

Increasing our renewable energy

Liberal Democrats Group 2024/25 Budget Amendment 2

This amendment seeks approval for:

- The provision of solar photovoltaic (PV) canopies for the new Osborn Road surface car park

It is important to combat this climate emergency that we invest in renewable energy. This proposal invests to increase our solar panel provision thereby demonstrating green leadership and delivering long-term green investment.

To provide solar photovoltaic (PV) canopies for the new Osborn Road surface car park

1. The **new solar photovoltaic (PV) canopies with associate battery storage** alongside the new Osborn Road surface car park would **cost £500,000**.
2. It is proposed **to fund this by reducing the “Civic Office Improvements” of £3,600,800** accordingly to £3,100,800 (a reduction of only 14%). This capital funding is available and has been for some time. Its future use remains dependent on the Civic Offices asset management plan which is expected later this year. There will be no realistic scenario in which all the original full monies would be required in 2024/25. We would think it sensible any Civic Office improvements are carefully considered alongside the wider Town Centre regeneration.
3. The **solar canopies will be income generating over the long term**. That level of income has not previously been calculated by Officers. It means we will receive a ‘green return on investment’ putting the Civic funds to work now and we will have an income to offset solar canopy set up/maintenance costs directly or via long term borrowing.
4. In **15 years, the solar canopies are expected to save 42 tonnes of CO2 emissions per annum**. This proposal is ultimately around green leadership where we do the right thing and set the right example.
5. The **PV installation** was part of the original proposal which was then withdrawn at the report to the September meeting of the Executive.