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26 November 2019

To: The Leader – Councillor Bridget Smith
Deputy Leader (Statutory) – Councillor Dr. Aidan Van de Weyer
Members of the Cabinet – Councillors Neil Gough, Bill Handley,
Dr. Tumi Hawkins, Hazel Smith and John Williams
Quorum: Majority of the Cabinet including the Leader or Deputy Leader (Statutory)

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend the next meeting of **CABINET**, which will be held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER - SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE HALL** at South Cambridgeshire Hall on **WEDNESDAY, 4 DECEMBER 2019** at **9.30 a.m.**

Yours faithfully
Liz Watts
Chief Executive

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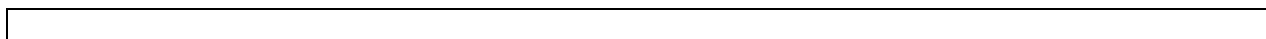
AGENDA

PAGES

1. **Apologies for Absence**
To receive Apologies for Absence from Cabinet members.
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **Minutes of Previous Meetings** 1 - 8
To authorise the Leader to sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2019 and of the Extraordinary meeting held on 18 November 2019 as correct records.
4. **Announcements**
5. **Public Questions**
Question from Mr. Daniel Fulton:

"Would the Lead Cabinet Member for Planning be willing to receive and consider representations from the public commenting on whether the current arrangements for the shared planning service provide sufficient oversight and management of the officers who discharge the Council's planning functions on its behalf?"
6. **Issues arising from the Scrutiny and Overview Committee** 9 - 10

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10.	Street lighting Policy and LED upgrade program (Key)	57 - 66
11.	Shared Payroll Service	67 - 74
12.	Applications for Council Tax Reduction under Section 13a of The Local Government Finance Act 1992 - Delegation of Authority for Decision Making	75 - 84
13.	Exclusion of Press and Public Agenda items 14, 15 and 16 contain exempt information. The law allows Councils to consider a limited range of issues in private session without members of the Press and public being present. Typically, such issues relate to personal details, financial and business affairs, legal privilege and so on. In every case, the public interest in excluding the Press and Public from the meeting room must outweigh the public interest in having the information disclosed to them. The following statement will be proposed, seconded and voted upon. "I propose that the Press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item numbers 14, 15 and 16 in accordance with Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that, if present, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act." Paragraph 3 refers to information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). If exempt (confidential) information has been provided as part of the agenda, the Press and public will not be able to view it. There will be an explanation on the website however as to why the information is exempt.	
14.	Issues arising from the Scrutiny and Overview Committee	85 - 86
15.	Potential property acquisition decision (Key)	87 - 116
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Agenda Item 3

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on
Wednesday, 6 November 2019 at 9.30 a.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Bridget Smith (Leader of Council)
Councillor Dr. Aidan Van de Weyer (Deputy Leader of Council (Statutory))

Councillors:	Neil Gough	Deputy Leader
	Bill Handley	Lead Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and Licensing
	Dr. Tumi Hawkins	Lead Cabinet member for Planning
	Hazel Smith	Lead Cabinet member for Housing
	John Williams	Lead Cabinet member for Finance

Officers in attendance for all or part of the meeting:

Susan Gardner Craig	Interim Director of Corporate Services
Mike Hill	Director of Housing and Environmental Services
Caroline Hunt	Strategy and Economy Manager
Stephen Kelly	Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development
Peter Maddock	Head of Finance
Rory McKenna	Deputy Head of Legal Practice
David Ousby	Head of Commercial Development & Investment
Trevor Roff	Interim Director of Finance
Ian Senior	Democratic Services Officer
Liz Watts	Chief Executive

Councillors Anna Bradnam, Jose Hales, Brian Milnes, Heather Williams and Nick Wright were in attendance, by invitation.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no Apologies for Absence from Cabinet members. However, Councillor Grenville Chamberlain (Chairman of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee) did send Apologies.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Cabinet authorised the Leader to sign, as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2019.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

6. ISSUES ARISING FROM THE SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

Cabinet received and noted a report from the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee.

The report related to the Committee's consideration of the following:

- Public Space Protection Order – proposed gating of Setchel Drove, Cottenham
- General Fund Capital Programme Update and new bids
- Property acquisition – Cambridge Science Park
- Property acquisition – Colmworth Trading Estate, St. Neots
- Greater Cambridge Local Plan: Issues and Options consultation

The Leader agreed to Councillor Brian Milnes' (Vice-Chairman, Scrutiny and Overview Committee) request that he contribute further comments as part of Cabinet's consideration of the current agenda.

7. GREATER CAMBRIDGE LOCAL PLAN ISSUES AND OPTIONS

Cabinet considered a report seeking its views on the proposed content of, and the participation and communication strategy for, the first formal round of consultation (the Issues & Options consultation) for the Greater Cambridge Local Plan. This consultation would form part of the early stages in jointly preparing the next Local Plan with Cambridge City Council. The report set out:

- an overview of the Local Plan process
- the member governance process ahead of the Issues & Options consultation
- the findings of an independent Lessons Learned and Good Practice review of the adopted local plans
- conclusions of initial stakeholder engagement workshops for the Local Plan
- the draft Issues & Options format and text for consultation
- supporting evidence documents
- the proposed participation and communication strategy for the Issues & Options consultation

Members noted in particular the comments in Sections II, VI and VIII of the report, which had been made by the Joint Local Plan Advisory Group and by South Cambridgeshire District Council's Scrutiny and Overview Committee.

On behalf of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee, Councillor Brian Milnes (Vice-Chairman) thanked officers for their commitment to the Local Plan process. His principal concern surrounded the timescales involved in consultation. He wondered whether the availability of 'pre-information' might ease the process, especially for those Parish Councils not meeting on a monthly basis.

Following further discussion, Cabinet

- a. **Noted** the Lessons Learned and Good Practice review (Appendix A);
- b. **Noted** the Statement of Consultation – Report on Local Plan Workshops (Appendix B – chapters 2-5);

- c. **Noted** the feedback from the Joint Local Plan Advisory Group (Appendix I);
- d. **Approved** the Local Plan Issues & Options report text (at Appendix E), supporting documents (at Appendices F, G and H) and consultation process (at Section VIII and Appendix B, chapter 6);
- e. **Delegated** authority to the Lead Cabinet Member for Planning, in liaison with Cambridge City Council Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Open Spaces, and in consultation with members of the Joint Local Planning Advisory Group, to consider and agree, as is consistent with this Council's corporate objectives, any material changes to the Local Plan Issues & Options report text (at Appendix E) and supporting documents (at Appendices A, B (chapter 6), F, G and H) prior to the commencement of the consultation period, including any proposed by Cambridge City Council;
- f. **Delegated** authority to the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development, in liaison with the Lead Cabinet Member for Planning and Cambridge City Council Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Open Spaces, and in consultation with members of the Joint Local Planning Advisory Group, to make editorial changes to the Local Plan Issues & Options report text (at Appendix E) and supporting documents (at Appendices A, B (chapter 6), F, G and H) prior to the commencement of the consultation period (to comprise minor amendments and factual updates and clarifications); and
- g. **Delegated** authority to the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development, in liaison with the Lead Cabinet Member for Planning and Cambridge City Council Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Open Spaces, to update the Local Development Scheme to reflect the amended consultation period.

8. GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME UPDATE AND NEW BIDS

Cabinet considered a report on the performance of the Council's Capital Programme during 2018-2019 and the new Capital Programme bids from 2020-2021.

In response to a query from Councillor Heather Williams, the Lead Cabinet Member for Finance referred to the impact of external influences on the Council's ability to control some aspects of the capital budget.

Following further debate, Cabinet

- (a) **Acknowledged** the performance achieved in relation to the Capital Programme Schemes substantially completed in 2018/2019, summarised at Appendix A in the report;
- (b) Considered the capital programme bids for new projects outlined in the report at Appendix B and **approved** the new capital schemes;
- (c) **Recommended** to Full Council that additional funding of £545,000 be allocated from the Renewables Reserve to complete the footpath lighting upgrades given the environmental benefits, and that a full report be submitted to Cabinet for approval that outlines the programme of work, timescales, costs and payback period;
- (d) **Recommended** to Full Council that funding of £1,300,000 be allocated from the Renewables Reserve for a range of energy efficiency and green

energy measures at South Cambridgeshire Hall, and that a full report be submitted to Cabinet for approval that outlines the range of modifications and enhancements proposed, costs and payback period;

- (e) **Supported**, if resources permit, the establishment of a Renewal and Repairs Fund for vehicles, plant and equipment, as part of the 2020/2021 revenue determination process; and
- (f) **Recommended** to Full Council the revised General Fund capital programme for the period 2019/2020 to 2024/2025, at Appendix C, to reflect the new scheme bids, amendments to the programme and the reprofiling of expenditure identified in the report.

9. 2019-20 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

Cabinet considered a report containing monitoring data and trends in respect of the 2019-2020 revenue and capital budgets and emerging budget issues for the period to 30 September 2019.

Cabinet

1. **Acknowledged** the 2019-2020 revenue budget position as at 30 September 2019 against the approved revenue budget shown in Appendices A, B(1) and B(2) to the report, the major variances with reasons for these variances and the action being taken to address the underlying issues; and
2. **Acknowledged** the position as at 30 September 2019 in respect of the Capital Programme for 2019-2020 and the variances as shown in Appendices C(1) and C(2).

10. PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER - PROPOSED GATING OF SETCHEL DROVE, COTTENHAM

Cabinet considered a report from the Director of Housing, Health and Environmental Services.

Councillor Neil Gough addressed the meeting as a local Member. He highlighted the issues needing to be addressed, and thanked officers for the actions they had taken so far.

Councillor Brian Milnes (Vice-Chairman of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee) welcomed the amount of public engagement but recognised that it was unlikely that a solution could be found that would satisfy all the interested parties.

Councillor Nick Wright urged caution. He said that the Council should learn from the experience of dealing with similar issues on other Travellers sites. He said that the crucial point was to tackle fly-tipping itself and suggested that a gate would simply divert that fly-tipping to elsewhere in South Cambridgeshire or nearby while being inconvenient to those farmers using Setchel Drove. Councillor Gough pointed out that Setchel Drove was relatively secluded and that, while fly-tipping might indeed be diverted elsewhere, it was likely to be to more visible areas and therefore to areas that would be cleared up more quickly.

The Director of Housing, Health and Environmental Services acknowledged the

challenge and said that the Council was keen to adopt a mixed approach to find a solution acceptable to all interested parties, including farmers.

Cabinet agreed

- a. A three-step “education, enforcement & engineering” approach to reducing incidences of illegal fly-tipping of waste at Setchel Drove, Cottenham;
- b. That, as part of that approach, some combination of a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) to restrict access to Setchel Drove, Cottenham and surveillance of Setchel Drove and the surrounding areas be justified to reduce the incidence of illegal fly-tipping of waste, and increase the likelihood of successful prosecution when incidents do occur;
- c. That the task of liaising with local interested parties be delegated to the Director of Housing, Health and Environmental Services in consultation with the Lead Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and Licensing and the local Ward Members to determine the optimal combination and location of physical barriers and surveillance equipment to achieve the desired results; and
- d. the Public Space Protection Order and the effectiveness of the solution be reviewed after two years of operation.

11. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Cabinet **agreed** by affirmation that the Press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items in accordance with the provisions of Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) (exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act). Paragraph 3 refers to information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

12. POTENTIAL PROPERTY ACQUISITION DECISION - CAMBRIDGE SCIENCE PARK

Cabinet considered a confidential report seeking its approval for a commercial property investment that would enable the Council to pursue its Business Plan objective of supporting businesses and delivering positive financial returns.

The Leader commended the efforts of those officers involved in identifying what she described as a substantial investment.

Following a short debate, Cabinet **recommended** to Full Council:

- (a) The investment of up to the sum referred to in the confidential report from the Interim Director of Finance, comprising property acquisition costs and refurbishment and letting costs in accordance with the approved Investment Strategy to acquire the property at Cambridge Science Park and to refurbish the building as a multi-let office investment;
- (b) The re-profiling of the Investment Strategy capital allocations to bring forward sufficient funds to enable the property at (a) above to be acquired in 2019-2020 and refurbishment to be commenced thereafter;
- (c) The use of the General Reserve, if required, for the potential revenue

cost impacts of the acquisition prior to the realisation and inclusion of the net additional income from the portfolio investment (after allowing for borrowing costs and property portfolio management costs), in the revenue budget.

13. POTENTIAL PROPERTY ACQUISITION DECISION - COLMWORTH TRADING ESTATE, ST. NEOTS

Cabinet considered a confidential report seeking its approval for a commercial property investment that would enable the Council to pursue its Business Plan objective of supporting businesses and delivering positive financial returns.

Following a short debate, Cabinet

1. **approved** the investment and purchaser's costs outlined in the confidential report from the Interim Director of Finance;
2. **agreed** that the acquisition of the property at Colmworth Trading Estate, St. Neots should be funded by the approved capital programme and be used as a multi-let trade counter investment in accordance with the approved Investment Strategy.

**The Meeting ended at 11.10
a.m.**

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on
Monday, 18 November 2019 at 10.00 a.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Bridget Smith (Leader of Council)
Councillor Dr. Aidan Van de Weyer (Deputy Leader of Council (Statutory))

Councillors:	Neil Gough	Deputy Leader
	Bill Handley	Lead Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and Licensing
	Dr. Tumi Hawkins	Lead Cabinet member for Planning
	Hazel Smith	Lead Cabinet member for Housing
	John Williams	Lead Cabinet member for Finance

Officers in attendance for all or part of the meeting:

Jonathan Malton	Cabinet Support Officer
Rory McKenna	Deputy Head of Legal Practice
Ian Senior	Democratic Services Officer
Liz Watts	Chief Executive

Councillors Anna Bradnam, Grenville Chamberlain and Dr. Douglas de Lacey were in attendance, by invitation.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no Apologies for Absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

4. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

By affirmation, Cabinet **resolved** that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of item 5 (Senior Management Restructure) in accordance with the provisions of Section 100(a)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 4 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of the Act).

Paragraph 1 refers to information relating to any individual.

Paragraph 2 refers to information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.

Paragraph 4 refers to information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority, or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.

5. SENIOR MANAGEMENT RESTRUCTURE

Cabinet considered a report from the Chief Executive.

The Chief Executive verbally summarised the briefing sessions that had taken place and gave a verbal report on discussion that took place at the Employment and Staffing Committee meeting held on 14 November 2019.

Referring to the drivers for change highlighted in the report, Councillor Dr. Douglas de Lacey requested that the talents of every individual should be rewarded, and that staff should feel valued. The Chief Executive agreed with this point.

The Leader thanked the Chief Executive for the purposeful way in which the restructure had been conducted.

Cabinet

- a. **noted** the verbal feedback from the Employment and Staffing Committee meeting held on 14 November 2019;
- b. **approved** the proposed structure and noted the outline process set out in the report from the Chief Executive, starting with a 30-day consultation with those staff directly affected; and
- c. **delegated** authority to the Head of Paid Service (the Chief Executive) to make minor amendments to the structure where necessary, following the 30-day consultation, in consultation with Chair of the Employment and Staffing Committee and the Leader of the Council.

