

SAVING PROPOSALS

EFFICIENCIES

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Children's Services

CS1 Directorate Restructure - Efficiency

Background

The consultation on this proposal has already been started following the Executive decision in August, 2010. This is a reorganisation of Heads of Service, School Improvement, School Support and the Policy and Strategy Team. Staffing reductions, including posts previously funded by the Area Based Grant, will total 66.5 full time equivalent posts. The Executive of the Council agreed in July 2010 to remove Area Based Grant activity from the area it serves and to bring forward this reorganisation to 2010/2011. The savings will be unlikely to be achieved until the financial year 2011/12.

Rationale for Service Change

- The reduction of posts reflects the Council's new role in supporting schools.
- Policy and strategy will be delivered through operational managers.
- In line with the Council's education vision, schools will support each other increasing through Trusts, Federations and Partnerships

Financial Savings

This will bring a saving of £915K in 2011/2012, with a further saving of £200K in 2012/2013.

Service Implications and Impact

- The reduction of posts will require application of the Council's Management of Change Policy.
- Policy and Strategy work will be included as part of the role of operational Heads of Service.
- Reduction in support for schools particularly where they are good or excellent thus reflecting a model of targeted support.

CS2 Education Welfare Officers - Efficiency

Background

Education Welfare Officers work with schools to ensure statutory school age children are in regular attendance. They also provide advice and support on community issues. The work involves liaison with schools and thereafter undertaking of enforcement procedures as required.

Rationale for Service Change

This service is a statutory requirement. This savings proposal is to reduce the service to a minimum statutory requirement. Pupil attendance in our schools is good when benchmarked against our statistical neighbours. Future provision will be focused on the truly vulnerable pupils and schools.

Financial Savings

This will bring a saving of £100K. This can be achieved by service restructure and the deletion of 2 full time equivalent posts.

Service Implications and Impact

The reduction of posts will require application of the Council's Management of Change Policy.

Some schools may receive reduced levels of support.

CS3 Removal of processes supporting regulatory activity - Efficiency

Background

This removes work on performance monitoring that will become, or has already become, deregulated. This will be a cross directorate saving as there are regulatory systems across the directorate.

Rationale for Service Change

This efficiency builds on the Government's intention to deregulate activities on performance reporting and some work done currently in Youth Justice reporting. There will be a reduction of support for some assessment procedures that schools and partners are now using more consistently as good practice is embedded. The cancelling of the Contact Point programme gives early evidence of deregulation. Some technology based applications will also be disappplied.

Financial Savings

This will bring a saving of £100K. This can be achieved by service restructure and the deletion of 4 full time equivalent posts and some rearranging the work of other part time staff.

Service Implications and Impact

The reduction of posts will require application of the Council's Management of Change Policy.

Information currently collected will no longer be part of the Council's performance management information.

CS6 Strategic Commissioning of Social Care Placements and Interventions - Efficiency

Background

Strategic commissioning contracts for providing social care interventions are subject to on-going review. Whilst these contracts are monitored to secure high quality child protection practices, value for money challenge can still be applied.

Rationale for Service Change

The focus of the re-commissioning of contracts will be to ensure best value and continued high quality. In 2012/13, we will work through early intervention strategies to seek to replace high cost interventions with more preventative work earlier in the cycle of difficulty.

Financial Savings

This will bring a saving of £230K in 2011/12 and £500K in 2012/13.

Service Implications and Impact

Those contracts for providing social care interventions subject to renewal will be subject to a re-commissioning approach.

The voluntary and third sector may gain or lose contracts.

CS7 Workforce Strategy - Efficiency

Background

The Workforce Strategy concentrates on the recruitment, retention, status and training of the wider workforce involved in service provision for Children. The team will be refocused to provide the statutory minimum service.

Rationale for Service Change

This is a statutory requirement. This proposal reduces activity to statutory minimum with a focus on child protection. Less work will be undertaken directly with schools. In line with the Council's Education Vision schools will be encouraged to support each other through their Trusts, Federations and Partnerships. The Council will retain a strategic leadership role by brokering partnerships. Partners such as Health professionals will have joint responsibility with the Council, through the Children's Trust or its replacement partnership arrangements, to ensure workforce development needs are met.

Financial Savings

This will bring a saving of £100K in 2011/12 and £100K in 2012/13. This will be achieved by a reduction of 4 full time equivalent posts.

Service Implications and Impact

The reduction of posts will require application of the Council's Management of Change Policy.

Schools and partners are likely to see a reduction in levels of support but will still receive statutory support.

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Customer & Shared Services

C&SS1 SAP Licensing– Efficiency

Background

SAP licences are on a named user basis. There are approximately 951 licences in use at this time. With a complete change to the process of procurement on SAP the current 279 SAP procurement users could be reduced down to around 60. Each licence saved will reduce our fees to SAP on an annual basis.

Rationale for Service Change

Procurement via SAP being reduced to around 60 key individuals will maximise skills and deliver efficiency savings.

Financial Savings

Estimated savings of £86,000 are anticipated from this change of SAP procurement.

Service Implications and Impact

Procurement specialists may not be able to cope with the number of procurements required.

