

An overview of the Council Savings Programme

The council has a strong track record of delivering savings and efficiencies from its budget and from 2011 to 2014 saved £36m through its transformation programme (details of how we did this can be found [here](#)). By the end of 2014/15, the transformation programme will have delivered £43m of savings.

The Council Savings Programme (CSP) sets out how the council plans to deliver an additional £36m of savings over the next 6 years from 2014/15 to 2019/20. The £36m CSP is subject to more detailed consultation on each proposal before implementation and potentially other options may come forward. It was originally agreed in February 2014 and full details can be found [here](#). Further savings of £4m will be required by 2019/20.

Savings of this scale mean that we must completely rethink our approach and prioritise our actions and activities. We will become a smaller council, delivering fewer services, and will need to review our priorities to make sure our more limited resources are focused on our 'core' activities. At the same time we will look to work more closely with local communities, strengthening and encouraging communities to take greater responsibility for local services to ensure that people's needs are met.

In future, our core services will focus on:

- Delivering jobs, homes and infrastructure
- Improving educational outcomes
- Maintaining safe and clean communities
- Closing the gaps - income, education & health
- Safeguarding vulnerable children and adults
- Meeting assessed needs for children and adults

We are now working up more detailed plans for how the savings set out in the CSP could be fully implemented over the next five years. This will be carried out as a number of individual projects within each department, as well as a range of cross-council projects. Some are clearly defined and have already started, some are currently being consulted upon, whilst others require more work and won't start for several years.

The size and complexity of projects will vary, with individual savings targets ranging from around £30,000 to £2.7 million by 2019/20. Some are extremely complex, involving working with partners and changing the way we deliver services, whilst others are relatively straightforward and involve, for example, top-slicing budgets or only minor service changes.

The council is looking at a range of ways to deliver savings on this scale, including:

- Reducing the quality of some services provided
- Increasing fees and charges for some services
- Making more services available online
- Making more efficient use of council assets such as land and buildings
- Scaling back or stopping provision of some services
- Stopping provision of some discretionary services to protect services to older people and the vulnerable
- Changing working practices to make better use of technology and more efficient ways of working
- Working in partnership and sharing services with other councils, public sector agencies and organisations
- Transferring services to other organisations like commercial companies, community groups, social enterprises and town and parish councils
- Encouraging more people to volunteer their time to become involved in the delivery of services

Some of the proposals currently being considered as part of this work include:

- Creating new community 'hubs' bringing together some library and customer services in order to reduce overheads and property costs
- Expanding capacity at some leisure centres in order to increase income and usage, reducing the amount they are subsidised by local taxpayers
- Involving the local community in delivering some local services, such as maintaining highway verges and other public spaces
- Reviewing bus services that are supported by the council, retendering contracts and transferring services to commercial operators, reducing the amount they are subsidised by local taxpayers
- Making more use of digital technologies to improve customer services and reduce costs
- Reviewing the way we provide care for adults in nursing homes, day services and in people's homes

Children, Adults and Health: savings of £13.8m (13% of departmental budget)

This department provides support to people who need it at different stages in their lives and ensures they are kept safe and well, and provides; education, children's social services, support for older people and people with disabilities, residential and social care, and non NHS public health services.

Children, adults and health spending accounts for over half of the council's budget. It faces the challenge of supporting the most vulnerable people in our communities, rising demand for services as the population grows and ages and a reduced budget to deliver services.

Changes to these service areas will come from:

- Resources being more targeted to ensure vulnerable adults and children are kept safe from harm and as an absolute priority those at immediate risk are safeguarded.
- Social care integrating with local health services to improve the experience of patients and service users and delivering cost efficiencies from closer joint working
- Work focusing on early intervention and prevention to reduce the use of high cost services before situations escalate or get worse

- Focusing on raising school standards and supporting young people into employment
- Reducing some discretionary services

Environment and Community Services: savings of £9.5m (18% of departmental budget)

The Environment and Community Services department provides a range of services that support where you live, your community and your local environment including: planning, housing advice, waste services, highways, transport, parks and open spaces, litter clearance, libraries, arts, heritage, sports and leisure, environmental health, trading standards and community safety.

Changes to these service areas will come from five areas:

- Working in partnership and sharing the costs of delivering services with others
- Working with communities to deliver services locally and enabling local communities and community groups to take greater ownership and control of services
- Reducing costs and services where the service currently exceeds what we have to provide by law
- Reducing or stopping provision of some non-essential/discretionary services where no alternative exists.
- Reducing overhead and management costs where possible

Chief Executive and Corporate Resources: savings of £4.5m (25% of departmental budget)

This department provides the support services the council needs to operate including: communications, customer services, finance, property, IT, human resources, legal and decision making support.

It is important as the council changes shape over the next 5 years, that the support and professional services provided by the department to the rest of the council changes to reflect the organisation it is supporting. These changes will predominantly come from two key areas.

- Continuing the drive to become more efficient, making better use of resources and technology, changing working practices and improved procurement.
- Ensuring that as the council becomes smaller, its support arrangements and the costs associated with running it are reduced accordingly.

Council wide savings of £8.2m

These savings will come from encouraging more people to access services online, and reviewing staff pay, management structures and other staff policies. Increasing economic growth and a growing population will also lead to increased collection of business rates and council tax, helping to offset a fall in government grants.

For further information and to get involved

Further information about the council's savings plan is available from our [website](#).

You can also take part in any consultations that are taking place about specific changes that could affect you. Further information about current or past consultations is available from our [website](#).