**The Meeting ended at 10.18
a.m.**

Agenda Item 6



REPORT TO:

Cabinet

4 December 2019

LEAD MEMBER:

Councillor Grenville Chamberlain, Chairman, Scrutiny and Overview Committee and Councillor Brian Milnes, Vice Chairman, Scrutiny and Overview Committee

Update from Scrutiny and Overview Committee

Purpose

1. This report is to inform Cabinet of the discussions and recommendations agreed by the Scrutiny and Overview Committee at its meeting of 14 November 2019, which Cabinet may wish to consider in its decision making.

Streetlighting Policy and LED upgrade program

2. The committee considered and commented on the policy for South Cambridgeshire District Council's Streetlighting Service.
3. Scrutiny and Overview Committee members made the following comments:
 - Following the LED streetlight trial in Hardwick, it was suggested that an alternative light deflector be investigated, which spread the light more widely and evenly to avoid dark patches between streetlights.
 - Some committee members commented on the County Council's dimming policy and felt that 10pm was quite early for lights to be dimmed. Some committee members had noticed a visible increase in people in villages walking with torches as lighting was insufficient.
 - Although there was concern regarding insufficient lighting, lamp design to minimise light pollution was suggested. The committee was assured that lamps were directional and should therefore reduce light pollution.
 - Some Members raised concerns regarding the problematic situation that had arisen in parishes in relation to the arrangements for paying for the electricity for streetlights. The challenge parishes had faced in having to deal with the legacy of the PFI contract with Balfour Beatty, was also highlighted.
 - It was suggested that something be included in the policy to ensure that trees would be cut back, so that streetlights were not obscured by vegetation.

2019-20 Quarter Two Performance Report

4. The committee considered and commented on the Quarter 2 Performance Report and the Operational Key Performance Indicator results:

- Committee members supported the use of apprenticeships in the Contact Centre and thanked the Lead Cabinet Member for having taken onboard the committee's past comments regarding staffing.
- It needed to be ensured that Contact Centre staff felt that they could say when they did not know the answer to a query, and not feel under pressure to always provide an answer. Some committee members felt that this was important so that staff did provide the wrong advice when they were unsure of the answer.
- The need for a standard deviation was raised, which would help Members see how useful the figures provided were.
- The Council's readiness to deal with the impact of Universal Credit was queried.
- The committee queried what measures were in place to reduce voids and re-let times. The Director of Housing, Health and Environmental Services agreed to provide an update on this at the next Scrutiny and Overview Committee meeting.
- Members thanked the Interim Assistant Director of Waste and Special Projects, for arranging the clearing of traffic islands in the centre of the A10.

General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy

5. The Scrutiny and Overview Committee considered and commented on the Medium Term Financial Strategy and financial forecast for the Council. The committee considered the projected changes in service spending and the overall resources available to the Council over the medium term.
6. Committee members expressed their sympathy for officers having to deal with high levels of uncertainty and thanked them for their efforts in trying to manage this.

Service Transformation: Savings Proposals

7. The committee considered and commented on the proposed objectives and intentions in relation to the review of Council services. The committee commented on the challenges facing the Council given the financial outlook, including Government announcements in respect of local government funding and the expectation that future cost pressures will exceed the resources available. The committee considered the revenue budget guiding principles, growth bids and the proposed service efficiency savings and policy options.
8. Committee members thanked officers for a clear report and commended the shared waste service for the savings it had made.

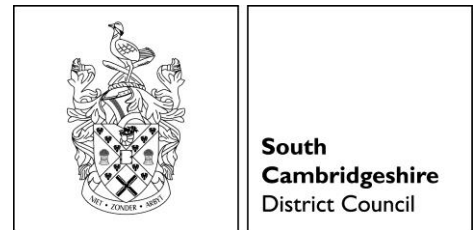
Property Acquisition

9. The committee's feedback in respect of the above report is included as a separate exempt report, as the committee discussed this item in confidential session due to the commercial sensitivity of the information contained in the report. This was in accordance with the provisions of Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act).

Report Author:

Victoria Wallace – Scrutiny and Governance Adviser 01954 713026

Agenda Item 7



REPORT TO: Cabinet

4 December 2019

LEAD CABINET MEMBER: Councillor Bridget Smith
Leader of the Council

Councillor John Williams,
Lead Cabinet Member for Finance

LEAD OFFICER: Liz Watts, Chief Executive

Service Transformation Programme: Savings Proposals

Executive Summary

1. The Council is embarking on an ambitious 4-year plan to transform service quality, realign financial resources to business plan priorities and improve customer service.
2. This report outlines the key objectives and intentions in relation to the transformation of Council services within the context of a continually challenging financial environment due to ongoing reductions in funding from Central Government to deliver services.
3. This is not a key decision as the report seeks to identify initial service policy options for consultation. There are no resource implications directly arising from the report at this stage and the Cabinet will in due course need to review service specific proposals that could contribute to forecast savings targets.

Recommendations

4. That Cabinet is invited to consider, as part of a coordinated Council wide transformation programme, the proposed objectives and intentions in relation to the review of Council services and, if satisfied, to:
 - (a) Note the considerable challenges facing the Council given the financial outlook, including Government announcements in respect of local government funding, and the expectation that future cost pressures will exceed the resources available;
 - (b) Note the revenue budget guiding principles, outlined at paragraph 21 of the report, that has provided the context for the planning of the 2020/2021 revenue budget and the formulation of proposals to achieve service efficiency savings;
 - (c) Note the growth bids, detailed at Appendix A, for inclusion in the Budget Setting Report in February 2020;
 - (d) Note the proposed range of service efficiency savings/policy options detailed in Appendix B of the report and that these will undergo further refinement and consultation with employees and other stakeholders prior to forming part of the Budget Setting Report in February 2020;
 - (e) Note that some of the savings proposals will require a detailed equality analysis.

Reasons for Recommendations

5. To create a key building block of the budget for 2020/2021 and the ongoing Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).
6. To ensure that an appropriate framework exists to formulate and consider areas for potential efficiency savings and service delivery variations.
7. To consider the actions proposed by Officers to reduce the impact that service efficiencies would have on frontline services.

Details

Prospects for Local Government

8. Local government funding and the delivery of local government services has been and continues to be the subject of significant scrutiny, with demands for increased efficiencies and cost effectiveness in the delivery of public services. There is continued emphasis towards fundamentally changing the way the public sector operates with the aim to achieve greater public choice, local decision making and greater efficiencies within an overall reduction in real spend.
9. Local government has encountered significant cuts over the last decade. The 2019 Finance Settlement was expected to be a pivotal year for local government as 2019/2020 represents the last year of the current four-year funding settlement. However, on 4 September 2019, the Government confirmed that there would only be a one-year spending review for 2020/2021. The announcement means that the Comprehensive Spending Review – due to be delivered in the autumn – will now apply from April 2021.
10. The one-year settlement means that the proposed changes in funding are likely to be delayed. District Councils currently receive funding through the Government's Business Rate Retention Scheme and New Homes Bonus; these payments help manage the additional pressures of growth. It is expected that the amount of funding that District Councils receive through these schemes will be cut, but the delay in the Comprehensive Spending Review means that these changes will be made a year later than expected. For many districts – including South Cambridgeshire – these amounts are considerable and thus it provides a breathing space to the medium term financial challenges. This is, of course, only a short-term benefit but it provides a more realistic timescale for undertaking an effective service transformation programme.
11. Whilst the previous four-year settlement period to 2019/2020 provided some funding certainty and stability to support medium-term planning, there have been numerous changes outside the settlement that have added to the uncertainty. There continues to be legislative change affecting how local government is funded (such as the Business Rates Retention proposals with its inherent risks and revisions to the arrangements for awarding New Homes Bonus), together with the service demands placed on the Council.
12. Alongside central government funding cuts of nearly 50% since 2010/2011, local authorities are facing strong demand and cost pressures, and no reduction in their statutory obligations to provide a range of services. The future financial landscape for local government continues to be challenging and it is inevitable that further pressures and constraints will arise. Efficiency and value for money remain, therefore, firmly at the forefront of all public sector planning to ensure that Councils redefine and focus resources on their key priority service areas identified in the Business Plan in order to meet the needs of local communities.

Medium Term Financial Planning

- 13. The reshaped funding landscape that Local Government has faced over recent years has the effect of increasing financial uncertainty and risk and the Council’s financial resilience will depend upon appropriate mitigating actions ranging from effective financial control, a clear financial strategy and strong financial governance. The ongoing assessment of resilience, including the sufficiency of Reserves to enable the Council to withstand the financial impacts of future developments, will continue to form a major element of the response to the financial landscape. A full review of Reserves will, therefore, be made as part of the Budget Setting Report to Cabinet and Council in February 2020.
- 14. The recent announcements about the ‘end to austerity’ made little reference to local government (particularly districts) and the future picture remains uncertain.
- 15. In considering the 2019/2020 General Fund Revenue Budget, the Council instructed the Executive Management Team to identify additional cumulative savings of £3 million for the 5 years from 2019-2024.
- 16. Service Areas were, therefore, tasked to identify the existing budget pressures that need to be managed, together with a range of efficiency/savings targets across the Council’s services (including possible invest to save initiatives and income generation opportunities) ensuring that proposed efficiency/savings targets are realistic, achievable and sustainable. The schedule of these pressures is attached at **Appendix A** and the range of savings/new income is attached at **Appendix B**.

Transformation Programme

- 17. The Transformation Programme is aimed at delivering Council services more efficiently and in a more convenient way for the public. The programme is still emerging but it will be built broadly around the following principles:
 - transforming service quality;
 - improving organisational productivity and process efficiencies;
 - improving customer service.
- 18. The programme has a number of workstreams, all of which seek to ensure that resource can be allocated to Business Plan priorities:

WORKSTREAM	DESCRIPTION
Develop a Workforce Operating Model	This workstream aims to reduce silos and create a ‘one council’ approach to service delivery, through a thorough review of structure, processes and skills.
Alternative Ways of Working	This includes exploring alternative, improved methods of conducting the business, including a review of essential accommodation needs, the scope to establish a paperless office and the positive transition to lean methods of operation. The outcome of this commitment is the adoption of streamlined approaches to business processes, with reduced bureaucracy and emphasis on a “right first time” culture. A better service for customers is paramount and a ‘Digital by Design’ approach will enable as many services as possible to be accessed by customers online through a single customer portal at their convenience (mindful, of course, that there will always be a number of customers who will not be able to switch).

Business & Growth	South Cambridgeshire District Council is a competitive place to do business and, as part of this, a Growth Plan will provide a framework for promoting economic development, with a positive commitment to promote the growth of existing businesses and enable new employment sites to be developed faster and older industrial estates to be regenerated. The Growth Plan will, through appropriate measures, assist the retention of existing businesses and attract new private sector investment and this will include appropriate procedural improvements and reliefs and incentives to grow business rates and, therefore, financial rewards from growth.
Managing Demand Better	This includes initiatives and work practices across service areas to best manage demand to achieve better outcomes for clients and service users. Demand management and behaviour change offer significant opportunities to save money over and above traditional savings approaches, leading to the reduced consumption of certain services and increase take-up of others.
Ensuring a Successful, Streamlined Organisation	This includes the development of a programme management approach to provide oversight and assurance of savings delivery, together with a commercial mindset aimed at creating an even leaner organisation and an open mind to effective service delivery models. The outcome is the effective monitoring of performance, adoption of a streamlined organisation, void of non-added-value behaviour and a focus on effective delivery models.

19. The Council has already recognised the need to continue the existing commitment to smart working and to develop income streams through prudent investment but the key message in the Budget Setting Report, considered by Council on 21 February 2019, was that a programme of transformation and service review needs to be developed to ensure that the Council is "fit for the 21st century". This programme is now being developed in detail, with some elements of resulting savings/new income sources already being identified in the 2020/2021 budget (as identified in Appendix B).

20. Critical to the transformation process has been the determination of guiding principles that should be adopted by Members and Officers to ensure that the Council can resource its expenditure plans for 2020/2021 and beyond. The uncertain financial outlook over the medium term remains and the need for more income and savings to deliver the Council's priorities and balance the Council's budgets further emphasises the need for control and prudent financial management and planning.

21. The following guiding principles have, therefore, been developed in response to the unsettled economic background, the significant changes that will have an impact upon medium term finances, and the forecast spending pressures:

- (a) Front line service reductions should be avoided, wherever possible, but emphasis will be towards Business Plan priorities, meaning some realignment may take place;
- (b) A programme of Service Reviews will be undertaken alongside a "zero-base budget" approach to resourcing delivery and constructing the MTFs;
- (c) Heads of Service are accountable for the management of performance, finance and risk of assigned services. Heads of Service must challenge and produce options to reduce (or eradicate) pressures identified in their MTFs forecast, clearly identifying costs, income streams and performance levels and performance indicators to track delivery of performance;

- (d) Non-Business Plan priority areas should be tasked to reduce spend/increase income by a minimum 3% over the next three years over and above the existing modernisation proposals. This would derive an estimated saving of at least £600,000 per annum;
- (e) Non-core budgets (such as running costs, supplies and services) should be challenged and reduced;
- (f) Inflation provision should, where possible, be targeted at nil or at a reduced percentage (exceptions will include contractual commitments, nationally agreed increases and utility/fuel costs essential for service delivery).
- (g) Any one-off savings should be used to maintain appropriate earmarked reserves and deal with one-off pressures identified in the MTFS as agreed by Members;
- (h) Further income generation opportunities should be identified and considered, and existing arrangements should be exploited; income, and controllable fees & charges must be set taking into account all costs incurred across all Service areas to ensure full-cost recovery where permitted;

Options

22. The option of not undertaking a structured review of services and the allocation of scarce resources is not considered to be appropriate. The key message in the Budget Setting Report, considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 6 February 2019, was that a programme of transformation and service review would be developed to ensure that the Council is "fit for the 21st century". The Council, in considering the budget and medium-term forecasts has already tasked the Executive Management Team to identify additional cumulative savings or additional income of £3 million for the 5 years from 2019-2024.

Implications

23. In the writing of this report, taking into account the financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:

Financial

24. The General Fund MTFS and financial forecasts, based upon the Spending Review consultation, are identified in a separate report to Cabinet at this meeting. The forecasts identify the following funding gap for the period to 31 March 2025:

	2020/2021 £m	2021/2022 £m	2022/2023 £m	2023/2024 £m	2024/2025 £m	TOTAL £m
Total Resource	22,642	15,996	15,927	16,000	16,549	-
Net Budget Requirement	19,865	19,207	18,361	17,682	17,682	-
Net Resource Position	(2,777)	3,211	2,434	1,682	1,133	5,683

25. The service transformation programme is being developed in response to the funding gap and the financial challenges over the medium term.

Legal

26. The Council is required by law to set a balanced revenue budget each year.
27. There are two specific dates in relation to budget and Council Tax setting that are required by statute to be achieved. Firstly, it is a requirement that each local authority approves its Revenue Budget by 28 February each year for the forthcoming financial year. Secondly, a billing authority (i.e. this Council) is required to set the Council Tax for its area by 11 March each year for the forthcoming financial year. To achieve budget setting deadlines, and essential cost reductions to achieve a balanced budget effective from 1 April 2020, appropriate consultation will need to be undertaken in respect of a range of policy options and emerging proposals.