C&SS2 Ampthill Customer Services Closure– Efficiency

Background

Customer Service Centres were opened in Biggleswade and Ampthill in March 2006 as part of the Mid Bedfordshire Council's move to Priory House, maintaining a presence in the 2 major towns in the area. Customer Service Centres were opened in Leighton Buzzard in April 2007 and Houghton Regis in September 2009. The Council offices in Priory House and Dunstable also have a Customer Service Centre.

Footfall at Houghton Regis has been low, averaging 224 customers per calendar month and is being replaced with a Customer Access Point during the financial year 2010/11.

Ampthill Customer Service Centre also does not have a high footfall, averaging approximately 478 customers per calendar month.

Amphill Customer Service Centre is staffed by 3FTE Customer Service Advisors and the Team Manager has responsibility for the Customer Service Centres at Amphill, Biggleswade and Priory House.

Rationale for Service Change

Closure of Amphill Customer Service Centre would enable cost savings in respect of staff costs and release the majority of the building for other use by Central Bedfordshire Council.

Amphill is equi-distant between Priory House and Dunstable offices allowing customers access to face to face service within 10 miles.

This closure would not prevent the longer term ambitions of Total Place to create a Community hub in the Flitwick area.

Financial Savings

A reduction of 2 FTE CSA. 1 FTE CSA would be retained to manage expected increased footfall at Priory House.

Year 1 savings £50K

Service Implications and Impact

This should be considered in conjunction with the Total Place agenda of co location with DWP in the longer term.

C&SS4 Mouchel Contract

Background

The previous County Council contract with Mouchel for design and related services came to a natural end on 30th September 2010.

Rationale for Service change

Mouchel staff had a right to transfer to the Council at the end of the contract under the TUPE employment regulations.

Financial Savings

Full year savings, inclusive of a £150,000 reduction in the property maintenance budget are now estimated at £450,000.

Service Implications and Impact

None in the short term, pending decisions about the provision and management of the Assets Division.

C&SS5 Finance : Business Support to Schools – Efficiency

Background

The Council is required to provide a statutory finance function to schools in respect of issuing, monitoring and adherence to guidelines and financial regulations, managing the Dedicated Schools Grant to be allocated via a locally determined formula to provide individual school budgets as well as

financial reporting (e.g. S251). This is provided by the school's finance team in Business Finance .The team totals 7.9 FTE. The DSG totals £147M and Formula Capital Grant £5M.

Rationale for Service Change

Currently the Council supports two systems for banking and financial reporting arrangements for schools. By moving all schools to being fully funded and maintaining their own bank accounts this will reduce workload in the team allowing for the reduction of 1 School Financial adviser post.

Financial Implications

An estimated saving of £18k 20011/12 (£38k full year) can be achieved by this proposal.

Service Implications and Impact

There will be a reduction of 1 FTE post requiring application of the Council's Management of Change Policy.

C&SS6 Finance Strategy Team - Efficiency

Background

The Financial Strategy Team provides key support to the business in all aspects of financial accounting including budget strategy, preparation of the annual accounts, capital accounting, income services, insurance services and financial controls. The team totals supports financial accounting of the Council's net revenue budget of £177M and £30M annual capital budget.

Rationale for Service Change

On transition to Central Bedfordshire Council as from 1 April 2009, the authority inherited a number of control and suspense accounts from the predecessor authorities, including the maintenance of the bank accounts associated with Bedfordshire County Council. The authority has subsequently invested a large amount of time and effort in reducing the number of control and suspense accounts it maintains and improving the procedures that support the reconciliation and justification of the balances held. Where the authority is able to gain adequate additional assurance over the reconciliation procedures it is recommended that the frequency of reconciliations is reduced according to risk and value / volumes of transactional activity within the accounts.

Financial Savings

An estimated saving of £38k in 2011/12 (£38k full year) can be achieved by reducing the number of financial advisers by 1 FTE.

Service Implications and Impact

There will be a reduction of 1 FTE posts requiring application of the Council's Management of Change Policy. There will be a reduction in the frequency of control and suspense accounts, where appropriate, and the authority must effectively manage the risk of failing to maintain adequate financial control.

C&SS8 HR: Review of payroll provision - Efficiency

Background

Provision of the payroll service to the Authority is outsourced to Serco. The current contract with Serco requires 12 months notice of termination, and early contract termination incurs a financial penalty.

There are a range of options in terms of the future delivery model - e.g. re-negotiated contract with current external provider; bring in-house and deliver at reduced cost; re-tender; shared service arrangements.

Rationale for Service Change

Any proposal for change needs to support the HR delivery model, and create efficiencies. The current contract is expensive, and there is a resulting high charge to schools for payroll provision which does not recover full costs.

Financial Savings

Depending on the model of delivery to be followed, there is a possible partial offsetting of the contract termination penalty during 2011/12, but full year savings can only be achieved in 2012/13.

Savings are estimated as £18,000 in 2011/12, and £107,000 in 2012/13.

Service Implications and Impact

Alternative or renegotiated arrangements will mean a reduction in headcount, a reduced charge to schools, and a more streamlined service.

C&SS9 Legal and Democratic Services: Review of Legal & Democratic Services - Efficiency

Background

Following the departure of two senior members of staff the structure of Democratic Services has been reviewed. The posts of AD Governance and Head of Democratic Services have been removed and their roles and responsibilities have been re-allocated to other senior managers.

