



FIFE COUNCIL MEETING

THURSDAY, 20 FEBRUARY 2025

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3(d) - GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2025-28

SNP GROUP AMENDMENT

“That the Council:-

1. Approves the report by the Executive Director (Finance & Corporate Services) and the resolution for the levying and collection of council tax and rates for the year 2025-26 as detailed below and specifically:-
 - (a) notes the details of the provisional settlement announced by the Scottish Government as outlined in Finance Circular 10/2024, and the terms of the settlement as outlined in the letter from the Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government, dated 4 December 2024;
 - (b) agrees a rise of 6.4% council tax to be levied for the financial year 2025-26 at Band D equivalent and the revenue budget which can be sustained by this level of income;
 - (c) note the indicative levels of expenditure, subject to further detailed analysis in respect of the financial years 2026-27 and 2027-28;
 - (d) note the prudential indicators will be approved alongside the Capital Investment Plan review;
 - (e) agree an additional contribution of £9.596m to the Fife Health & Social Care (H&SC) Partnership in respect of additional funding contained in the settlement;
 - (f) note the heightened level of future financial risk and uncertainty;
 - (g) agrees that the Council set for 2025-26 the Council Tax at £1,473.83 for valuation Band D properties and proportionately for other Bands; and
 - (h) approve the terms of the SNP Group’s Budget Statement and the attached appendices and investment proposals.

2. Agrees that early work commences in relation to the development of options for the preparation of the 2026-27 and 2027-28 revenue budgets.

RESOLUTION FOR THE LEVYING AND COLLECTION OF COUNCIL TAX AND RATES FOR THE YEAR 2025-26

Fife Council resolves for the financial year from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026 as follows:-

- (i) in terms of Section 93 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and of all other powers enabling them in that behalf to set the amount of council tax to be paid in their area in respect of a chargeable dwelling listed in valuation Band D at £1,473.83 and to determine the amounts for all the valuation bands as follows:-

Valuation Band	Council Tax
A	£982.55
B	£1,146.31
C	£1,310.07
D	£1,473.83
E	£1,936.45
F	£2,394.97
G	£2,886.25
H	£3,610.88

- (ii) in terms of sections 7 and 7B of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1975, to levy within their area the non-domestic rate as prescribed by the Scottish Ministers and in accordance with the relevant Non-Domestic Rates (Levying) (Scotland) Regulations.

Proposed by Councillor Craig Walker

Seconded by Councillor Derek Glen



Revenue Budget Amendment 2025-28

Proposed by the SNP Group

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Fife Council SNP Group Budget Amendment

The Fife Council SNP Group remains committed to serving the people of Fife with fairness, responsibility, and a clear focus on what matters most to our communities. In the face of continued financial pressures, we are determined to protect the services that matter to Fife's residents and keep council tax rises to a minimum, while ensuring that the education and well-being of our children remain a priority.

Keeping Council Tax Rises to a Minimum

We understand that many households across Fife are already facing a continuing cost-of-living-crisis, and the last thing anyone needs is unnecessary financial burdens. This budget amendment prioritises the protection of vulnerable residents and ensures that council tax increases are kept to a minimum. We will continue to work within our means, delivering essential services that our communities rely on, while resisting any unnecessary hikes that would add strain to family budgets. Our goal is to provide fair and equitable solutions, ensuring that the financial burden on Fife's households is kept as low as possible. **To that end we propose limiting council tax rises to 6.4% this year**

Protecting Teacher Numbers and Education

Education is the bedrock of Fife's future, and the SNP Group is determined to safeguard the quality of education for every child in our communities. We know that teachers and educators are central to shaping the future of Scotland, and we will ensure that teacher numbers remain protected in Fife. Our budget amendment outlines our commitment to maintaining high-quality education across the region, preserving smaller class sizes, and ensuring that every child, regardless of their background, has access to the opportunities they deserve. We are committed to working with our schools and education professionals to address any challenges, and to providing a stable and supportive environment for both teachers and students.

The importance of education cannot be overstated – it is the foundation for personal growth and community prosperity. We will continue to stand up for Fife's young people, ensuring they receive the highest standard of education, with the resources and support they need to thrive and that is why we have protected the Education budget in this amendment. **Our budget proposals will not take any efficiency savings in frontline Education**

Employers National Insurance Contribution Rises

The Fife SNP group firmly believes that the UK Governments decision to increase Employers National Insurance Contributions, due to take effect in April, is both economically short-sighted and unfair. The recent rise in ENICs adds unnecessary pressure on businesses in Fife, discouraging investment and hindering job creation and may lead to job reductions. For employers, particularly in small and medium-sized businesses, this means higher operational costs and reduced ability to hire new staff or invest in growth, further exacerbating the financial strain they already face. **The cost to Fife Council of this rise, is around £15million and we have only received around £10million to cover these costs, leaving around £5million of a gap to fill ourselves taking more money out our budget that could be better spent on services or reducing any council tax rise by 2.5%**

The Impact of High Inflation and the Cost of Borrowing

The failure to tackle the root causes of high inflation continues to create significant hardship for Fife Council. Rising prices on everyday goods and services, do not just have an impact on families across Fife but the Council also has to take it into account when setting its Capital Plan.