Risk

28. The Council's overall reputation and performance assessment is at risk if it is not aware of the challenges presented by the reduction in resources available to it and their impact on key areas of performance of the Council. This report seeks to outline the strategic direction of the Council in order to mitigate risks and to respond to the areas of concern outlined above. In doing so, regard will need to be given to the impact of legislative changes affecting local government and changes to local government funding.

Environmental

29. Environmental implications will need to be considered in the context of specific proposals that emerge.

Equality Impact

30. Service Areas will need to assess the impact of the budgetary reductions arising from the emerging proposals and to determine appropriate actions to manage the change/residual business; this is to ensure compliance with the Council's statutory equality duty.
31. Equality impacts will need to be considered in the context of the specific proposals and any Equality Analyses must, therefore, also be prepared as necessary to reflect the impact of any change.

Effect on Council Priority Areas

32. The guiding principles are designed to protect front line services, maximise income sources and create resilient, efficient and cost effective services that make best use of the limited resources available to the Council.

Background Papers

Where the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 require documents to be open to inspection by members of the public, they must be available for inspection:

- (a) at all reasonable hours at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council;
- (b) on the Council's website; and
- (c) in the case of documents to be available for inspection pursuant to regulation 15, on payment of a reasonable fee required by the Council by the person seeking to inspect the documents at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

The following documents are relevant to this report:

- General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy – Report to Cabinet: 7 November 2018
- Budget Report – Report to Cabinet: 6 February 2019
- Business Plan 2019 - 2014 – Report to Council: 21 February 2019
- Medium Term Financial Strategy and General Fund Budget – Report to Council: 21 February 2019
- General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy – Report to Cabinet: 4 December 2019
- Savings Proposals: Business Case Templates
- Service Pressures: Funding Bids

Appendices

Appendix A: Schedule of Budget Pressures

Appendix B: Revenue Budget Planning 2020-2024: Proposed Savings

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Summary of New On-Going Funding Bids

New Revenue Budget Bids: Staff Related	Ongoing £ pa
<p>New Post: Health & Safety Officer</p> <p>A recent health and safety compliance audit identified the need for additional support to maintain compliance with the Council's statutory responsibility for health and safety. The safety of communities, visitors and staff is really important and a designated post of Health & Safety Officer is now recommended.</p>	40,000
<p>ICT Resource [Local Government Association (LGA) Review]:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intelligent Client – Skilled Resource (1 FTE) <p>A recent review, by the LGA, recommended the strengthening of the intelligent client function within the Council by an additional full time skilled resource to enable the relationship between the Council and the 3C Partnership to be better managed.</p>	60,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Team Support <p>The funding for the 3C Digital Support Team is imbalanced between the partner Councils and inadequate to access the full range of services. Additional funding will enable the Council to accelerate its delivery of digital services and access web-site development and support, portal and business system integration and mobile application/voice development.</p>	150,000
<p>Project Initiation/Management (Capital Projects) – Core Resource:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client Side Project Officer [2 FTE] • Project Support Officer [1 FTE] • Project Surveyor/Clerk of Works (1 FTE) <p>The funding supports the creation of core professional capacity in the organisation to deliver large capital investment projects. This includes projects such as the construction of a Sports Pavilion, Community Centre and Civic Hub (as part of Northstowe Phase 1 and Phase 2). It will also support an extension to the New Build Programme and a range of commercial investment projects.</p>	100,000 40,000 50,000
<p>Business Plan Priority – Support Business Growth in the District:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Support Service [4 FTE] <p>To provide dedicated resource to support local businesses and the specific needs of the rural area and to enable the Council to pursue with vigour its Business Plan commitments, including the provision of information and support to businesses, encouraging rural inward investment, organising business events and effective area promotion. This includes revenue funding for a business support programme, marketing and promotion.</p>	200,000
<p>Business Plan Priority – Mobile Warden Partnerships</p> <p>To achieve, on a phased basis, District wide coverage of effective mobile warden partnerships to ensure support for elderly and vulnerable people across the area who currently have limited or no access to this service.</p>	200,000

Business Plan Priority – Community Liaison Forum To deliver effective community engagement on new developments through Community Liaison Groups (building on the successes in Northstowe and Cottenham) thus enabling the delivery of better housing developments and communities for all. A designated post of Community Liaison Officer is proposed to fulfil this role.	30,000
Business Plan Priority – Improve Recycling Performance To provide support at community based events, including the provision of advice to local communities on recycling practice and organising the temporary provision of recycling bins, litter picking equipment and reusable cups etc.	30,000
TOTAL	900,000

Summary of New On-going Funding Bids:
Non-Staffing Related

NEW REVENUE BUDGET BIDS: NON - STAFF RELATED	ONGOING £ PA
Waste Service: MRF Costs The pressure is due to changes in the world commodity market which has led to a fall in the secondary material value and an increase in the quality requirements for material for recycling. This has already impacted on the level of income from recycle.	100,000
Waste Service: Additional Vehicles/Associated Revenue Costs This relates to the additional revenue costs, comprising transport and employee costs, of a new vehicle. In line with housing growth, and planned replacements, it is planned to add one additional vehicle in 2020/2021 (funded by the Council) and a further vehicle in 2021/2022 (funded by Cambridge City Council).	135,000
Human Resources: New IT System This relates to the additional cost of software licences, hosting charges and maintenance costs of the new system human resources software solution.	23,400
Upgrade AV and Delegate Systems: Council Chamber This relates to the ongoing support costs of the replacement equipment.	19,000
IT Investment: Other Projects This relates to the revenue costs of the call management system (£2,900), server and network monitoring system (£3,800) and resource planning tool (£2,900).	9,600
Members' Services: Member Training & Development There is currently insufficient capacity to support Members and to deliver the Member Development Programme leading to risk of Members not being equipped with the skills, knowledge and information they need to carry out their roles.	8,900

<p>Procurement: Electronic Tendering System</p> <p>This relates to the ongoing support costs of the replacement electronic tendering system (procured in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridge City Council and Huntingdonshire District Council).</p>	2,700
<p>Shared Audit Service: Additional Audit Days</p> <p>The risk based internal audit plan is continuously appraised and updated. The plan coverage has been lower than some other Councils and, following review by the Audit & Corporate Governance Committee, the approved plan requires more audit days, which reflects the need to provide an appropriate level of assurance.</p>	62,000
<p>Business Plan Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air Quality Monitoring To accelerate the installation of air quality monitors, collate baseline data and commence remedial action at sensitive sites in the District. Fly Tipping To take actions to deter fly-tipping in the District, including the installation of overt surveillance and signage in hot spot locations to ensure that the campaign against fly tipping is visible and effective. There are no additional resource implications arising from this initiative as a revenue budget is already in place for signage and campaigning, including the installation of overt surveillance cameras. 	30,000
	Within Existing Resources
TOTAL	390,600

Overall Total

£1,290,600

Value Attributable To:

General Fund

£1,038,800

Capital

£190,000

Housing Revenue Account

£61,800

Medium Term Financial Plan 2020-2024: Proposed Savings

Theme 1: Develop a Workforce Operating Model		Timeline/Saving			
		2020/2021 £	2021/2022 £	2022/2023 £	2023/2024 £
1	Undertake a thorough review of processes across the organisation to identify potential changes to workforce deployment and a revised senior management structure, targeting a saving of £600,000 per annum by 31 March 2024. (* proposals approved by Council in May 2019)	£230,000 *	£170,000	£100,000	£100,000
2	The creation of business resource capacity in order to release professional staff from corporate processes thus enabling and optimising professional staff time deployment on key professional duties in Environmental Health.	£36,000	-	-	-
3	Rationalise processes and budgets to focus on efficient service delivery and effective resource deployment, including a review of:				
	(a) the corporate communications budget to further the benefits already achieved from the transition from in house to commissioned design work and to the digital tasks needed for the Council.	£3,500	-	-	-
	(b) the statutory electoral registration service and, in particular, the scope to optimise canvassing by electronic means.	£5,000	-	-	-
	(c) the HR function following the implementation of a new Human Resource Information System, including an extension of self-service arrangements.	-	£20,000	£20,000	-
	(d) the review and refocussing of services relating to the health and well-being of residents to enable the rationalisation of processes and effective targeted support in a cost effective manner.	£75,000	-	-	-
	(e) the planning application registration and administration processes.	-	£20,000	£20,000	-
	(f) the shared waste collection service in order to achieve further efficiencies in the delivery of the service, including streamlined policies that has enabled the improved communication of information to residents.	£25,000	-	-	-

Theme 2: Alternative Ways of Working		Timeline/Savings			
		2020/2021 £	2021/2022 £	2022/2023 £	2023/2024 £
4	Increase customer self-service and remote access through the implementation of the “One-Vu” customer portal project.	-	£80,000	-	-
5	To establish a framework for electronic service delivery, encouraging “paperless” business processes and reduced printing.	£20,000	£20,000	-	-
6	Revised Scheme of Members’ Allowances taking into account the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel (October 2019).	£60,000	-	-	-
7	Following the introduction of ‘Council Anywhere’, reduce unnecessary travel to meetings. Target 10% of total General Fund mileage costs per annum.	£6,000	£6,000	-	-

Theme 3: Business and Growth		Timeline/Savings			
		2020/2021 £	2021/2022 £	2022/2023 £	2023/2024 £
8	Implementation of the Investment Strategy (subject to Council approval on 28 November 2019) by pursuing, subject to business case justification, commercial investment opportunities.	£940,000	£590,000	£990,000	£990,000
9	To review Planning Performance Agreements and processes to reduce the current subsidy provided to those who undertake major developments.	£10,000	£30,000	-	-
10	To consider prevailing fee scales and income generation opportunities for regulatory services, including:				
	(a) A review of the current pre-planning advice charging policy.	£10,000	£10,000	-	-
	(b) A review of the charging policy that applies in respect of the licensing function, targeting additional income from safeguarding training and DBS checks for Taxi Drivers.	£60,000	-	-	-
	(c) The development of a commercial model for the building control service to generate additional income from consultancy services.	£2,500	£5,000	-	-
11	To undertake a review of the Ermine Street Housing recharge model for both housing and support staff.	£6,000	-	-	-

Theme 4: Managing Demand Better		Timeline/Savings			
		2020/2021 £	2021/2022 £	2022/2023 £	2023/2024 £
12	Expand and grow the commercial waste collection service.	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000
13	Encourage budget holders, through increased autonomy, to manage budgets within cash limits thus eliminating budget uplift for inflation (exceptions will include contractual commitments, nationally agreed increases and utility/fuel costs essential for service delivery).	£50,000	-	-	-
14	To review annually the revenue budget outturn position and to identify areas of budgetary underspend where, in the context of managing demand and resource better, budgets could be reduced without significant and noticeable impact on service delivery.	£80,000	-	-	-
15	To review high volume printing and mail processing services across all service areas and to seek to rationalise processing costs:				
	(a) To review the benefits to be derived from the establishment of a Council wide hybrid mail/single printing contract with print jobs completed off site and posted directly by the service provider.	-	£7,000	-	-
	(b) To review the potential for additional discounts on postage budgets held by service areas by using Royal Mail's CleanMail service and/or transferral of universal postal service provider for '2 nd class' mail to a competitor of Royal Mail.	£11,000	-	-	-
16	Review of all council tax exemptions/discounts using data matching techniques (countywide project).	-	£35,000	-	-
17	To review the way in which housing services are delivered, particularly developing self-service opportunities and partnership approaches to the delivery of some services, with realisation of cost and efficiency savings.	£55,000	-	-	-

18	To pursue, in line with the Business Plan Theme “Green to Our Core”, the following specific investment opportunities:				
(a)	Energy efficiency and green energy measures at South Cambridgeshire Hall, including Ground Source Heat Pump, solar canopies in the car park, internal LED lighting upgrades, electric vehicle charging points and chiller modifications and enhancements.	£79,700	-	-	-
(b)	The installation of roof-mounted solar panels at the Waterbeach Depot (fully operational).	£5,000	-	-	-
(c)	The installation of LED footway lighting throughout the District and consequent impact on maintenance and energy costs.	-	£50,000	-	-

Total Estimated Savings	£1,794,700	£1,068,000	£1,155,000	£1,115,000
Value Attributable to General Fund	£1,739,700	£1,045,000	£1,152,000	£1,115,000
Value Attributable to Housing Revenue Account	£55,000	£23,000	£3,000	-

Agenda Item 8



Report To: Cabinet 4 December 2019

Lead Cabinet Member(s): Councillor John Williams,
Lead Cabinet Member for Finance

Lead Officer: Trevor Roff, Interim Director of Finance

Subject: General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy

Purpose

1. This report sets out the medium term budget strategy for the Council. The Council refreshes its Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) twice a year in accordance with best practice. This report updates the MTFS to the financial year 2024/2025.
2. This is not a key decision as there are no resource implications directly arising from the report at this stage. The report does, however, ensure that the Council is aware of the financial challenges over the medium term and the financial forecasts outlined in the MTFS assist in the Council's financial planning.

Recommendations

3. **That Cabinet is requested to consider the report and, if satisfied, to:**
 - (a) **Acknowledge the projected changes in service spending and the overall resources available to the Council over the medium term;**
 - (b) **Recommend to Full Council the Medium Term Financial Strategy at Appendix A and the updated financial forecast at Appendix B.**

Reasons for Recommendations

4. To ensure that the Cabinet is aware of the financial challenges over the medium-term and the strategy that is required to ensure that the Council will be in a position to deliver sustainable public services in the future.
5. To provide Cabinet with an update of the financial position and forecasts for the General Fund over the medium term following a review of financial assumptions.
6. To enable the Cabinet to recommend the MTFS to Council for approval in order to assist in the Council's financial planning.

Details

Background

7. The MTFS is the Council's overarching Financial Strategy document and gives financial expression to the Council's plans and fiscal challenges over the medium term. It sets out a range of financial assumptions and in so doing sets parameters within which the Council will deliver key public services over the medium term.

8. The MTFS comprises two key elements (i) an assessment of the resources available to the Council over the medium term and (ii) an assessment of spending pressures based on existing levels of service delivery and known policy/legislative changes. Taken together the movement over the planning period of these two elements represents the financial challenge facing the Council.
9. In order to be able to deliver the Council's aspirations as set out in its Business Plan, approved by Council at its meeting on 21 February 2019, and meet its statutory responsibilities the Council must take a proactive approach to managing its resources effectively. The MTFS is a key tool for proactive financial management which allows for future projected funding requirements to be identified thus enabling the Council to identify appropriate actions to deal with any funding shortfalls.
10. The proposed MTFS covering the period 2021/2022 to 2024/2025 is attached at **Appendix A**. This document sets out the framework within which the financial forecast, summarised at **Appendix B**, has been determined. The forecast shows the level of savings that need to be achieved to deliver the indicative Council Tax level.
11. In considering the impact of the financial forecasts on revenue budgets during the MTFS period and the key issues for consideration, due regard has been given to the local and national policy context, current financial position, economic indicators, risks and assumptions relating to financial planning.