Changes are also proposed to team structures so that the Committee Services will have a "flattened" structure and Electoral Services and Local Land Charges will be merged.

Rationale for Service Change

The proposals will allow for greater flexibility to take account of significant peaks and troughs in workload at certain times. Staff will also be expected to undertake work in different disciplines as the demand dictates.

Financial Savings

An estimated saving of £150,000 can be achieved by this proposal.

Service Implications and Impact

There will be a reduction of 4.2 fte posts requiring the application of the Council's Management of Change Policy.

C&SS10 Legal and Democratic Services: Members Allowance - Efficiency

Background

Reduction in number of Members from 66 to 59 will result in a reduction in the allowances payable.

Rationale for Service Change

The change is a result of the decision made by the Electoral Commission to reduce the number of elected members.

Financial Savings

An estimated saving of £80,000 can be achieved by this proposal based on a reduction of 7 basic allowances @ £11,000 each.

Service Implications and Impact

The change will result in an increase in the size of wards in some areas and may mean increased workload for remaining members.

C&SS12 Finance :Business Support – Efficiency

Background

The Financial Management Team supports the Service Directorates in all aspects of financial management including budget preparation, budget strategy and financial planning, budget monitoring and final accounts. The team totals 21.3 FTE and supports financial management of the Council's net revenue budget of £177M and £63M annual capital budget.

Rationale for Service Change

The production of the annual Statement of Accounts is a statutory function and sound financial management and financial control of the organisation is imperative in the provision of these accounts. The cessation of financial support to the service directorates, although a discretionary service, would severely put at risk the financial standing of the organisation.

Financial Savings

An estimated saving of £37k in 2011/12 (£113k full year) can be achieved by reducing the number of financial advisers by 4 FTE.

Service Implications and Impact

There will be a reduction of 4 FTE posts requiring application of the Council's Management of Change Policy. There will be a reduction in service to the Directorates and is dependent on improved business processes, self sufficiency and improved financial competencies of cost centre managers.

C&SS 13 Review of Service Provision in Assets - Efficiency

Background

Assets Division in Customer and Shared Services now includes the ex-Mouchel contract team.

Rationale for Service Change

There is an opportunity to undertake an initial rationalisation and consolidation of staffing in Assets, pending strategic decisions about delivery mechanisms for the service as a whole.

Financial Savings

Full year annual savings of the order of £140,000 from April 2011, in relation to staffing (approx 5 FTE's).

Service Implications and Impact

The consolidation process is a reflection of the fact that short term efficiencies can be identified following the TUPE transfer of the ex-Mouchel staff to the existing CBC Assets team.

C&SS 15 Registration Services – Efficiency

Background

Central Bedfordshire manages the shared Registration Service on behalf of both Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough Councils. It provides Register Offices in Ampthill, Bedford, Biggleswade, Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard for taking of notices and conducting ceremonies.

Rationale for Service Change

Dunstable Register Office in Grove House, Dunstable is leased from Dunstable Town Council. The rental costs are not covered by the income generated from ceremonies performed in the marriage room.

The lease expires in March 2011, providing an opportunity to move the Registrar to the Council offices in Dunstable to undertake the taking of notices for Births, Marriages and Deaths. Due to the requirement to provide 12 months notice to the General Register Office of a change in ceremony venue, the

Financial Savings

An annual saving of £20,000 is expected to be achieved through relocation of the Registrar to the Council Offices in Dunstable. This is reduced in 2011/12 to £8,000 due to partial occupancy in this year

Service Implications and Impact

There is no legal requirement for the Council to provide a ceremony venue in Dunstable. However, it may be considered as a reduction in service to the residents of Dunstable and the surrounding area. Consideration is being given to licensing the Registrars office in the Council offices in Dunstable to perform ceremonies at the statutory fee of £40 (2 witnesses and the couple) to mitigate this.

Dunstable Town Council would be able to license the marriage room in Grove House as an Approved Venue. This would allow the facility to be retained, but the fees would be set by the Town Council.

There is no impact on the Registrar by moving location to the Council office.

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Office of the Chief Executive

OCE1 Reduction of staffing - Efficiency

Background

This proposal relates to a reduction in staffing across the Office of the Chief Executive. Specifically:

- 2 posts from the Overview and Scrutiny Team
- Performance Improvement Manager
- Performance Officer
- Programme Management Team Leader
- Designer
- Project Support Officer
- Business Support Officer

Rationale

The proposed staffing reductions are made in the context of the streamlining of back office services. Whilst the office has taken on additional responsibilities, such as the Council's strategic risk management function with no additional resources, other developments such as the abolition of the CAA proposal have released capacity.

The proposal relating to a reduction in the Overview and Scrutiny Support Team is based on a shift towards the Directorates providing support to their respective Overview & Scrutiny Committees with forward planning and Democratic Services bring responsible for arranging and administering all meetings. In addition, the Chief Executive and AD Strategy and Performance will continue to provide strategic input.

Financial Savings

The estimated savings for 2011/12 are £0.338m.

Service Implications and Impact

The internal impact of the reduction to the Overview and Scrutiny Team will be on Directors or nominated directorate leads, who will need to have a close involvement with O&S forward planning, and Democratic Services who will be fully managing agendas and production of minutes etc for all aspects OSCs. The impact to Members will be a reduction in officer capacity to undertake research and to support the development of items for OSCs.

