

Budget & Policy Framework Proposals 2015/16

Presentation by
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On behalf of Cabinet

Budget & Performance Panel: 27 January 2015

Where we started from (February 2014)

Our Medium Term Financial Strategy was to:

- make net savings of £1.0M in 2015/2016
and £2.5M in 2016/2017

on an annual budget of around £18M.

- implement savings in year, where practical.
- increase Council tax by 1.99% each year, subject to referendum thresholds.

Very similar to the February 2013 position, with one notable exception....

- in that using £1M of Balances was also planned for 2015/16.

Progress achieved through:

- Efficiency savings and managing costs down (c £600K)
- Timing changes (c £100K)
- Income generation and improved forecasts (c £700K)
 - Business Rates
 - Council Tax
 - Other Fees, Charges and Income Sources

These measures will have some adverse impact on the public and communities but so far, again, major service reductions have been avoided.

The question is still - for how long?

On the same path for 2015/2016.....

Retain Existing Priorities:

- Clean, Green & Safe Places
- Health & Wellbeing
- Community Leadership
- Sustainable Economic Growth

with a narrower focus,
but still ambitious



Develop the Council's "Ensuring Council" Ethos:

- What it means and requires in practice

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An Ensuring Council's Ethos:

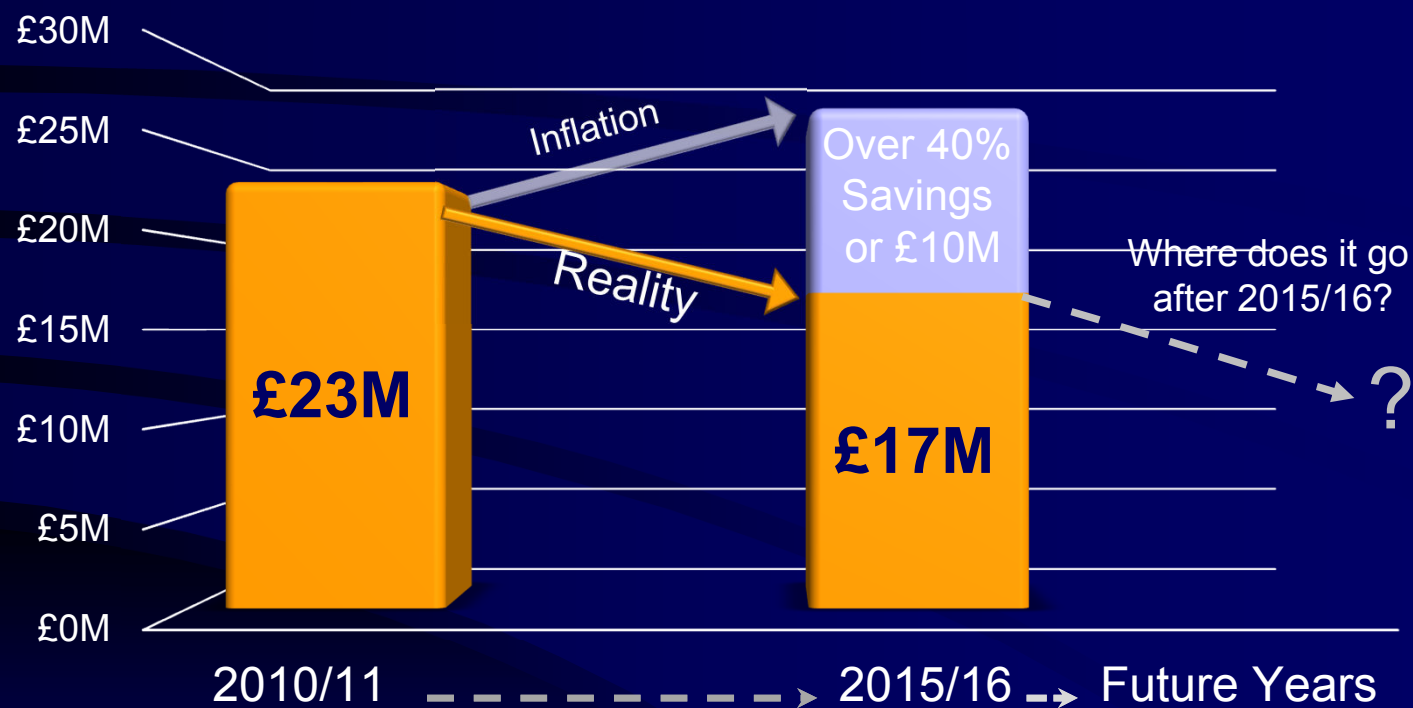
- **Stewardship** – wellbeing of the local area
- **Core Capacity** – maintaining in-house local services
- **Municipal Entrepreneurialism** – innovation and income generation
- **Collaboration** – rather than competition
- **Political Accountability** – through policy and decision-making
- **Social Justice** – equality and community needs
- **Sustainability** – in environmental terms
- **Value for Money**

What's different, looking forward

General and Local Elections in May 2015

- more uncertainty for short term, but
- opportunity for better informed medium term planning, beyond then.

Budgets and Funding: Past, Present and Future



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Future Financial Strategy Proposals

To balance the budget over the medium term, and help protect key services to the public:

1. Keep council tax increases at 1.99% year on year, subject to local referendum thresholds.

2015/16 Band D City Council Tax would increase to £203.97 (an increase of £3.98 or 8p per week)

2. Continue with service reviews and change programme, with a medium term focus.

- Efficiency savings and service “trimming”
- Other organisational development
- Invest to save initiatives
- Major service reductions

3. Manage any service growth needs through redirection of resources.

4. Use spare Balances to help deliver all the above – but they will soon run out, if the ongoing funding gap isn't tackled.

Growth Proposals for Consideration

- **Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) - £99K**
Extend City Council's contribution of £99K for one year, into 2015/2016.
- **Off-street Car Parking – c £14K per year**
Freeze pay & display and permit charges for next year.
- **Tackling Empty Homes – c £260K over two years**
Provide funds and other resources to help bring them back into use.
- **Grounds Maintenance – £8K per year**
For recreational areas “Beyond the Castle”.
- **Public Satisfaction Survey - £10K**
To gain community insight for future planning and budgeting (typically every three years).

Other Budget Considerations and Decisions

January Cabinet:

- Developing Salt Ayre Sports Centre
- Tackling fraud and managing information better

February Cabinet:

- Renewable Energy proposals - strategy and key projects
- St Leonard's House proposals – for its future use.

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Cabinet welcomes your views and
feedback.

More details available at www.lancaster.gov.uk

Any Questions??