Resources

12. The 2019 Finance Settlement was expected to be a pivotal year for local government as 2019/2020 represents the last year of the current four-year funding settlement. A 3-year spending review (covering the years 2020/2021 to 2022/2023) had, therefore, been expected, together with some major changes in local government funding itself. These included the increase in local business rate share to 75% (from 50%), a business rate baseline reset, a Fair Funding Review, and other changes to key funding streams, such as social care and New Homes Bonus.
13. The Government has, however, now confirmed that there will be a one-year spending review for 2020/2021 with the announcement in September 2019. The announcement means that the Comprehensive Spending Review - which was due to be delivered in the autumn - will now be held in 2020 and will apply from April 2021. It has been assumed, therefore, that the delay of the major changes in local government funding will result in authorities receiving broadly the same resource as they did in 2019/2020.
14. Whilst this benefits the Council in 2020/2021 compared to existing MTFS forecasts, in overall terms there are very significant risks to the funding level from 2021/2022 for District Council's with the expectation that South Cambridgeshire District Council will lose a significant share of its funding as a result of the funding changes – the business rate baseline reset is particularly damaging.

(1) Revenue Support Grant/Business Rates Retention

15. The Business Rate Retention Scheme (BRRS) was introduced in April 2013 to provide Councils with stronger financial incentives to support property development and boost the economy in their local area. It means that Councils bear a proportion of the real-terms change in business rates revenues in their area: gaining when revenues grow in real terms, losing when they fall. The proportion was initially set at 50% across England. In two-tier areas, like Cambridge, 40% is retained by the District and 10% is retained by Cambridgeshire County Council.

16. The introduction of the new funding model for Local Government, predicated on changes to BRSS to enable a 75% retention of Business Rates, will now be introduced effective from 2021/2022 and this will influence the forward financial forecasts. There are a number of issues arising from this:
- (a) As the 75% Business Rates Retention model is fiscally neutral (i.e. offset by reductions in funding elsewhere in the system), the existing Revenue Support Grant (RSG) will be funded by Business Rates. This will not affect the Council as the level of retained Business Rates has exceeded the threshold at which RSG would have been payable;
 - (b) It has been assumed that the tier split for Districts will remain at 40% to enable the County Councils share to be increased to 35% (from 10%) in order to provide additional funding towards adult social care. The government's central share falls, as a consequence, from 50% to 25%.
 - (c) It is envisaged that there will be a full business rate baseline reset so that all authorities are at baseline when the Fair Funding Review is implemented. The Council will lose significantly from the reset as the total collected from this source is currently in excess of £7 million above the baseline and, in a full reset, this level of growth will be lost. The updated modelling identifies a net loss from BRRS of £2.3 million from 2021/2022.
 - (d) The Government will be consulting on a Fair Funding Review that will allocate a share of the Local Government Control total to Local Authorities. This review will look at factors that drive spend (population, deprivation) as well as a Council's ability to raise local finance (Council Tax and possibly some elements of Fee Income). It has been assumed that, in overall terms, there will be a cash freeze in the Local Government Control Total.
 - (e) The Government is additionally looking at how best to build on the current business rates retention scheme and will consider issues such as Appeals, growth and revaluation frequencies/baseline resets.

(2) Rural Services Grant

17. The Council currently receives a Rural Services Grant in the sum of £131,000 in recognition of the additional cost of providing services in sparse rural areas. It is expected that this will roll into the Baseline Funding Level (BFL) because the Council's RSG will be nil from 2021/2022.

(3) New Homes Bonus

18. New Homes Bonus (NHB) funding is currently based on the following:
- (a) NHB is payable on housing growth over a threshold of 0.4% of the Tax Base;
 - (b) Payments are based on a rolling 4 year period.
19. Housing growth has been significant for this Council area and, as such, the Council has benefited from high levels of NHB. The future of NHB, however, looks very precarious and the expectation is that it will be phased-out and that authorities will only receive "legacy" payments. The recent consultation paper gives a clear signal that there will be only two years of "legacy payments" in 2021/2022, and only one in 2022/2023. The additional year that is "earned" in 2020/2021 is only a one-off and will only be paid for one year (with NHB ceasing to exist from 2023-2024 onwards).

20. This is bad news for the Council because it has been a major beneficiary of NHB: it received a peak of £5.2 million in 2016/2017 but the initial reforms of NHB has already reduced payments to £2.473 million in 2019/2020, and these payments would continue to fall if the Government only makes “legacy” payments.

(4) Council Tax

21. Council Tax remains the most predictable and stable element of Local Government funding. This source of income is predicted to yield £9.548 million in 2020/2021 based upon an assumed £5 increase in Council Tax (the maximum level of permitted by Government) and an increase in tax base based upon the housing trajectory.

(5) Fair Funding Review

22. The government is reviewing the funding allocations for local government through the Fair Funding Review (FFR). There are a number of key issues for the Council:
- (a) The indications are that the Government will reduce the number of specific needs formulas (e.g. homelessness costs) and incorporate these into the Foundation Formula, which is where shire districts receive most of their funding. The outcome should be broadly positive for District Councils.
 - (b) The indications are that FFR will introduce an average Council Tax as part of the Relative Resources Formula and, if so, this would penalise low Council Tax areas such as SCDC. This process is known as “equalisation”, but it is not clear at what level it will be applied: full equalisation would take funding away from high tax-base, low-need councils. The assumption is that partial equalisation will be implemented instead.
 - (c) New travel-time and remoteness indicators are to be included within the Area Cost Adjustment (ACA). The Council has very high labour and rates cost adjustments, as well as very high dispersal and traversal indicators (i.e. travel times). In fact, it has the highest dispersal indicator in England. It is expected, therefore, that the Council will receive a higher ACA.
23. It is assumed that funding for “negative” RSG will disappear from 2021/2022 when FFR is introduced. This occurred when an authority’s reduction in core funding exceeded the available amount of RSG meaning that the reduction had to be sought from the retained business rates share. The Council should have paid “negative” RSG in respect of 2018/2019 and 2019/2020 but, in both years, it was fully funded by the Government (£661,000 in 2019/2020). It is assumed that this shortfall will continue to be fully funded in 2020/2021.

Medium Term Financial Planning

24. The MTFS forecast, reproduced at **Appendix B**, outlines the financial forecast and the headline figures for the medium term. These are set out in the table below which incorporates a number of planned savings and estimated additional investment income but does not factor in any additional service pressures beyond 2020/2021. Further service pressures will exaggerate the funding gap and, wherever possible, these should be managed within existing budgets. Given the reliance on both Council Tax and Business Rates moving forward it would be appropriate to develop different scenarios in order to provide a sensitivity analysis and, as such, it will enable the impact that different assumptions have on the MTFS forecast to be highlighted and thus the associated risk that the Council must manage over the medium term.

	2020/2021 £'000	2021/2022 £'000	2022/2023 £'000	2023/2024 £'000	2024/2025 £'000
Council Tax	9,548	10,027	10,504	11,008	11,522
Retained Business Rates	7,310	4,961	4,945	4,992	5,027
Revenue Support Grant	-	-	-	-	-
New Homes Bonus	1,851	1,008	478	-	-
Rural Services Grant	131	-	-	-	-
Section 31 Grant	3,176	-	-	-	-
Collection Fund Surplus	626	-	-	-	-
Total Resource	22,642	15,996	15,927	16,000	16,549
Net Budget Requirement	19,865	19,207	18,361	17,682	17,682
Net Resource Position	(2,777)	3,211	2,434	1,682	1,133

25. A service transformation programme has been developed in response to the funding gap and the financial challenges over the medium term and a detailed report is scheduled for consideration by Cabinet at this meeting. This is expected to include a programme of targeted service reviews to ensure that value for money is obtained in the delivery of services, together with the continuation of the programme of investment and commercialisation that has commenced, and which has been strengthened by the recent review of the Investment Strategy. The impact of the planned savings and additional income is identified in the table below:

	2020/2021 £'000	2021/2022 £'000	2022/2023 £'000	2023/2024 £'000	2024/2025 £'000
Net Budget Requirement: Before Adjustments	20,016	19,865	19,207	18,361	17,682
Budget Pressures	1,229	-	-	-	-
Savings/Income Identified	(1,740)	(1,045)	(1,152)	(1,115)	-
Other Base Budget Changes	360	387	306	436	-
Budget Requirement c/f	19,865	19,207	18,361	17,682	17,682

* Further service pressures will exaggerate the funding gap and, wherever possible, should be managed within existing budgets.

26. Council, at its budget meeting on 21 February 2019, envisaged the appropriation of the sum of £4.77 million from the General Reserve balance as a contribution to the funding gap over the period to 2023/2024; this will need to be further considered together with the profile of savings that results from the transformation agenda.
27. Some form of damping is also inevitable from 2021/2022 and it is envisaged that the Council would receive some damping support, although it would be phased out. Modelling, based upon the assumption that the reduction in overall resources does not exceed 5%, indicates damping support of about £3 million in 2021/2022, reduced by phasing to £0.5 million in 2024/2025 and fully phased out in 2025/2026.
28. The financial forecasts are based upon the latest modelling data, but the medium term forecasts and damping should be treated with caution as the final position is uncertain until the provisions of the post 2021/2022 Spending Review are known and are eventually confirmed. There is also concern that any further service pressures over the medium term will exaggerate the funding gap.

29. The Council subscribes to an external funding advisory service, with access to well developed and well respected modelling data. The financial modelling is based upon the latest available data and the following key assumptions have been made in the MTFS forecast (Baseline Model):

Council Tax

- (a) For Council Tax, it is assumed that Government will use the existing thresholds for Band D in both a roll-over in 2020/2021 and once a new spending review has been announced. The MTFS baseline model, therefore, includes an increase in Band D Council Tax of the higher of £5 or 2.99% in each year. This increase is for planning purposes only, and no decision has been made on the actual level of Council Tax increases in the medium term.
- (b) The projected increase in the Council tax-base is calculated using the Housing Trajectory in 2021/2022 and the two-year moving average, but an adjustment has been made to the two year average for a spike that occurred in 2019/2020 [which resulted in much higher growth than the previous three years increase] in order to show a realistic future growth rate.

Business Rates

- (a) The rateable values of non-domestic properties are subject to periodic revaluation by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA), normally every five years although as part of Business Rates Retention it has been suggested that a more frequent revaluation take place. The MTFS has been updated to reflect the revised baseline and yields based on the current position.
- (b) In estimating rates yield from retained business rates for the purpose of the MTFS, the NNDR1 2019/2020 statutory return has been used and no further growth has been assumed in the baseline model. The following key assumptions have also been made:
- The current provision for existing Appeals is sufficient;
 - There are no further significant changes to valuation schemes resulting from Tribunal or Court decisions;
 - There are no significant variations to the levels of rate reliefs;
 - The compensation to Local Authorities by way of Section 31 grants to cover the cost of measures introduced to help businesses (e.g. Small Business Rates Relief) will continue and will be increased annually in-line with inflation (if the grants are discontinued it is anticipated there will be a compensating increase in the yield).

Other Base Budget Changes

- (a) The revenue impact of the latest Capital Investment Programme needs and priorities has been included in the projections. Interest rate forecasts have been assumed to continue at low levels for the duration of the MTFS, although the recent 1% increase in PWLB borrowing rates has been factored into the forecasts. Investment income has been determined having regard to the level of expected balances, including capital receipts and expenditure, together with Reserves and Provisions held by the Council.

- (b) Provision has been made for the establishment of a Renewal and Repairs Fund for plant and equipment, including IT equipment, with revenue contributions built into the budget rather than recourse to borrowing and its associated costs. The extent to which this can be achieved in 2020/2021 will depend on the extent of savings achieved and other funding pressures that will impact on the delivery of a balanced budget.
- (c) An allowance has been made for increased pressures relating to the cost of waste disposal, and an additional waste round in 2020/2021 arising from the increase in the number of new properties across the District.
- (d) Provision has been made in the forecasts for the creation of core in-house capacity in the organisation to deliver large capital investment projects.
- (e) An allowance has been made for inflation on the Council's key contracts; and fees and charges. Allowance for a pay award and pay increments (including National Living Wage increases) over the period has also been included.
- (f) The MTFS incorporates estimated income from Ermine Street Housing Limited for the repayment of loans to reflect the commitments made in the approved Capital Programme.

Implications

30. In the writing of this report, taking into account the financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:

Legal

31. It is a legal requirement that the Council set a balanced budget for the ensuing financial year; the MTFS provides the framework for this and brings together funding and spending assumptions over the medium-term thereby identifying funding shortfalls and providing sufficient time for decisions to be made in order to achieve balanced budgets over the medium term.

Policy

32. The financial strategy needs to have regard to the "resource envelope" available to the Council. This includes the transition to the new funding model, introduced in 2013/2014, predicated on the Business Rates Retention Scheme which means that the Council's net spending is financed from local sources; Business Rates and Council Tax. As part of this continued transition the Government have been consulting on a Fair Funding Formula that will change the method of distributing funding levels across Councils based on "Need" and "Local Resources". In addition, the MTFS period is outside of the current Spending Review period and, as such, the Government has not set out the spending limits beyond 2020/2021.
33. The Council has adopted its Business Plan for the period 2019-2024. The areas of focus and key priorities within the Business Plan inform the policy framework for achieving the required ongoing savings whilst meeting the Council's strategic objectives and statutory obligations.

Finance

34. The MTFS is the Council's key financial planning document and sets out the Council's strategic approach to the management of its finances and Council Tax levels over the medium term, thereby allowing sufficient lead time to develop services consistent with the forecast resource envelope.
35. The MTFS forecast covering the period 2021/2022 to 2024/2025, is attached at **Appendix B**, and is based upon the assumptions underpinning the financial projections and overarching plan. The forecast shows the level of savings that need to be achieved to deliver the indicative Council Tax level.

Risk

36. There are inherent risks in developing a financial strategy over the medium term, not least due to the uncertainty of funding streams; this is particularly relevant as the outcomes of the Fair Funding Review and Spending Review post 2021/2022 are not known. In order to mitigate this risk alternative MTFS scenarios have been developed highlighting the impact of different assumptions on the Council's medium term financial outlook and these are shown at **Appendix B**.
37. There are a number of other risks that need to be understood and broadly these fall into two categories:
 - (a) Savings: it is inevitably more difficult to continue to reduce costs and put in place savings after an extended period of reduced funding, without impact on service provision. It should be noted that the legal requirement to set a balanced budget on an annual basis requires the Council to reduce its net costs in line with funding.
 - (b) Economic: The impact of Brexit and wider economic pressures may impact on the Council's finances over the medium term and it is, therefore, important for the Council to assess the potential level of potential risk. This could arise from (i) reduced economic activity adversely business rate income, (ii) reduced income arising from fees and charges, (iii) increased costs, including welfare related costs and (iv) potential impact on the Council's supply chain.
38. As the Council reviews the MTFS twice a year, it is able to assess the robustness of the MTFS forecast, reassess risk and, where appropriate, refresh the forecast.

Environmental

39. There are no environmental implications arising directly from the report.

Effect on Council Priority Areas

40. Timely and robust consideration of the Council's financial forecasts and budget setting is vital to ensure that financial performance is in line with expectations, emerging issues are identified and tackled and that Business Plan priorities are met.