The proposed reduction in the Council's in-house design capability reflects the Council's plans to reduce significantly the volume of professionally designed publications through a series of measures, including a drive toward on line publishing and the use of templates. Where design is required, it will be outsourced to an approved list of external suppliers.

In addition, the proposals entail a reduction in general corporate capacity.

OCE2 Reduction of miscellaneous Non-Pay items - Efficiency

Background

This proposal relates to a reduction of spend on miscellaneous non-pay items.

Rationale

This is a simple cost saving initiative within the Office and factors in corporate savings initiatives in, for example, Procurement.

Financial Savings

The estimated savings for 2011/12 are £0.024m.

Service Implications and Impact

There are no staffing implications as this will reduce levels of spend on items such as printing, training, events, development of e-learning materials, stationery etc.

OCE3 Further rationalisation of senior management arrangements in OCE - Efficiency

Background

This proposal relates to further rationalisation of senior management arrangements in the office and specifically a reduction from three Heads of Service to two.

Rationale

This proposal is in response to general reduction in corporate capacity.

Financial Savings

Part of this resource will be used to create some capacity to undertake corporate risk management work, a responsibility recently transferred to the Office without resource. However, £0.030m savings will be achieved in 2011/12.

Service Implications and Impact

There will be no need for a redundancy process as one of the Heads of Service has since taken up another position in another Directorate. This has provided the opportunity to activate the office's further planned contribution to the Council's Senior Management Review and the 'Partnerships and Insight' team and 'Performance, Risk and Customer Relations' team have now been merged into a single Partnerships and Performance team.

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Social Care, Health & Housing

SCHH1 Review of Management Posts – Efficiency

Background

The current directorate management structure consists of four Assistant Directors (AD) and eleven Heads of Service (HoS).

Rationale for Service Change

Reduce the Adult Social Care management structure by one FTE.

Financial Implications

It is estimated that reducing the structure will deliver £60,000 of savings in 2011/12.

Service Implications and Impact

This should lead to more efficient use of management resources. There would be a need to allow 90 days consultation with the employees concerned.

SCHH2 Harmonisation of Housing Needs - Service Efficiency

Background

The Housing Needs service i.e. homelessness advice, housing options and the housing register are currently provided by Aragon Housing Association in the north of the Central Bedfordshire area and by the in-house team in the south of the area.

Rationale for Service Change

Bringing this provision together under one provider will deliver efficiencies and a consistent approach across Central Bedfordshire.

Financial Implications

It is estimated that a total efficiency of £90,000 can be made in 2011/12 if this service is delivered by one provider. Initial estimations were made when setting the 2010/11 budget and as a result £70,000 was projected to be achieved in 2011/12. Subsequent discussions have added a further £20,000 to that target to make the full £90,000. It is estimated that further efficiencies will be achieved in 2012/13.

Service Implications and Impact

A major reorganisation may involve tendering the service. There will be staffing implications and TUPE could apply to both the internal or Aragon employees.

SCHH3 Review of Management resources in Housing – Service Efficiency

Background

The current Housing management structure consists of thirteen managers below Head of Service (HoS).

Rationale for Service Change

A skill mix exercise will be undertaken to ensure that there are appropriate management arrangements in place to deliver the Council's housing agenda. As a result the Council would look to reduce the number of managers by 2 FTEs.

Financial Savings

An estimated saving of £75,000 could be made in 2011/12 with potential further savings over the next two years.

Service Implications and Impact

This should lead to more efficient use of management resources. There would be a need to allow 90 days consultation with the employees concerned.

SCHH4 Change the 'skill mix' in Assessment and Care Management Teams – Efficiency

Background

The current Assessment and Care Management teams arrange adult social care support for older people, people with disability and learning disabilities. They are made up of 67 professionally qualified Social Workers (78%) and 19 Community Support workers (22%). The approach to delivering adult social care is changing with more emphasis on self assessment and personal budgets that will require our workforce to have a broader range of skills.

Rationale for Service Change

Changing the skill mix will reduce the cost of the services. This would mean a reduction in the number of professionally qualified staff and their work would be directed towards more complex cases (e.g. safeguarding and complex needs). We would look to increase the number of Community Support Workers who would focus on assisting customers with support planning to achieve the personalisation agenda.

Financial Implications

It is estimated that a total efficiency of £150,000 will be made in 2011/12 and further efficiencies will be achieved in the following years.

Service Implications and Impact

There would be a need to allow 90 days consultation with the employees concerned and this may cause concern amongst the Council's current adult social care customers.

SCHH5 Efficiencies in Care Management – Efficiency

Background

The current Assessment and Care Management teams are made up of 67 professional Social Workers, 19 Community Support workers and a number of support staff including administration and brokers.

Rationale for Service Change

Introduction of changes to the customer pathway and a greater use of ICT based systems should result in a lower number of assessments undertaken with a greater emphasis on self-assessment.

Financial Implications

It is estimated that a saving of £50,000 will be made in 2011/12 by reducing staff numbers by 2 FTEs. Further efficiencies are anticipated over the next two years.

Service Implications and Impact

There would be a need to allow 90 days consultation with the employees concerned and this may cause concern amongst the Councils current adult social care customers.

