

MEETING OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL

4 FEBRUARY 2025

**ITEM 5 (i) – AMENDMENT TO ITEM 5 - 2025/26 FINAL BUDGET AND MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY TO 2029/30**

**Item 5 (i)**

**Amendment by Paul Follows (Godalming South, Milford & Witley) to item 5 – 2025/26 Final Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy to 2029/30**

*Seconder: Lance Spencer (Goldsworth East and Horsell Village)*

**Recommendations**

**Council is asked to approve the following budget proposals:**

**1. (a) that Surrey County Council will explore the creation of a voluntary contribution scheme for Council Tax Band H residents of our County.**

**(b) that a cross-party working group will be established to determine this scheme's scope, legal structure, governance, and communication and to bring back to Council for consideration with the aim of establishing the scheme for the next financial year.**

There are no direct financial impacts of the above proposals, as set out in the table below:

**Table 1. Summary of budget proposals**

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>2025-26 &amp; annual ongoing revenue impact</b>	<b>One-Off costs</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<p><b>1. Voluntary Contribution Fund</b>  <b>(a) that Surrey County Council will explore the creation of a voluntary contribution scheme for Council Tax Band H residents of our County.</b></p> <p><b>(b) that a cross-party working group will be established to determine this scheme's scope, legal structure, governance, and communication and to bring back to Council for consideration with the aim of establishing the scheme for the next financial year.</b></p>		Initial set up and promotional costs	Minimal promotional & administrative costs are anticipated to set up a voluntary fund. It is proposed that these are built into future years' budgets once initial work to establish viability, cost and governance arrangements are established.
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**Section 151 Officer Commentary**

The Voluntary Contribution proposal would require some initial set-up and promotional costs as well as potentially additional ongoing administration costs. This is yet to be quantified and engagement would be required with Boroughs and Districts who collect council tax income on our behalf.

The proposal however is to explore the option of setting up a voluntary contribution scheme and therefore it is anticipated that no funding will be committed to or required for this stage, which I have assumed as being for 2025/26. Should the working group conclude that in future financial years such a scheme be established, then the administrative and promotional costs will need to be incorporated into future budgets as required.

**Monitoring Officer Commentary**

The legal content and implications as set out in the main budget report applies to the alternative budget proposal(s) and regard should be had to them. Any proposal accepted will require the Chief Finance Officer S151, advice as to the robustness of estimates and adequacy of the budget proposals. Any plan(s) which are put to be considered as part of SCC budget, will require an Equality Impact Assessment and if applicable other financial diligence. Any decision by the Council will be on an “in principle” decision until the completion of the work above is completed.