Background Papers

Where the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 require documents to be open to inspection by members of the public, they must be available for inspection:

- (a) at all reasonable hours at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council;
- (b) on the Council's website; and
- (c) in the case of documents to be available for inspection pursuant to regulation 15, on payment of a reasonable fee required by the Council by the person seeking to inspect the documents at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

The following documents are relevant to this report:

- General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy – Report to Cabinet: 7 November 2018
- Budget Report – Report to Cabinet: 6 February 2019
- Business Plan 2019 - 2014 – Report to Council: 21 February 2019
- Medium Term Financial Strategy and General Fund Budget – Report to Council: 21 February 2019
- An Organisation for a Sustainable Future – Report to Cabinet: 1 May 2019
- General Fund Capital Programme Update and New Bids – Report to Cabinet: 6 November 2019
- MTFS – Forecasts and Assumptions: November 2019

Appendices

- A Medium Term Financial Strategy
- B Financial Forecasts 2021/2022 to 2024/2025

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Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020-2025

November 2019

Councillor John Williams
Lead Member for Finance

Peter Maddock
Head of Finance

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Introduction

1. The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is the Council's key financial planning and policy document. It sets out the:
 - Policy Context of the Strategy;
 - Linkage of the Medium Term Financial Strategy to the Business Plan;
 - Revenue Budget;
 - Capital Budget;
 - Financial Outlook – Capital and Revenue;
 - Efficiency Requirements;
 - Risk.
2. The MTFS has to be considered as part of a corporate wide process and it links into the wider decision making of the Council.

Policy Context of the MTFS

3. The MTFS is the Council's overarching Financial Strategy and Policy document. The purpose of the MTFS is to give financial expression to the Council's plans over the medium term in the context of the Council's longer term plans as set out in the approved Business Plan (approved by Council on 21 February 2019).
4. The MTFS sets out the Council's funding plan, for achieving its goals and priorities, thus balancing available financing and spending ambitions. It highlights the financial projections for financing, spending (revenue and capital), and reserves. It also highlights the underlying financial strategy, the financial assumptions, and the inherent financial risks. Importantly, it endeavours to link decisions on resource allocation to decisions on policy priorities.
5. In addition, the Council has approved corporate policies which, in addition to the MTFS, act as a cornerstone of its Financial Management. These include:
 - Investment Strategy;
 - Corporate Asset Plan;
 - Value for Money Strategy;
 - Procurement Strategy;
 - Organisational Development Strategy;
 - Risk Management Strategy;
 - Digital Strategy.
6. Looking ahead, the Council's financial planning process will continue to develop. It will promote the best use of limited financial resources and facilitate the alignment of those resources to the Council's priorities. Base budgets will be analysed with increasing sophistication and spending that does not contribute to Council priorities will come under increasing levels of scrutiny.

Linkage to the Business Plan

7. The Council's key priorities and areas of focus are expressed in its approved Business Plan and the allocation of resources over the medium term is intended to reflect the established priorities.
8. In developing the Business Plan and the MTFS, it is important to give full regard to the following:
 - national and local priorities;
 - stakeholder and partner views;
 - external drivers, including funding variations and requirements to improve economy, efficiency and effectiveness;
 - capital investment plans and their revenue implications;
 - risk assessments and financial contingency planning;
 - sensitivity analysis;
 - expected developments in services.
9. The Council needs to manage the continued high level of population growth and economic growth and the resulting impact on Council services, while continuing to improve, in order to meet its ambition to become an excellent authority. The MTFS must recognise these challenges and, in doing so, takes its lead from the strategic goals and priorities outlined in the approved Business Plan.

Revenue Budget

Revenue Budget Planning

10. The Council's financial planning for 2021/2022 to 2024/2025, as set out in this Strategy, is to contribute to the Council's overall vision and priorities by:
 - Securing stable and sustainable budgets within the financial resources available;
 - Ensuring that limited resources are focussed towards the Council's highest priorities;
 - Recognise risks and ensure an adequate level of financial protection against risk by maintaining a prudent level of financial reserves;
 - Securing an understanding of sources of potential finance;
 - Building financial capacity for fundamental change;
 - Being flexible to allow shifts in spending if circumstances change;
 - Ensuring that the Council is not overburdened with financial commitments.
11. The Council's MTFS is reviewed twice per year on a rolling basis and, through the revenue budget determination process, seeks to link decisions on resource allocation with decisions on policy priorities.

12. The clear message is that budget setting and medium term financial planning will be tough over the duration of the MTFS and the following financial objectives will, therefore, help guide budget proposals:
 - A sustainable medium term financial plan that allows the achievement of the Council's key objectives;
 - Realistic levels of year on year spending which are supportable via annual income streams and do not require the use of general reserves to support recurring expenditure;
 - General reserves should be maintained at all times at or above the agreed minimum level;
 - Constraining annual Council Tax increases to an acceptable level (and within any Referendum Limit issued by The Secretary of State);
 - The pursuance of "invest to save" opportunities with a financial return on the investment in transforming activities over an acceptable payback period;
 - A commitment to explore income generation opportunities and to maximise income from fees and charges;
 - A commitment to maximise efficiency savings.
13. Full regard will be given to Revenue Budget forecasts (annually updated in this Strategy) and any increase in the ongoing annual Revenue Budget (by way of use of the contingency provision or virement) will be subject to the expenditure being either legally unavoidable or considered affordable after taking into account:
 - any forecast savings targets;
 - Implications on Council Taxpayers in future years.
14. In the light of any forecast savings targets, every effort will be made to increase annual income sources and reduce annual expenditure without materially reducing front line services provided by the Council.
15. Notwithstanding 14 above, if the Council is facing a position whereby the ensuing year's forecast expenditure is more than the forecast total income to be received, it can elect to consult Council Taxpayers on either the option to reduce service levels or increase Council Tax and the Council will have regard to the consultation outcome before it reaches its final decision. The Council is required to hold a referendum for any Council Tax rise in excess of an amount set by the Secretary of State, in January each year, to ensure that Taxpayers support the proposed Council Tax increase.

Revenue Budget Policy

16. To ensure a continuously stable financial base for the provision of Council services and functions, the Council will ensure that annual ongoing General Fund revenue expenditure can be covered by annual income sources across the MTFS period.
17. The Council recognises that any significant use of reserves to fund ongoing expenditure commitments is unsustainable in the medium term.
18. A prudent level of revenue contingency [defined as Precautionary Items] will be maintained to enable unforeseen and "one off" needs (i.e. having no long term ongoing revenue commitment) to be considered for funding.

19. Under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, before approving the ensuing year's Capital and Revenue Budget, the Council is required to receive and take into account a report of the Chief Finance Officer on the robustness of the estimates leading to the Council's Council Tax requirement and the adequacy of financial reserves. Council needs to consider:
- affordability (having regard to Council Tax implications);
 - prudence (having regard to Council policies/strategies);
 - sustainability (having regard to forecast annual expenditure and income);
 - In addition, it must also take into account risks and impact on reserves.
20. The Council's financial strategy reflects the anticipated funding gap over the medium term and, as such, it highlights that over the period resources are not going to be able to sustain the current level of spend. Consequently, the Council has put in place a transformation programme comprising service and efficiency reviews that will look to reduce costs and better focus resources on the Council's Business Plan priorities.

Revenue Budget Monitoring

21. There is a need for effective budget monitoring to be undertaken in line with the Council's Financial Regulations as this will enable the Cabinet to put plans in place to address forecast budget issues.
22. The Cabinet will, therefore, receive regularly reports in respect of budget trends and, as part of these monitoring reports, will identify potential variations to the approved budget and consider appropriate action. Where possible, performance data will be developed over time and reported as part of the process of linking budget allocations to performance attainment.

Value for Money

23. Each Service/Function Budget submitted to Cabinet/Council as part of the annual budgetary process will have regard to the need to secure economy, effectiveness and efficiency as detailed in the Council's approved Value for Money Strategy.

Financial Regulations

24. Council, Cabinet and Lead Cabinet Members shall adhere to all Budgeting (including Budget Preparation, Monitoring and Control) requirements as set out in the approved Financial Regulations of the Council. Officers shall adhere to detailed financial procedures issued by the Head of Finance (as the statutory Chief Finance Officer) as required by Financial Regulations.

One-Off Savings, Fortuitous Income and Fixed Term Funding

25. Given that the Council, from time to time, achieves one-off revenue savings or receives fortuitous income these monies will ordinarily accrue to the general contingency and could be used to meet:
- any unavoidable one-off expenditure;
 - one-off expenditure consistent with Business Plan Priorities.

Growth Prospects

26. The Local Government Finance Act 2012, and associated subsequent regulations, introduced extensive changes to local government finance from April 2013, including provisions for local authorities to retain a portion of the revenue that is collected from the Non-Domestic Rates payable in respect of properties situated in their area.
27. The Business Rates Retention Scheme is based upon a policy initiative to promote economic growth through aligning financial and business growth benefit for Councils and, given the economic outlook and the increased reliance on locally raised taxation, the Council's financial planning needs to address the benefits and risks of this funding structure. The Council will, therefore, actively pursue growth opportunities through its Economic Growth Strategy in order to maximise revenue from this source but also give due regard to the potential for and impact of reduced yield arising, for example, from rating appeals (i.e. reductions in rateable value).

Investment Opportunities

28. The Council has finite resources and will seek to supplement its resource base by exploring income generation opportunities, with appropriate emphasis on the pursuance of "invest to save" opportunities where statutory powers exist and where there is a financial return on the investment over an acceptable payback period. This includes, for example, returns generated from the wholly owned company (Ermine Street Housing), investment in the Council's commercial property portfolio in line with the approved Investment Strategy with a view to enhancing revenue benefits and deriving a financial payback from acquisition of new income earning assets.
29. The Investment Strategy sets out how the Council determines its capital investment priorities in particular in relation to corporate priorities taking into account the capital resources available including borrowing in line with the Council's approved Prudential Indicators. In determining the appropriateness of investment opportunities, the provisions of the Investment Strategy should be fully observed.

Reserves

30. The Cabinet, as part of the annual budgetary process, or at such other times where it is necessary, will identify one-off unavoidable expenditure and one-off expenditure for identified requirements. Such funding will be held in earmarked reserves until spent but will be subject to annual review by the Cabinet as part of the annual budget process to determine whether the monies still need to be held and that the balances held comply with professional guidance.
31. The Cabinet will, as part of the provisional outturn each year, review the level of General Fund Balance based on a risk assessment. The General Fund Balance should not be adjusted without a full risk assessment.
32. Thus, the policy on reserves is to:
 - (a) establish earmarked reserves for specific commitments and make them subject to review as outlined above;
 - (b) only adjust the General Fund Balance based on a full risk assessment.

Capital Budget

Capital Strategy

35. The Council's Capital Programme is determined, prioritised, delivered and monitored in accordance with the Council's approved Capital Strategy. This Strategy is subject to annual review by the Cabinet.
36. The Capital Strategy outlines the Council's approach to capital investment ensuring that it is directed to the Council's Business Plan priorities. It provides the framework for the Council to maximise the finance available for investment together with the allocation of capital reserves.
37. The Strategy, therefore, provides a mechanism for the Council, the Cabinet and its officers to manage, measure and monitor the Council's Capital Programme including an annual review of investment needs targeted to key investment priorities.
38. Capital Scheme Bids will be evaluated and prioritised in accordance with the approved Capital Strategy and based on the priorities in the approved Business Plan.

Capital Finance Policy

39. The Council has a number of methods of ensuring the most effective use of available capital finance. These include:
 - (i) The Council will each year consider the proposed Capital Programme having regard the CIPFA prudential indicators. Council will consider the extent of borrowing based on these indicators.
 - (ii) The Council will seek to maximise resources for capital investment from all potential sources.
 - (iii) Any savings made on capital schemes will potentially reduce the need for external borrowing.
 - (iv) A prudential financial framework will be maintained so that, once priorities have been determined, no capital scheme can be authorised (and no commitment made) until:
 - (a) capital finance is in place to cover the full capital costs; and
 - (b) it has been determined that the ongoing revenue cost consequences are affordable in the light of forward three year Revenue Budget forecasts and related Council Tax consequences.
40. An annual review of the Capital Programme will be undertaken and, in doing so, full regard will be given to the Prudential Indicators before any proposals/decisions are made in respect of a revised programme. There is a need to be cautious in terms of future borrowing requirements given the capital financing costs and future decisions will need to balance the need for, and cost of, investment or failure to invest. Endeavours will be made to support revenue contributions to capital expenditure to ensure that funding is available for essential ongoing investment needs.

Efficiency Requirements

41. The ongoing financial challenges will require the Council to continue to make radical changes in order to transform itself to deliver sustainable services to its residents. The indications are that future spend pressures will significantly exceed the forecast growth in resources (with a significant impact on the delivery of services), which requires the Council to plan for ongoing efficiencies in relation to the provision of services. The financial planning process will, therefore, facilitate the identification and delivery of efficiency savings with emphasis on challenging service delivery, comparing performance, outcomes and delivery options, ensuring competitiveness and consulting fully on emerging proposals and service options.
42. In response to the reduction in Government Grant, set against anticipated spending demands, and the ongoing commitment to efficient and cost effective service delivery, the Council has put in place a programme of initiatives designed to review services delivered, review and improve internal processes and reappraise the workforce model required to deliver services in the most efficient and effective manner.
43. The Council will continue to look for efficiencies and better ways of working as part of the day to day operations of the business, including:
 - (a) Creating capacity through additional efficiencies and service delivery options;
 - (b) Implementing demand management strategies including investment in technology to enable Channel Shift;
 - (c) Increasing Business Rate income through economic development activity;
 - (d) Raising additional revenue such as increasing income and external funding;
 - (e) Identifying opportunities to “invest to save”.
44. As part of this process, all bids for additional resources must be accompanied by a quality business case and such proposals will be subjected to more rigorous challenge through the strong corporate ‘management line’ within Services, as well as peer review by other Services.



Risk

45. As far as possible, changes in the Council's financing and spending from year to year should be predictable and manageable so that key services can be protected. That can never be entirely the case, hence the need for the Council to recognise and manage financial risks, including the identification of the significant risks in terms of the spending assumptions (see section 43 above). Sound financial planning processes are critical in predicting and managing the limited resources available.
46. The purpose of this strategy is to provide the key financial planning tool of the Council. Without forward financial planning difficulties will arise in respect of:
- not meeting the Council's own policy on Council Tax increases;
 - not meeting any Government targets on Council Tax increases so as to avoid a Council Tax Referendum;
 - not having sufficient Capital Resource to fund the approved Capital Programme.
47. It is important that, in considering Revenue and Capital Budgets, factors which could make the projections worse are identified. The Council will, therefore, as part of its decision making, consider the risk implications of all proposals. By adopting the actions in this Strategy, the risks outlined above should be mitigated.

Summary & Conclusion

48. This Strategy sets out how the Council will resource its Revenue Budget and Capital Programme over the Medium Term having regard to the policy objectives of keeping Council Tax increases within Government guidelines.
49. The MTFS represents the Council's overarching Financial Strategy and Policy document and it gives financial expression to the Council's plans for the next five years, in the context of the plans set out in its Business Plan. It, therefore, sets out the Council's funding plan, for achieving its goals and priorities, balancing available financing and spending ambitions and, in doing so, highlights the underlying financial strategy, the financial assumptions, and the inherent financial risks. Importantly, decisions on resource allocation are linked to decisions on policy priorities.
50. The MTFS will be kept under review and, as a minimum, will be reviewed:
- In Autumn prior to considering the annual budget setting report to Council;
 - As part of the budget setting report, taking into account the financial forecasts that are available at that time.