Further compounding this is the high cost of borrowing. As the cost of borrowing rises, so too does the burden on public finances. This impacts Fife's ability to invest in key infrastructure, vital services, and community projects that are needed now more than ever. **This has had a significantly detrimental effect overall on the capital plan but also on the revenue budget which helps to finance the plan.**

Conclusion

This budget amendment reflects the priorities of the SNP Group in Fife – fairness, investment in education, and responsible financial management. While Westminster's economic policies continue to create challenges, we are determined to shield Fife's residents from the worst impacts and ensure that essential services remain protected.

We will keep council tax rises as low as possible, protect teacher numbers to ensure the best education for Fife's children, and continue to challenge the unfair Employers National Insurance increases, the high cost of borrowing, and the failure to address inflation. The Fife SNP Group will continue to fight for a fairer, more prosperous Fife for all.

**FIFE COUNCIL
AMENDED GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2025-28**

	2025-26 £m	2026-27 £m	2027-28 £m
Estimated Budget Gap/(Surplus) as per report by Executive Director Finance & Corporate Services	5.241	28.744	54.655
Provision for Pressures/Investment			
Pressures and Investment (Appendix 2)	13.096	10.428	10.428
Revised Budget Gap	18.337	39.172	65.083
Budget Savings (Appendix 1)	(5.312)	(8.762)	(15.001)
Council Tax Increases (6.4% / Indicative 3.0% / Indicative 3.0%)	(12.432)	(18.758)	(25.355)
Fees & Charges (increase by 5.0%)	(0.593)	(0.593)	(0.593)
Final Budget Gap	0.000	11.059	24.134

FIFE COUNCIL
AMENDED GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2025-28
BUDGET SAVINGS

		2025-26 £m	2026-27 £m	2027-28 £m
<u>Education</u>				
Education				
ED-001	Senior Management Structure	0.000	0.750	0.750
ED-010	Review of payments and services in relation to NHS funding agreements	0.100	0.100	0.100
Education Total		0.100	0.850	0.850
<u>Place</u>				
Planning				
PL-001	Increase Non Statutory Income	0.040	0.040	0.040
Facilities Management				
PL-003	Staff Productivity - Facilities Management	0.260	0.260	0.260
Business & Employability				
PL-004	Removal Of Vacancies	0.104	0.104	0.104
PL-005	Increase External Income - Matrix	0.066	0.066	0.066
PL-021	Introduction of Visitor Levy	0.000	0.000	3.400
Roads & Transportation Services				
PL-033	Traffic Management	0.501	0.501	0.501
PL-034	Car Parking Strategy	0.281	0.407	0.453
Place Total		1.252	1.378	4.824
<u>Communities</u>				
Housing & Neighbourhood Services				
CM-001	Safer Communities - Travel Reduction	0.020	0.020	0.020
CM-002	In house mediation	0.090	0.090	0.090
CM-003	B&B reduction	0.150	0.250	0.398
CM-004	Commissioning Services in house	0.050	0.100	0.150
Customer & Online Service				
CM-005	Realignment of CSC Offices/Buildings	0.000	0.000	0.180
CM-007	Fully Digital Council Tax System	0.000	0.035	0.035
CM-008	Increased digital focus for customer contact & resolution	0.024	0.114	0.174
CM-009	Liquidlogic - Professional Portal	0.000	0.084	0.084
CM-010	Digital Repairs Centre	0.000	0.075	0.150
Children, Families & Justice				
CM-012	Future of Leisure	0.100	1.140	2.100
CM-014	Consolidate Community Social Work Team into no wrong door & existing service delivery	0.304	0.304	0.304
CM-018	Review of payments to Health	0.427	0.427	0.427
CM-019	Developing an Inhouse Children's Rights Service	0.200	0.200	0.200
CM-020	Review of taxi usage	0.100	0.100	0.100
Communities Directorate Wide				
CM-022	Management & organisational savings across Directorate	0.108	0.108	0.528
Communities Total		1.573	3.047	4.940

**FIFE COUNCIL
AMENDED GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2025-28
BUDGET SAVINGS**

	2025-26 £m	2026-27 £m	2027-28 £m
<u>Finance & Corporate Services</u>			
Business Technology Solutions			
FC-003 IT Contracts	0.122	0.195	0.195
Legal & Democratic Services			
FC-004 Increase Fee for S75 agreements	0.018	0.018	0.018
Finance & Corporate Services Directorate Wide			
FC-001 Staff Productivity	0.247	1.165	1.448
FC-005 Service redesign in line with the Digital Programme	0.000	0.109	0.726
Finance & Corporate Services Total	0.387	1.487	2.387
<u>Council-Wide Saving</u>			
CW-001 Efficiency Saving	2.000	2.000	2.000
Council-Wide Total	2.000	2.000	2.000
Total Budget Savings	5.312	8.762	15.001

**FIFE COUNCIL
AMENDED GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2025-28
BUDGET PRESSURES AND INVESTMENT**

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
	£m	£m	£m
H&SC share of Settlement cash increase	4.410	4.410	4.410
H&SC Funding	5.200	0.000	0.000
HRA NI Pressure	0.449	0.449	0.449
Revenue Investment - 1-2-1 Devices	1.867	0.369	0.369
Financing for Capital Investment	0.770	4.800	4.800
Financing for Capital Investment - 1-2-1 Devices	0.400	0.400	0.400
Total Budget Investment	13.096	10.428	10.428