering 1) the Council's communication with tenants and leaseholders to ensure optimum transparency in the communication of fees and charges, and 2) Value For Money of the Council's procurement practices for any capital works which directly impact leaseholders and tenants. As part of this review, Council will assess existing consultation processes and will ensure that future decisions that financially impact leaseholders go above and beyond statutory consultation requirements.

*Re-number paragraphs 1.9 and 1.10, as 1.10 and 1.11, respectively.*

*ENDS*