Medium Term Financial Strategy

Financial Forecasts 2021/2022 to 2024/2025

	2020/2021 £'000	2021/2022 £'000	2022/2023 £'000	2023/2024 £'000	2024/2025 £'000	
Council Tax	9,548	10,027	10,504	11,008	11,522	
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Section 31 Grant	3,176	-	-	-	-	
Collection Fund Surplus	626	-	-	-	-	
Total Resource	22,642	15,996	15,927	16,000	16,549	
Net Budget Requirement: Before Adjustments	20,016	19,865	19,207	18,361	17,682	
Budget Pressures *	1,229	-	-	-	-	
Savings/Income Identified	(1,740)	(1,045)	(1,152)	(1,115)	-	
Other Base Budget Changes	360	387	306	436	-	
Net Budget Requirement	19,865	19,207	18,361	17,682	17,682	
Net Resource Position	(2,777)	3,211	2,434	1,682	1,133	5,683

* Further service pressures will, however, exaggerate the funding gap and, wherever possible, should be managed within existing cash limit budgets.

MTFS: Key Assumptions

The assumptions are outlined at paragraph 29 of the report and are summarised as follows:

- (a) Council Tax: An increase in Band D Council Tax of the higher of £5 or 2.99% in each year.
- (b) Council Tax: The increase in the Council tax-base is calculated using the Council's housing trajectory for 2021/2022 and the two-year moving average thereafter.
- (c) Business Rates: No further growth has been assumed in the baseline mode, balancing the opportunities of the growth area with the current economic caution, but an inflationary increase has been applied to the Business rates multiplier.
- (d) Business Rates: The current provision for existing Appeals is sufficient and there are no further significant changes to valuation schemes resulting from Tribunal or Court decisions or to the levels of rate reliefs.
- (e) Other Base Budget Changes: Allowance has been made for the following:
 - The revenue impact of the latest Capital Investment Programme needs and priorities has been included in the projections.
 - Interest rate forecasts have been assumed to continue at low levels for the duration of the MTFS, but the recent increase in PWLB rates by 1% has been factored into the modelling.
 - Investment income has been determined having regard to the level of expected balances, including capital receipts and expenditure, together with Reserves held.
 - An allowance has been made for increased pressures relating to the cost of waste disposal, and an additional waste round in 2020/2021 arising from the increase in the number of new properties across the District.
 - Provision has been made for the establishment of a Renewal and Repairs Fund with revenue contributions built into the budget rather than recourse to borrowing and its associated costs.
 - Provision has been made in the forecasts for the creation of core in-house capacity in the organisation to deliver large capital investment projects.
 - An allowance has been made for inflation on the Council's key contracts; and fees and charges. Allowance for a pay award and pay increments (including National Living Wage increases) over the period has also been included.
 - The MTFS incorporates estimated income from Ermine Street Housing Limited for the repayment of loans to reflect the commitments made in the Capital Programme.

Agenda Item 9



REPORT TO: Cabinet

4 December 2019

LEAD CABINET MEMBER: Cllr Neil Gough

LEAD OFFICER: Director of Corporate Services

2019-20 Quarter Two Performance Report

Executive Summary

1. This report presents Cabinet with the Council's Quarter two (Q2) position regarding its operational key performance indicators, for consideration, comment and onward submission to Cabinet.
2. These performance reporting arrangements allow performance monitoring and management to take place by providing opportunity to examine quality of service provision, identify any areas of concern and decide on the appropriate action.
3. This is not a key decision.

Recommendations

4. Cabinet is invited to:
 - a) Review the Operational Key Performance Indicator (OKPI) results and comments in this report at **Appendix A**, recommending, where appropriate, any actions, including redeployment of resources, required to address issues identified for consideration by Cabinet.

Reasons for Recommendations

5. These recommendations are required to enable senior management and members to understand the organisation's performance. The information included within performance reports contributes to the evidence base for the ongoing review of priorities and enables, where appropriate, redirection of resources to reflect emerging priorities and address areas of concern.

Details

Operational Key Performance Indicator (OKPI) report

6. This report presents Operational Key Performance Indicator (OKPI) results that are aligned to high-level, business-as-usual activities that underpin the successful delivery of the Council's service plans. The OKPI report is submitted to CEMT monthly, and Scrutiny and Overview Committee and Cabinet quarterly.
7. The data in **Appendix A** shows actual performance against target and intervention levels and accompanying comments, as provided by performance indicator owners. The Council uses a 'traffic light' system to denote performance, whereby:
 - **Green** signifies performance targets which have been met or surpassed;
 - **Amber** denotes performance below target but above intervention level. It is the responsibility of service managers to monitor such performance closely, putting in place remedial actions at the operational level to raise standards as required.
 - **Red** denotes performance below the intervention level. This represents underperformance of concern, and should prompt interventions at the strategic level, which are likely to involve the reallocation of resources and proposals to redesign how services are provided.

Options

1. Identify any action, including redeployment of resources, required to address issues highlighted within this report and its appendices.
2. Request clarification from performance indicator owners on any aspects relating to performance indicators, results and comments contained within this report and its appendices.
3. Commission more detailed performance reports from performance indicator owners that drill-down into specific areas relating to the one or more of the performance indicators, results and comments contained within this report and its appendices.

Implications

8. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:-

There are no significant implications beyond those raised by performance indicator owners within the comments section of the Operational Key Performance Indicator report.

Consultation responses

9. All performance indicator results and commentaries are provided by or at the instruction of performance indicator owners.

Effect on Council Priority Areas

10. The OKPI report allows business-as-usual performance to be monitored and managed across the Council's range of activities, including those within each of the 2019-24 Business Plan priority areas, as detailed below:
 - Growing local businesses and economies
 - Housing that is truly affordable for everyone to live in
 - Being green to our core
 - A modern and caring Council

Background Papers

SCDC Performance Management Framework – this document will be refreshed to account for revised performance reporting methods adopted for the 2019-20 financial year and beyond.

Appendices

Appendix A: Operational Key Performance Indicator Report

Report Author:

Kevin Ledger – Senior Policy and Performance Officer
Telephone: (01954) 713018

Phil Bird – Corporate Programme Manager
Telephone – (01954) 713309

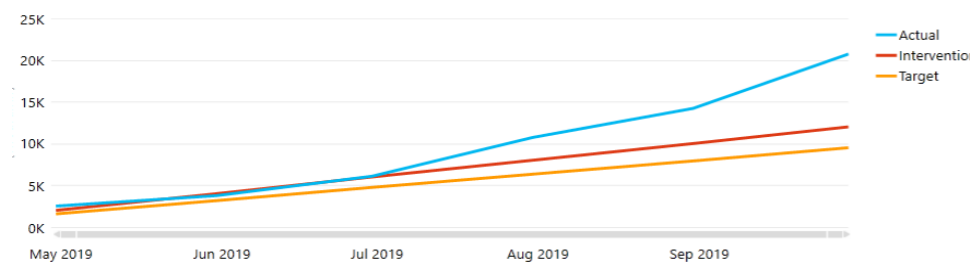
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Key Performance Indicator and Owner, organised by Directorate and Service Area **Actual** **Target** **Intervention** **Comments**

Housing Advice

AH212 £s spent on Bed and Breakfast accommodation (year to date)

Sue Carter



Month	Actual	Intervention	Target
Jul	10724	6333	8000
Aug	14210	7917	10000
Sep	20720	9500	12000

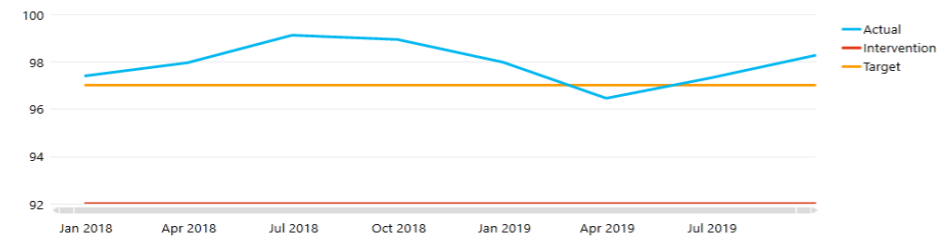
The B&B spend is currently at a level which requires intervention and, as such, has triggered a more in depth scrutiny of the B&B related processes. However, it should be noted that the overall level of B&B usage, particularly when viewed in the wider context of the Housing Advice and Homelessness budget, is unlikely to result in an overspend.

As a result of the greater scrutiny and intervention that has taken place, a helpful meeting has been held with the temporary accommodation provider. The current usage of B&B is linked to applicants failing the hostel risk assessment rather than an overall increase in the demand for temporary accommodation. As a result of the meeting, positive process changes have been identified that should allow a greater number of temporary accommodation referrals to be accepted and those involved accommodated without the use of B&B. In addition, an exploratory strand of work is underway to trial the set up and running of HMOs via Shire Homes Ltd. This work is to assess whether HMOs are a financially viable option to help increase the accommodation choices for single people in the district whilst potentially reducing the use of B&B for single people.

Housing and Property Services

AH204 % tenants satisfied with responsive repairs

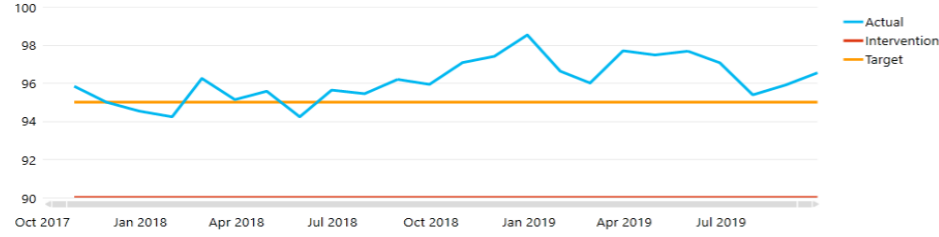
Geoff Clark



Month	Actual	Intervention	Target
Jun	97.31	97	92
Sep	98.27	97	92

SH327 % of repair job appointments kept

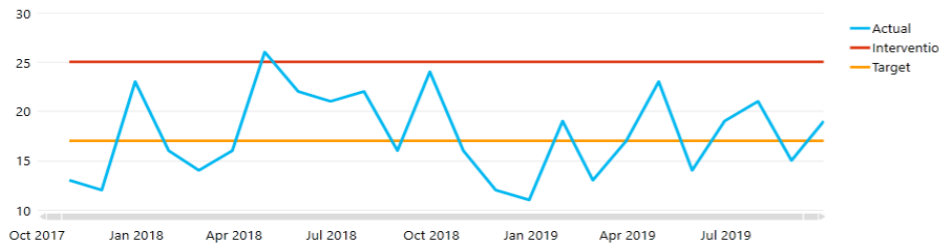
Geoff Clark



Month	Actual	Intervention	Target
Jul	95.4	95	90
Aug	95.9	95	90
Sep	96.5	95	90

AH211 Average days to re-let all housing stock

Geoff Clark



Month	Actual	Intervention	Target
Jul	21	17	25
Aug	15	17	25
Sep	19	17	25

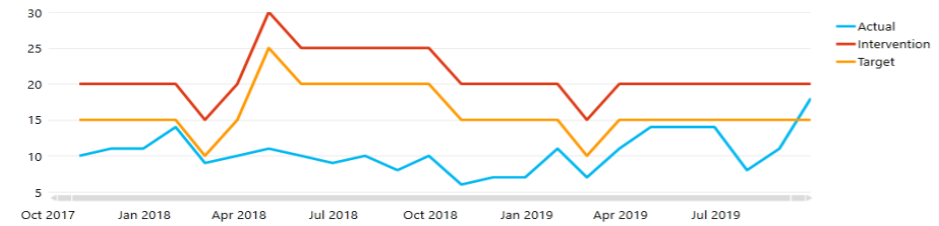
Although categorised as 'Amber' September's **AH211** result of 19 days continues to reflect a high level of performance, comparing with an upper quartile of 22 days amongst 23 Housemark benchmarking organisations for 2018/19 quarter 4.

Key Performance Indicator and Owner, organised by Directorate and Service Area **Actual** **Target** **Intervention** **Comments**

Benefits

FS112 Average number of days to process new HB/CTS claims

Dawn Graham

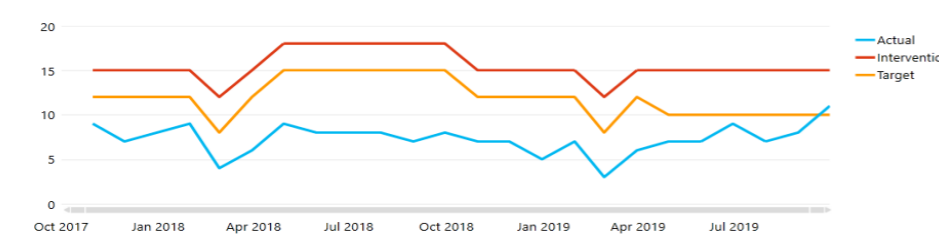


Jul	8	15
Aug	11	15
Sep	18	15

20 September's performance results for **FS112** and **FS113** have been affected by late August leave and the end of school holidays. Within the team there are three absences and two vacancies - one maternity, one secondment and one person covering a long term sickness absence (now a vacant role). Vacancies are currently being covered and it is likely that new staff will be in place by the middle of November. A review of absences will be undertaken at the end of October to look at options.

FS113 Average number of days to process HB/CTS change events

Dawn Graham



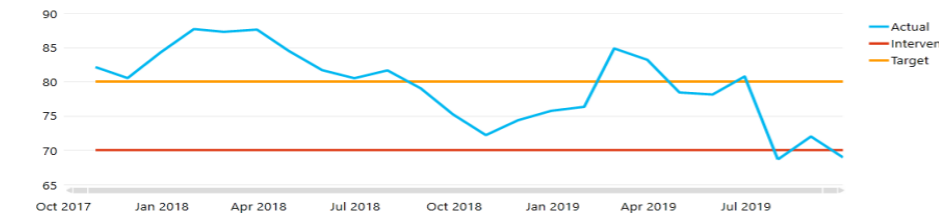
Jul	7	10
Aug	8	10
Sep	11	10

The performance for new claims over the entire financial year to date is 13.6 compared with target of 15 days; performance for change of circumstances over the financial year to date is 8.63 compared with target of 10 days.
It should be noted that the KPI yearly target has seen a reduction from 20 to 15 days (5 days) for new claims compared with 2018/19, and from 12 to 10 days (2 Days) for change of circumstances.

Contact Centre

CC302 % calls to the Contact Centre resolved first time

Dawn Graham

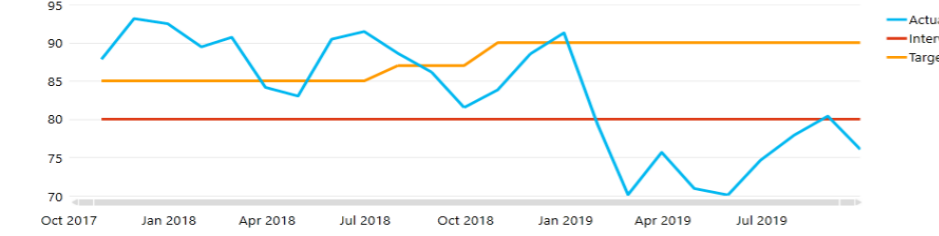


Jul	68.6	80
Aug	72.0	80
Sep	68.9	80

70
70
70

CC303 % of calls to the Contact Centre that are handled (answered)

Dawn Graham

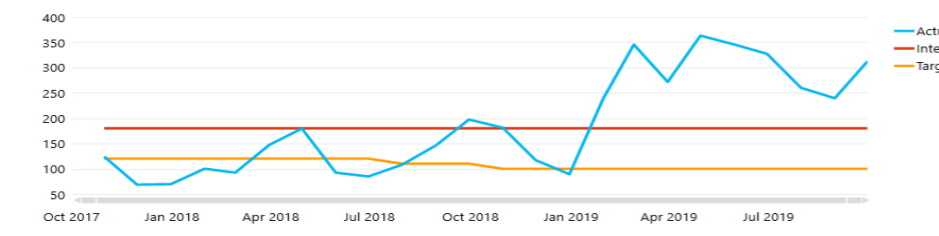


Jul	77.9	90
Aug	80.4	90
Sep	76.1	90

80 Performance in relation to **CC302**, **CC303** and **CC307** is affected by levels of staffing; we now have 6 new staff within the Contact Centre who are currently being trained. They have started a 13 week training program and this means improvements in performance will be incremental during the rest of this calendar year.
80 The Council is offering apprenticeships to aid the retention of staff within the Customer Contact Centre and the Contact Centre Manager is reviewing the structure with a view to the addition of a higher grade advisor post to allow for career progression.