SCHH6 More effective deployment of council resources across the reablement service and extra care sheltered housing – Efficiency

Background

We currently have home care teams at Quince Court, St Georges Court, Red House Court and Lavender Court with a total salary budget of £1.07m. Unit cost analysis suggests it is a costly service and that staff could be more effectively redeployed within the council's reablement service. The council will then consider alternative forms of support in the Courts.

Rationale for Service Change

Better use of staffing resources.

Financial Implications

It is estimated that a saving of £200,000 will be made in 2011/12.

Service Implications and Impact

There will be a need to consult with customers, partners and relatives and allow 90 day staff consultation. Current customers may well be anxious about the potential change.

SCHH7 Streamline the in-house services for People with Learning Disabilities – Efficiency

Background

The current Domiciliary Care (including Respite Services) and Assessment & Resettlement service supports adults with learning disabilities in supported living environments. The team has 57 full time equivalents with a total salary budget of £1.64m

Rationale for Service Change

Better use of in house staffing resources and more flexible opportunities for customers.

Financial Implications

There will be a potential reduction on 6 FTEs which will deliver a saving of £150,000 in 2011/12. There are also potential efficiency savings in future years.

Service Implications and Impact

There will be no direct impact on our customers although there will be a need to allow a 90 day staff consultation and current customers may be concerned.

SCHH8 Streamline the Management Structure at Linsell House – Efficiency

Background

There are five managers in the current structure at Linsell House which is a care home and residential respite centre for adults with learning disabilities.

Rationale for Service Change

Reduce the number of managers from five to three to make better use of management resources.

Financial Implications

It is estimated that a saving of £70,000 will be made in 2011/12.

Service Implications and Impact

There will be no direct impact on our customers. Staff consultation has been completed and the restructure is in progress as some savings were attributed to 2010/11.

SCHH9 Maximise use of block purchase home care services – Efficiency

Background

There are four block contracts covering most of Central Bedfordshire costing £12.57m.

Rationale for Service Change

Maximise the use of these block contracts as the block price is advantageous to the council.

Financial Implications

It is estimated that a saving of £50,000 will be made in 2011/12.

Service Implications and Impact

New customers will be encouraged to use block contractors rather than a provider of choice. This may result in opposition from current providers and reduced choice for our customers.

SCHH10 Increase the use of block purchased care – Efficiency

Background

The Council currently has residential care block contracts to the value of £22.8m for older people and adults with a learning disability. The latter were inherited as part of the learning disability commissioning funding transfer from the PCT.

Rationale for Service Change

The council will encourage, as first option, its customers to use the block contracts. Where this is not possible, in that an individual's need would not be met, then the council will make use of a homefinder service. This homefinder service will also secure residential respite care placements and there will be a consistency of fees payable.

Financial Implications

It is estimated that an efficiency of £150,000 will be made in 2011/12 if there is an increase the use of these contracts. Future savings are anticipated in future years.

Service Implications and Impact

This will lead to a reduction in choice for customers, who with their families may challenge the council. Additionally other local care home providers may challenge the council.

SCHH11 Renegotiation of high cost residential placements – Efficiency

Background

The residential placement budgets for Physical Disability and Learning Disability are £16.57m. A number of these placements are outside of Central Bedfordshire and have been negotiated on an individual basis. The Council will continue to commission an agency, with a national database, to effectively challenge the individual placement costs. The agency will commence with the highest 50 cost placements and over the next 2-3 years will consider all of the high cost placements.

Rationale for Service Change

Reduce the high cost residential placements and introduce changes to block purchasing for these groups.

Financial Implications

It is estimated that a saving of £500,000 will be made in 2011/12. Future savings are anticipated but not in the same order.

Service Implications and Impact

There should be no impact on the quality of care to customers although this may result in opposition from current providers. Contract negotiations need to be carried out.

**SCHH12 End the Service level Agreement for Business Support–
Efficiency****Background**

A Service Level Agreement is in place with Bedford Borough Council to provide some business and administration support to the directorate around its adult social care services especially its care services.

Rationale for Service Change

By terminating the shared service, local managers will manage the business and administrative support to the services.

Financial Implications

It is estimated that a saving of £80,000 will be made in 2011/12.

Service Implications and Impact

Need to formally terminate the Shared Service Agreement with Bedford Borough Council. The TUPE implications are currently being investigated. This will not impact on the Council's Customers.

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Sustainable Communities

HT1 Replace illuminated bollards with reflective ones and turn off street lighting between 2400 and 0600 daily - Efficiency

Background

The Council is responsible for the maintenance of 21,000 street lights and 2,000 illuminated bollards.

Rationale for Service Change

Replacing illuminated bollards with high reflective versions will reduce energy consumption and maintenance costs. Approximately one third could be replaced per year as part of the routine lamp change and cleaning process.

Turning off or dimming street lights between 24:00 and 06:00 will reduce the Council's energy costs.

Financial Savings

An estimated saving of £55,000 can be achieved each year by this proposal. There will be implementation costs of approximately £135k per annum for 3 years associated with this saving – which would come from the existing capital allocation budget.

Service Implications and Impact

If illuminated bollard replacements are made they would comply with Department Transport standards to maintain road safety. Switching off street lighting would need community support. There may be issues around fear of crime in some locations.