CC307 Average call answer time (seconds)

Dawn Graham



Jul	260	100
Aug	239	100
Sep	312	100

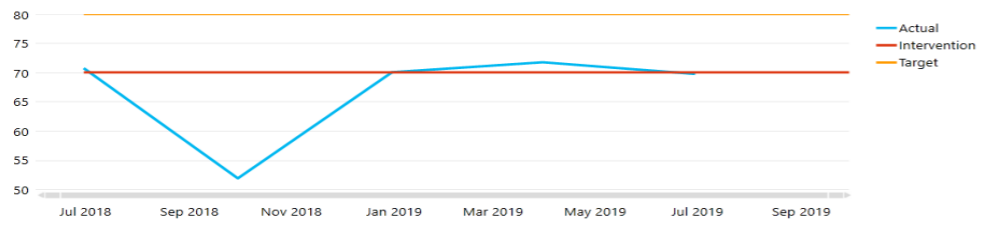
180
180
180

Key Performance Indicator and Owner, organised by Directorate and Service Area **Actual** **Target** **Intervention** **Comments**

Corporate Services

CC305 % of formal complaints resolved within timescale (all SCDC)

EMT



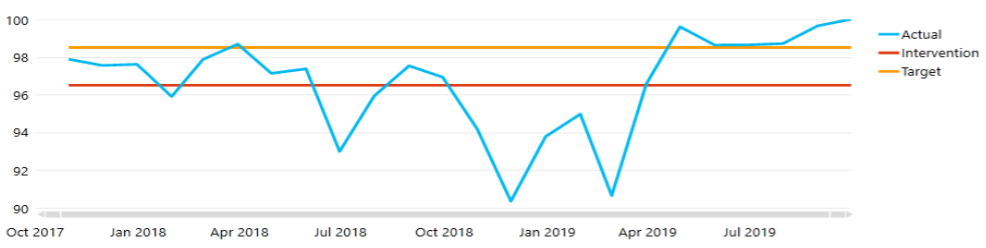
Jun	69.7	80
Sep		80

Initial figures received indicate that 5 of 5 Planning, 3 of 5 Corporate Services and 18 of 22 Affordable Homes complaints responses sent within quarter 2 were within deadline. This equates to 81% of responses having been sent within target timescale based on the results that are currently available. The final Q2 figure is pending the Health and Environmental Services result. This will be made available and a full quarter 2 complaints report presented once finalised.

Finance

FS109 % undisputed invoices paid in 30 days

Peter Maddock



Jul	98.7	98.5
Aug	99.7	98.5
Sep	100.0	98.5

Ongoing work between accounts staff and staff in service areas has led to outstanding performance in relation to **FS109** during September. From October there has been a drive to reduce the amount of paper invoices being processed by accounts payable which should help maintain high levels of performance, reduce paper usage and save money.

HR

FS125 Staff sickness days per FTE excluding SSWS (non-cumulative)

Susan Gardner Craig

Line chart not included - historic results not currently available.

Jun	1.96	1.75
Sep	2.21	1.75

This quarter's performance equates to a 4.5% reduction in the number of sickness days taken since the same quarter last year, despite our FTE having increased by 23 during this period. During quarter 2 there was a higher than normal level of sickness in July, however August saw a reduction of 207 days lost to sickness (reducing the value of the hours lost by £17,700) in comparison to July. September saw a further reduction of 79 days from August's result (reducing the value of hours lost by a further £9,500).

Revenues

FS102 % Housing Rent collected

Katie Kelly

Line chart not included as scale means that actual is indistinguishable from target

Jul	95.2	95.4
Aug	95.7	96.0
Sep	96.8	97.1

Performance against **FS102** is Amber. We have seen significant staffing changes since March 2019 - out of a team of just six, there has been one retirement, two team members who have moved to other SCDC jobs and one long-term sickness. Posts have been successfully recruited to, however there will be a period where the team are not at full capacity whilst training is delivered. In addition, the impact of Universal Credit (UC) is starting to take hold, and whilst staff are working hard to ensure that tenants are well aware of their responsibilities when it comes to payment of rent when on UC, tenants are invariably finding the transition difficult. We continue to signpost tenants to budgeting / debt advice agencies. Performance in this area is being monitored closely.

FS104 % NNDR collected (year to date)

Katie Kelly

Line chart not included as scale means that actual is indistinguishable from target

Jul	42.8	41.0
Aug	51.3	50.2
Sep	60.3	59.8

Performance in this area is being monitored closely.

FS105 % Council Tax collected (year to date)

Katie Kelly

Line chart not included as scale means that actual is indistinguishable from target

Jul	43.5	40.5
Aug	52.6	50.0
Sep	61.7	59.8

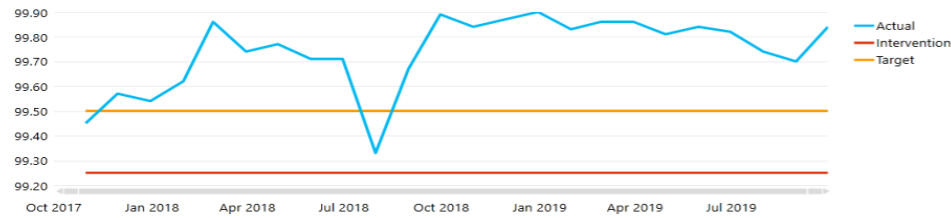
39.7
49.0
58.6

Key Performance Indicator and Owner, organised by Directorate and Service Area **Actual** **Target** **Intervention** **Comments**

Shared Waste Service

ES408 % of bins collected on schedule (SSWS)

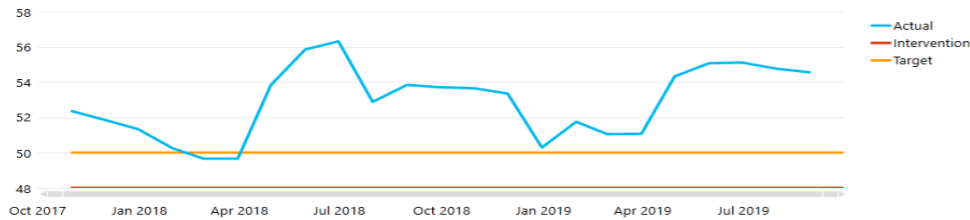
Trevor Nicoll



Jul	99.74	99.5	99.25
Aug	99.70	99.5	99.25
Sep	99.84	99.5	99.25

ES418 % of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting (cumulative)

Trevor Nicoll

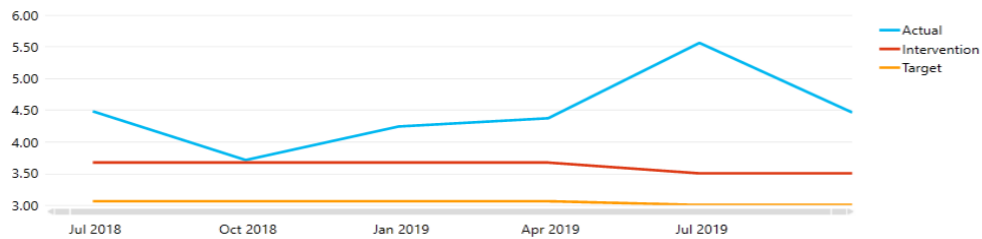


Jul	54.76	50	48
Aug	54.55	50	48
Sep		50	48

ES418 September result becomes available shortly and will be reported at the earliest opportunity.

SF786a Staff sickness days per FTE - SSWS

Trevor Nicoll



Jun	5.56	3	3.5
Sep	4.46	3	3.5

Additional HR resources have been specifically allocated to support waste service managers with their case work and we have also recently appointed a new Occupational Health provider to support the Council with its absence and health management. Looking at individual monthly figures, both August and September saw a decrease from the months that preceded them. These decreases are due to the resolution of a number of long term absence cases.

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Environ. Health & Licensing

ES406 % major non-compliances resolved (in rolling year)

Jane Hunt

Jun		90	80
Sep		90	80

ES406 and **ES401** figures are currently unavailable due to an ICT issue that is preventing the extraction of data from the system. This issue is being investigated and relates only to the production of performance data - it is not impacting on ability to investigate and resolve non-compliance cases. Results to be reported once resolved.

ES401 % business satisfaction with regulation service

Jane Hunt

Jun	87.5	90	80
Sep		90	80

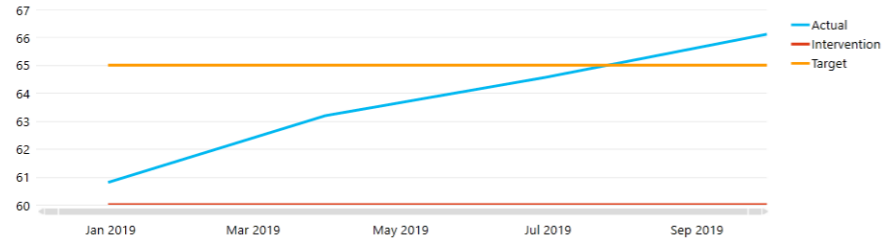
Key Performance Indicator and Owner, organised by Directorate and Service Area

Key Performance Indicator and Owner, organised by Directorate and Service Area	Actual	Target	Intervention	Comments
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Dev. Management

PN510 % of major applications determined within 13 weeks or agreed timeline (designation period cumulative)

Sharon Brown



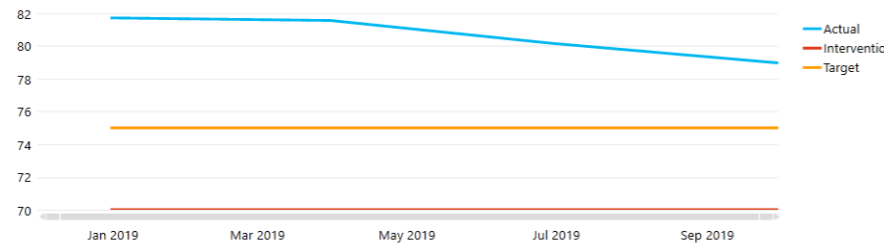
Jun	64.56	65	60
Sep	66.11	65	60

June's **PN510 and PN511** results have been verified and updated based on Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) published data for quarter 1. As a result there has been a minor change from the provisional quarter 1 results of 62.66% previously reported for PN510 and 80.07% for PN511.

The Sep result is provisional based on Q2 data submission to MHCLG. This is subject to confirmation following MHCLG publication of final verified results in the coming weeks.

PN511 % of non-major applications determined within 8 weeks or agreed timeline (desig. period cumulative)

Sharon Brown



Jun	80.15	75	70
Sep	78.96	75	70

September's result is the final result within the current MHCLG designation assessment period, which ran from April 2017 - March 2019. The designation threshold for Major applications (PN510) was 60% and for non-minor applications (PN511) it was 70%.

PN512 % of appeals against major planning permissions refusal allowed (designation period cumulative)

Sharon Brown

Jun	6.38	5	10
Sep		5	10

PN512 and PN513 results for quarter 1 have been provisionally obtained combining information from MHCLG and Planning Inspectorate datasheets. This is in advance of MHCLG publication of a specific appeals designation datasheet, which is expected in the coming months.

PN513 % of appeals against non-major planning permission refusal allowed (designation period cumulative)

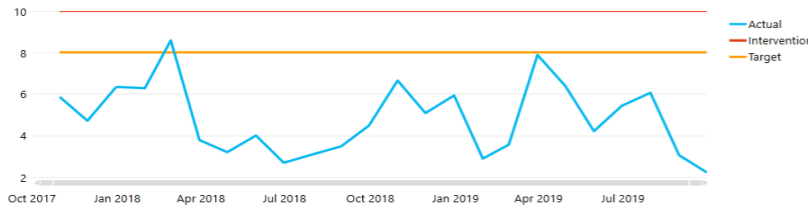
Sharon Brown

Jun	1.30	5	10
Sep		5	10

Provisional quarter two figures will be reported at the earliest possible opportunity following the update of Planning Inspectorate datasheets. The current assessment period runs until Dec 2019 and the designation threshold for both major and non-major appeals is set at 10%.

Land Charges

SX025 Average Land Charges search response days



Jun	5.4	8	10
Aug	3.1	8	10
Sep	2.2	8	10

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Agenda Item 10



REPORT TO: Cabinet 4th December 2019

LEAD CABINET MEMBER: Cllr Handley, Lead Cabinet Member for Environmental Health and Licensing

LEAD OFFICER: Trevor Nicoll, Assistant Director for Waste and Projects

Streetlighting Policy and LED upgrade program

Executive Summary

1. This report presents to Cabinet a policy for South Cambridgeshire District Council's (SCDC) Streetlighting Service (Appendix A) for approval.
2. Under the priority of 'being green to our core', SCDC has committed within its current Business Plan to upgrade its stock of around 1800 streetlights to LEDS by March 2021, to save between 60-70% in energy for Parish Councils.
3. The policy document details this commitment, including a specification for the LEDs and captures SCDC's role and the principles and standards for the streetlighting service generally.

Key Decision

4. Yes. The key decision was first published in the October 2019 Forward Plan.

Recommendations

5. It is recommended that Cabinet approves the SCDC Streetlighting Policy document.
6. Following its approval, the policy will be included on the SCDC website and will inform the communications plan. The service will work closely with parishes and Members throughout the delivery of the upgrade.

Reasons for Recommendations

7. The policy will enable the commissioning of LED upgrade works in accordance with SCDC's requirements and the completion of works by March 2021. It also supports the ongoing delivery of the streetlighting service and sets out what residents and stakeholders should expect of the service.