There are no staffing implications.

HT2 Car Parking and Resident Permit Scheme – Efficiency

Background

The current cost of a resident Parking Permit is £20. The issue of the permits is subject to criteria being met but there is no restriction on the number of permits per household for those living in the specified area.

Dispensations are issued at no charge – which (for certain activities) permit vehicles to remain lawfully in places where parking restrictions would not normally allow.

No visitor permits are available to residents within the Residents' Parking Zones.

Rationale for Service Change

Realignment of the permit charging structure to more closely match neighbouring authorities by increasing the permit charge to £50 per annum. Also, an incremental increased fee charged for permits in respect of 2nd and 3rd vehicles registered to an address - £70 fee for a second vehicle and £90 fee for a third vehicle.

A charge for dispensations at £20 per week, or £5 daily.

A book of 25 visitor's day tickets for £50.

Financial Implications

An estimated saving of £70,000 can be achieved by this proposal.

Service Implications and Impact

Parking policy would be more consistent with other Councils.

There are no staffing implications.

HT3 Reduce lump sum allocations in the Highways 'Managing Agent Contract' – Efficiency

Background

The Council's highway services are provided by a private company through a Managing Agent Contract.

Rationale for Service Change

The contract contains a payment structure including lump sum revenue payments for a wide range of activities. It is proposed to work with the contractor to find savings from these.

Financial Savings

An estimated saving of £50,000 can be achieved by this proposal.

Service Implications and Impact

The savings will be sought from the professional and administrative services of the contractor – rather than frontline activity such as road repairs. Staff employed directly by the Council will not be affected.

CSPPWL1 Public Protection – reconfiguration and restructure of management, licensing and administrative support - Efficiency

Background

Public Protection provides a wide range of statutory services in support of local businesses and protection of public health. This includes environmental health, trading standards, licensing, emergency planning and business continuity and the financial investigations unit.

Administration posts support this activity.

Rationale for Service Change

To contribute to the corporate savings target.

In respect of licensing and administrative support the harmonisation of legacy authority arrangements, commissioning of a new computer system and business process re-engineering enable a rationalisation of licensing and administrative support without compromising on front line delivery.

Financial Savings

An estimated saving of £230,000 can be achieved.

Service Implications and Impact

The deletion of four team leader posts for Public Protection, replaced with two Service Manager posts. 4 full time employees reduced to 2.

There is capacity within the service to manage the licensing and administration functions by technical staff and specialist administrators. There will be a reduction from 12.1 to 7.5 full time employee posts.

CSPPWL2 Leisure Services: a combination of removal of security and cleaning in vicinity of Grove Theatre in Dunstable, deletion of two posts and reduction in SLA recharge for Leisure Outdoor Education - Efficiency

Background

Leisure Services provides a range of leisure and sports development activities. These include management of Leisure Centres and Grove Theatre, sports development, play and open space to help support people access and participate in sports, play and leisure activities.

Rationale for Service Change

The service contract for security and cleaning in the Grove Theatre area in Dunstable is being removed (£50k annual cost).

The Sports Development post and the Open Spaces Technical Officer posts can be deleted with limited impact.

To reduce the subsidy provided by CBC to the Leisure Outdoors Education SLA (Blue Peris, Kempston Activity Centre and Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme).

Financial Savings

An estimated saving of £120,000 could be made by this proposal in 2011/12.

Service Implications and Impact

Reduction in or loss of cleaning and security services around the Grove Theatre area may impact on other businesses in this area. Staff directly employed by the Council will not be affected.

Sports Development post is deleted and CBC uses £8,500 per year for 3 years (£25,000 required) to a Football Development post hosted by Bedford

FA. Sports development continues via external funds. Reduction in one full time employee.

Open Spaces Technical Officer post is deleted, this provides technical support, site visits and monitoring and can be absorbed by other officers in the team. Reduction in one full-time employee.

Reduction in SLA recharge – options include increasing income from school groups and other users to reflect cost of running centre.

P3 Joint Technical Unit (JTU) office relocated from rented offices in Luton to Technology House saving on rental payments - Efficiency

Background

The Joint Planning Committee currently oversees LDF preparation for Luton and Southern Central Bedfordshire. This arrangement ends on 31/03/12. The JTU services the Committee and currently operates from rented offices in Luton. However, there is a break clause in the rental agreement which allows the rental to cease in May 2011. From an efficiency perspective, a saving can be made by providing staff the space to relocate with the CBC Development Plan Team in Technology House. Both CBC and Luton Borough Council will save money through this arrangement.

Rationale for Service Change

This is an efficiency saving which can be actioned without any substantial change in the level of service being offered. Office rental is currently £86,000 per annum (split 50/50 between the partnering authorities, equates to £43,000). Taking account of the ongoing costs of relocating staff (Appendix E mileage payments), annual savings of £35,000 can be achieved.

Financial Savings

£35,000

Service Implications and Impact

None, though the team would be less conveniently located to the Luton/Southern Central Bedfordshire area, increasing travel to occasional site visits.

P4 Reduction in resource to input into Regional/Sub-Regional Planning - Efficiency

Background

The new Coalition Government announced its clear intention to abolish Regional Spatial Strategies earlier in the summer. In response to this announcement, work on the East of England Plan Review ceased immediately and in future local authorities will rely on preparing their local development frameworks against locally agreed housing targets etc.

Rationale for Service Change

In the past the Development Plan Team has contributed significantly to regional planning and strategy development work, but moving forward, whilst cross-authority liaison and local joint working will continue, there will be very little formal regional work which the team would be expected to contribute to. In this light, it is considered that officer resource can be reduced in area by 1 FTE.

Financial Savings

£50,000

Service Implications and Impact

Specialist regional planning knowledge will be lost from within the team, though its role in future is likely to be very limited in light of the move towards localism.

1 FTE Reduction

P5 Reduction in Biodiversity Officer and Countryside Officer resource as a result of dissolution of shared funding arrangements. - Efficiency

Background

The Biodiversity Officer and the County Countryside Officer are jointly funded between Central Beds, Bedford, Luton, Natural England and the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Service (FWAG) and deliver on a range of functions across the County.

Rationale for Service Change

Both Bedford and Luton have recently confirmed they will not be contributing to the posts next year and funding from Natural England is presently uncertain. FWAG have confirmed that they will continue to contribute funding at the same level. Without contributions from Bedford and Luton, CBC can no longer afford to fund this post.

Countryside Officer: This post helps to bring in significant grant income to the Council and local farming community through Environmental Stewardship etc. Some of that grant is important in helping the Council manage its own land assets. Without partner funding, it is proposed that this post only deal with Central Beds issues and it is therefore proposed to reduce the hours to 3 days a week.

Financial Savings

£10,000

Service Implications and Impact

None in Central Bedfordshire.

1.4 FTE Reduction

P7 Development Management Restructure - Efficiency

Background

Development Management provides a wide range of statutory and non statutory services associated with the determination of planning applications, planning control and the delivery of high quality and sustainable development.

Rationale for Service Change

Bringing together the legacy authorities in a single location, business process re-engineering work currently underway, introduction of a new computer system and the appointment of a single Head of Development Management will allow the realignment of the structure below management/team leader level without compromising this essential frontline service. Re-prioritising some elements of work will assist in maintaining quality and timeliness of determining planning applications.

Financial Savings

£210,000 estimated.

Service Implications and Impact

It is considered that if properly managed, a net reduction in FTE can be accommodated without a reduction in the level of service to customers or the quality of development delivered.

4FTE Reduction

P8 Increasing of fees for range of services – Efficiency

Background

There are a number of planning services for which an administration fee can be levied. These include, S106 (Statutory Planning Obligations), S38 (Highway Agreements (Adoption)), S278 (Highway Agreements by Highways Development Control) and the ability to charge for pre-application advice.

Rationale for Service Change

The statutory fees that are levied were reviewed in comparison to neighbouring authorities and found to be low compared to the regional average. Increasing these fees would bring Central Bedfordshire Council in line with the region.

Financial Savings

£260,000

Service Implications and Impact

The additional income will help maintain levels of service provision and will have no negative impact on the service. The charge for 'pre-app' advice could lead to increased expectations of timely and comprehensive advice supplied. Customer care and management will need to be managed.

P9 Building Control Restructure - Efficiency

Background

Building Control provides a wide range of statutory services in support of local business including Building Regulations, Dangerous Structures, Demolitions, Accessibility, Street Naming and Land Drainage.

Rationale for Service Change

The economic downturn has resulted in reduced income for building control and the level of resource the team is currently able to support. Bringing together the two legacy teams within a single location and the introduction of a new computer system also enables efficiencies to be made.

Financial Implications

£50,000 saving in 2011/12 to the Council, majority of the saving to the trading accounts.

Service Implications and Impact

The restructure will deliver a reduction of 3.0 FTEs.

SAVING PROPOSALS

EFFICIENCIES

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

CROSS CUTTING EFFICIENCIES

CC1 Income Revenue - Efficiency

Background

A recent high level benchmarking exercise suggested CBC's income levels against expenditure are generally lower than our peers. The Corporate Management Team have commissioned a fast-paced project in partnership with PwC to identify opportunities for income growth.

Rationale

This project will focus on "Revenue Income Optimisation (RIO)" which aims to maximise current and new sources of income for the Council through the identification of a range of income opportunities across Council services. The project will therefore look to work with all Directorates to identify any cost-effective income opportunities to:-

- Restructure existing fees
- Agree new income streams
- Enhance commercial cost recovery
- Maximise trading services opportunities
- Better target concessions to those who need them

Financial Savings

Based upon PwC's experience of successfully delivering these types of projects with 16 other LA's, and 9 more currently, their initial estimate is that the Council should be able to generate business cases with a net benefit of several £m savings over the next three years, £1.5m is anticipated for 2011/12.. Where possible, the project will aim to deliver some quick wins that generate some extra income in 2010/11.

The implementation costs associated with delivering the income opportunities resulting from this project will be detailed within the individual business cases.

Service Implications and Impact

The project costs to develop opportunities and associated Business Cases are split between a £40k flat fee, plus a variable fee (based upon the amount of additional income that is identified over a 3 year period).

The services that will be impacted by this project will be identified during the income opportunity workshops (being run in October 2010) and prioritised by the Income Board before being developed into business cases.

CC6 Passenger Transport Review - Efficiency

Background

The Council funds home to school transport; transporting of vulnerable adults; and the maintenance of uneconomic public bus services to enable residents to access a wide range of services and facilitates.

Rationale for Change

This comprehensive review of all the Council's passenger transport services as well as some transport services provided by the NHS and voluntary and community sector organisations, will both

- inform the service plan element of Local Transport Plan 3; and
- recommend changes that will deliver passenger transport services that are safe, effective and fit for purpose, within controlled budgets and an up-to-date policy framework.

Financial Savings

An estimated saving of £1.050M in 2011/12 can be achieved by this proposal.

Service Implications and Impact

These will be identified through a range of detailed policy review reports being considered by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee for decision by Executive.

CC7 Procurement - Efficiency

Background

This theme involves streamlining the number of staff who are able to requisition goods and services from circa 400 to around 50. This will improve compliance with corporate procurement contracts and ensure more efficient and effective procurement practices.

It also focuses on seven key corporate procurement contracts where there are opportunities to reduce unit costs and manage the demand more effectively hence, reducing overall expenditure. These include:- Distributed Printing Managed Service; Advertising Services; Consultancy; Travel, Hotel Accommodation and Venue Hire; Stationery; Temporary Staff and Corporate Print Services.

Rationale for Service Changes

The changes include: streamlining requisitioning, improving specification practice, sourcing, demand management, contract compliance and contract management of generic corporate supplies and services.

Financial Savings

Savings across all the elements of this initiative are projected at £1m per annum.

Service Implications and Impact

The procurement and contract management initiatives will improve supplies and services and lower costs across all directorates. No FTE reductions are assumed within this proposal.

CC2 & CC14 to CC21 Customer Management & Web Transformation – Efficiency

Background

This cross cutting programme is to develop a council-wide approach that shifts inbound and simple transactions to preferred and more cost effective channels, supported by a single view of the customer. The objective is to ensure that wherever, whenever and however customers seek to access our services they get the right level of service, first time and as efficiently and effectively as possible. It consists of four primary work streams.

- Web Strategy Channel Migration: Transform capability to offer services and deliver business processes online
- Migration of Services into Customer Services: Continue to develop, design and implement a standard approach to the migration of services into Customer Services.
- Improve process efficiency and consistency of delivery by the implementation of a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system.
- Process Transformation: To enable the whole organisation to provide our customers with the service they require, how, when and where they want to access it. Office processes will have to be re-designed to meet the customer requirements and aid self service delivery.

Rationale for Service Change

This will deliver efficiencies through avoidance of process duplication and fragmentation. It will reduce processes that require multiple hand offs and drive increased first point resolution. It shift transactions to lower cost access channels (Web & Telephone). It will improve the Customer 'journey' - increasing customer satisfaction and lead to a reduction in avoidable contact. The council will be able to have a single view of the services consumed by the customer.

Financial Savings

The programme is estimated to save approximately £1.2M over a five year period.

Service Implications and Impact

The implications on staffing if all four work streams deliver as expected is difficult to predict at this time but assuming that the savings are made as anticipated in 2011/12 this equates to a reduction of 12 FTE across the Council.

CC22 to CC29 Energy Efficiency Programme – Efficiency

Background

The Council is a major user of energy which has a direct cost and which also means that the Council is compulsorily required to participate in the Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Efficiency Scheme which includes financial incentives for organisations to become more energy efficient. This is aimed at reducing the carbon footprint of organisations.

Rationale for Change

The Council has adopted a Climate Change Strategy to reduce its carbon footprint for the wider benefit of society and to put the Council in a strong position to perform well in the Carbon Reduction Commitment Scheme. Specific measures will be set out in the Carbon Management Plan to follow.

Financial Savings

The estimated savings are to be confirmed and will be set out in the Carbon Management Plan.

Service Implications and Impact

These will be set out in the Carbon Management Plan

CC30 Employee Terms and Conditions of Service - Efficiency

Background

Employee costs make up a significant part of the Council's expenditure in delivering a wide range of services. (£90M per annum). A number of "terms and conditions of service" costs within this amount are open to local determination.

Rationale for Service Change

In the extremely challenging context of the Council's financial position it is appropriate to seek to reduce the cost of providing services by reducing this major spend area, rather than reducing an equivalent value of actual services.

Financial Savings

A target saving of £1M is to be achieved. Implementation will be over the two financial years 2011/12 and 2012/13.

Service Implications and Impact

The aim of this proposal is to reduce cost without reducing service levels. The specific measures to achieve the target savings will be the subject of negotiation with recognised trade unions through the collective bargaining arrangements.

CC32 Assets Rationalisation - Efficiency

Background

Consideration is being given to rationalisation of 53 existing corporate buildings. 13 leased buildings have been identified which can be vacated over the next four financial years.

Rationale for Service Change

Revenue saving efficiencies can be maximised by vacating leased properties, this is considered achievable for these 13 leases linked to optimising flexible working and staff reductions.

Financial Savings

£900k per annum by end of year 4 (£500k from Technology House). Similarly at least £100k revenue can be saved by declaring surplus and disposing of freehold properties. Actual costs of flexible working will have to be set against these savings.

Service Implications and Impact

The rationalisation process is primarily limited to a major move to flexible working by the Authority.