Details

8. The policy document captures the current streetlighting service and role of the Council in its undertaking, which includes service standards under the current streetlighting maintenance contract shared with Fenland District Council.
9. The document includes, in line with new national guidance, a position on attachments to its streetlights and a requirement for the approval of attachments by SCDC in order to ensure the safety of its streetlights. This has been developed with reference to Cambridgeshire County Council's (CCC) policy and tailored to SCDC streetlights.
10. The policy document also includes SCDCs commitment to improve its streetlighting stock by upgrading lamps to LEDs, which will include the replacement of units where conditions require this and where more cost effective. LEDs are shown to improve lighting quality, achieve considerable energy savings and offer the best solution for replacement of traditional sodium lamps currently used within the majority of SCDC streetlights, which are being phased out.
11. The LED specification for SCDC streetlights includes dimming lights by 40% to give 60% light output between the hours of 10pm and 6am, in line with the CCC street lighting specification, which will improve the consistency of lighting across the district and support any potential future alignment of services.
12. Dimming LEDs by 40% to 60% light output also helps to achieve further environmental benefits without a visible reduction in the lighting quality. A dimming effect becomes more visible to the eye when dimming levels exceed a reduction of 60%.
13. The LED specification has been demonstrated within a successful trial of the LEDs on SCDC streetlights within the parishes of Ickleton and Hardwick, which were set up to obtain learning as part of preparations for a wider roll out.
14. Modelling of the LED specification on SCDC streetlights indicates energy savings will meet SCDCs intended aims of between 60 and 70% savings, with resulting financial savings benefiting Parish Councils and their communities. SCDC will also benefit from reduced maintenance costs due to the increased lifespan of LED lamps and the replacement of older units. Both environmental and financial benefits will be monitored and reported upon.
15. Officers will work closely with Parish Councils throughout the delivery of the upgrade, which will include identifying all heritage/ornate streetlights, to be included with within a second phase of works.
16. The LED upgrade is a first step in the development of SCDCs streetlighting stock, following which a range of other potential 'smarter' developments can be explored which make use of this existing infrastructure, including their use as electric vehicle charging points.

Options

17. In contrast to current sodium lamps LEDs can be programmed to varying lighting levels to suit requirements. Nationally night-time street lighting approaches vary, with some authorities opting to switch off lights, usually between 12 midnight and 6am, some applying various dimming regimes, and some choosing to maintain lights at 100% output throughout the night.
18. CCC operate most streetlights (around 52,000 across the County) with SCDC's relatively small stock of streetlights (around 1800 units) distributed amongst these lights. CCC lights are set to dim down to 60% of light output between the hours of 10pm to 6am in residential areas. The lights have been dimmed to these levels since the PFI replacement program concluded in 2016, following periods of testing and consultation.
19. Any regime adopted by SCDC as part of the upgrade to LEDs that was visibly different to the current regime operated by the County Council would create inconsistencies in lighting within the district. Part-night lighting (switching lights off for a period), for example, would result in the same street within a parish having some lights on and some off during the night.
20. Alternative regimes within an acceptable range of the CCC lighting regime were modelled by way of comparison, in view of SCDCs environmental aims, and revealed that whilst further energy savings could be made from the inclusion of CCCs dimming (an additional 6%) when compared with not dimming, minimal further savings (an additional 2%) could be achieved by decreasing dimming further to within an acceptable lighting level.

Implications

Financial

21. SCDC has committed budget of £0.750m for the LED upgrade and unit replacement program, largely from the Renewable Energy Reserve. With a further £0.545m being requested as part of the 2020/21 budget process. This report details no additional budget requirements.

Consultation responses

22. LEDs were installed on all SCDC streetlights in the parishes of Ickleton and Hardwick, working closely with Parish Councils, and operational by the autumn 2018. Since installation positive feedback has been received from the parishes. The policy is also similar to that in place by CCC.

Effect on Council Priority Areas

Growing local businesses and economies

23. No effect on this priority area.

Housing that is truly affordable for everyone to live in

24. No effect on this priority area.

Being green to our core

25. The LED upgrade aims to achieve energy savings of between 60 and 70% in the operation of SCDC streetlighting.

A modern and caring Council

26. The LED upgrade program is a move towards modernising the streetlighting stock and from which a range of potential opportunities to provide additional services to communities can be explored.

Background Papers

None

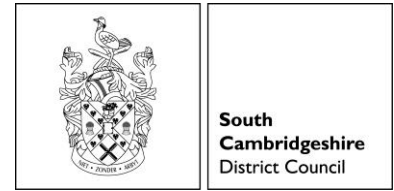
Appendices

Appendix A: South Cambridgeshire District Council Streetlighting Policy

Report Author:

Helen Taylor – Development Officer

Telephone: (01954) 713452



South Cambridgeshire District Council's Streetlighting Policy

Version 1

October 2019

1. Background and purpose

In accordance with the Highways Act 1980, Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and Electricity at Work Regulations 1989, there is no statutory requirement for local authorities to provide public lighting. Councils do, however, have the power to provide lighting and once provided, have a duty of care to ensure that assets for which they retain responsibility are maintained in a safe condition.

Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC), as the Highway Authority, is responsible for all streetlighting on the public highway and maintains most streetlights (around 52,000) across Cambridgeshire, including illuminated signs and bollards.

South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC), as a permitted lighting authority, has retained responsibility for a small number of lights (around 1800), defined as 'footway lighting' which are generally located in residential areas within a number of villages across South Cambridgeshire. No new additional footway lighting is provided by the authority. For simplicity the service refers to its footway lights as streetlights and will refer to them as such throughout this document.

The SCDC streetlights are maintained in partnership with Parish Councils and under this partnership arrangement SCDC has responsibility for maintaining the lights whilst Parish Councils pay for electricity.

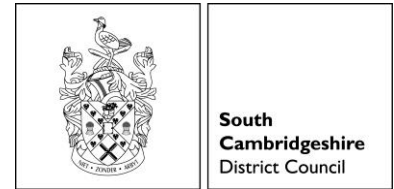
This policy document outlines the responsibilities, basic principles and standards for SCDC's maintenance of its streetlights and planned improvements to this stock. The document has been developed with reference to CCC's Street Lighting Policy and in consultation with parish and neighbouring district councils.

The document will be reviewed every 3 years or as required.

2. Partnership working

Given the shared arrangements for street lighting in Cambridgeshire, SCDC recognises the importance of working closely with partners in the delivery and development of the service. In addition to the involvement of partners in the development of this policy, SCDC has entered into joint maintenance arrangements with Fenland District Council and has set up a Cambridgeshire Street Lighting Network with a view to future service developments.

The service will also work closely with Parish Councils and Members in the maintenance and development of street lighting.



3. Streetlighting maintenance

SCDC is responsible for the following in accordance with all relevant standards and legislation:

- Providing and maintaining an inventory of all streetlights it maintains.
- The repair and maintenance of all streetlights on the inventory.
- Cyclical structural and electrical testing of all streetlights on the inventory.
- The replacement of streetlights on the inventory where necessary.
- The removal of streetlights, where agreed with Parish Councils.
- Assessment and approval of any attachments to the streetlights on the inventory.
- Labelling and numbering of all streetlights on the inventory. All SCDC lights are identifiable by an 'SC' prefix.

3.1 Fault reporting

General faults with SCDC streetlights can be reported via:

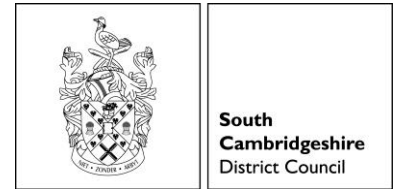
- The SCDC website <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/climate-and-environment/report-a-street-lighting-fault/>
- SCDCs Contact Centre on 03450 450063 between 8am and 5.30pm, Monday to Friday
- An out of hours reporting service by calling 01354 654321

Urgent faults must be reported via telephone only and not the website to ensure they are dealt with immediately, and in the case of emergency the matter should be reported to the police.

3.2. Fault response standards

A report of a faulty streetlight to SCDC will be categorised at the point of receipt by the contractor and responded to within the following times:

Response Category	Response Time
Emergency (where there is a risk of serious injury or immediate risk to life)	Attendance within 3 hours
Major Fault (for example, several lights are out in one street)	Attendance within 24 hours
Minor Fault (for example, a light is dim or not working)	Attendance within 14-28 days



In any emergency or major event the asset shall in the first instance be made safe by the contractor in accordance with the above response times, following which required repairs will be made.

3.3. Cyclical Testing

In accordance with relevant regulations and standard, the streetlights will be:

- Structurally tested at required intervals in accordance with Institute of Lighting Professionals Guidance Note 22/19 and as required by the results of previous structural testing.
- Electrically tested every 6 years.

4. Attachments to streetlights

Any attachment to a streetlight may affect the structural integrity of the light or interfere with public access and access required for maintenance. The attachment of any kind to a streetlight on its inventory therefore requires approval from SCDC prior to any action being taken.

Please be aware that any un-approved attachments may be removed by SCDC without notice.

SCDC accepts applications for attachments from non-commercial organisations only for the approval of signs, vehicle speed indication devices, CCTV and Smart City measures. Where vehicle speed indications devices are intended these should be battery operated.

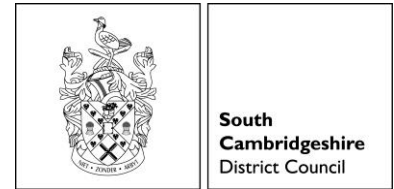
SCDC will not approve applications for the attachment of hanging baskets, festive decorations, catenary wires, litter or dog bins, or banners to its streetlights.

SCDC will generally make arrangements for the installation of attachments to its streetlights for the applicant, which ensures adherence to all relevant requirements and mitigates any potential damage to the asset.

As assessments of applications and installation works will vary, depending on the request, there may be a charge at the discretion of the responsible officer.

SCDC requests applicants to contact them prior to any application as there are streetlights for which it may not be able to approve any attachments. For applications SCDC will require the information within the form (**Appendix A**) to be provided at least 12 weeks in advance of intended installation. All enquiries should be made to streetlighting@scamb.gov.uk

SCDC will be reviewing current/historic attachments on its streetlighting which may lead to their removal where they affect safety or impede access.



5. Street lighting improvements - LED upgrade and replacement program

SCDC aims to upgrade its streetlights to LEDs by March 2021, which will include the replacement of existing streetlights columns and brackets, where structural condition requires this. Standard streetlights will be upgraded initially, with heritage/ornate lights within a second phase of works, given their bespoke nature. We will work closely with Parish Councils and Members when considering upgrades to heritage/ornate lights.

SCDC streetlighting in residential areas will be dimmed by 40%, giving a 60% light output between 10pm and 6am in line with CCC streetlights to improve the consistency of lighting.

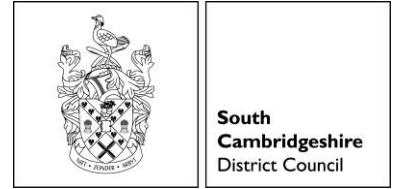
The upgrade seeks to benefit the communities and the environment by:

- Improving the quality of SCDC streetlighting
- Reducing energy consumption by at least 60%
- Reducing light pollution by dimming lights during set hours and improved control of light output
- Supporting the wellbeing of people and wildlife by installing a warmer colour temperature LED
- Reusing and recycling materials where possible within the upgrade

The upgrade also seeks to:

- Provide a beneficial and cost-effective alternative to existing sodium lamps which are gradually being phased out
- Reduce maintenance and associated costs due to the greater lifespan of LED (25 years) and through the replacement of older units
- Enable the future incorporation of smarter lighting measures to the benefit of communities

Appendix A



Application for Attachments to Streetlights (Appendix A)

Please complete with reference to point 4 within the South Cambridgeshire District Council Streetlighting Policy.

Name of organisation applying:

Contact details

Name	
Email	
Telephone	

Village:

Streetlights intended for attachments (Please list all relevant streetlights)

Street name	SC streetlight unit numbers	Duration of installation (dates from/to, or permanent)

Attachment details

Please describe the attachment and provide/attach the suppliers specification for the equipment which should include weight and dimensions and the means of attachment to the streetlight, together with any further relevant information.

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Agenda Item 11



REPORT TO: Cabinet

4 December 2019

LEAD CABINET MEMBER: Cllr John Williams

LEAD OFFICER: Susan Gardner-Craig, Interim Corporate Director

Shared Payroll Service

Executive Summary

1. The Payroll shared service with Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council went live in April 2014, it was established quickly and is often referred to as the most successful shared service to date.
2. Prior to the shared service Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council operated in-house payroll services utilising the same Payroll / HR software which was procured through a joint tendering project in 2004.
3. The payrolls at both Councils were operated by between 1.6 and 2.1 full time equivalent (FTE) staff. This was an area of concern in terms of ensuring sufficient team resilience and capacity.
4. The demands on the payroll teams has increased with the introduction of Pensions Auto enrolment, changes to tax deductions and National Insurance and other employment and pensions legislation.
5. Other considerations included the need for Councils to seek efficiencies and make cost savings.
6. The shared service was established in 2014 and has fully met its initial objectives and achieved more than expected. It continues to identify and implement improvements through system and process changes and new ways of working including self-service.
7. This is not a key decision.

Recommendations

8. It is recommended that:
 - a) Cabinet is asked to note that the Payroll Shared Service Agreement has been extended and will be reviewed in line with other 2C's shared services arrangements.
 - b) It is recommended that the service looks to appoint a payroll apprentice to support the team and invest in the future of the service.

Background

9. Prior to the shared service Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council operated in-house payroll services utilising the same Payroll / HR software system Resourcelink from Northgate Arinso UK Ltd, procured through a joint tendering project in 2004. Each Council had a separate contract with the software provider and operated the system on separate servers. This meant that any systems changes, enhancements and updates were performed separately by each Council.
10. The payroll service at Cambridge City Council was provided by just 2.1 full time equivalent staff (plus some limited data input support following the Council's Departmental Support Service Review). In South Cambridgeshire District Council the payroll service is provided by just 1.62 full time equivalent staff. The structures are attached at Appendix A for information.
11. The number of employees paid has reduced slightly overall since the shared service came into operation with the number in the region of 1,500 employees and Elected Members paid across both Councils plus all election staff. However, the demands on the payroll teams had increased with the introduction of Pensions Auto enrolment, changes to tax deductions reporting and National Insurance and other pensions and employment legislation changes.
12. One of the main drivers for the shared service was create greater resilience which was a concern for both Councils with significant key person dependency.
13. In addition to this both authorities recognised the need to seek efficiencies in, and reduce the costs of, back office services wherever possible.

Shared Service Performance

14. The shared payroll service has been a significant success for both Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council achieving all it set out to and more. Since the shared payroll service went live all payment dates have been achieved for both Councils, all PAYE payments to HMRC and pension payments to LGSS have been made on time (including reconciliations).
15. All new legislation relating to PAYE and Pensions has been implemented and communicated in line with required deadlines.
16. The shared service is constantly reviewing its processes to streamline and increase efficiency, to facilitate this process CCC and SCDC work together to ensure that all colleagues have an input into process design and implementation, the service has consolidated and aligned a number of processes and forms.
17. There is a focus on continuous improvement by reviewing system developments and enhancements, since the implementation of the shared payroll service the team has rolled out Self Service at SCDC, further work on this generate benefits to employees and managers as well as creating a more efficient service.

18. The shared service has created greater resilience in the provision of a payroll service for both Councils.
19. The cost of the service is split using a number of factors including number of employees paid, this means that the overall apportionment of the cost will fluctuate each year, however the costs are maintained within the overall budget.
20. The creation of the shared service generated savings of over 19% across the combined payroll service, in addition further system savings were generated as the system is a joint HR / Payroll system.
21. The SCDC HR & Payroll teams continue to work extremely well together with regular meetings and updates. This also facilitates the prompt response to queries from employees and Elected Members.

Changing Environment

22. Payroll is subject to continuous change with new legislation and constant changes to practices and processes. Since the inception of the shared payroll service the following changes have been introduced and absorbed within the existing resources:
 - Significant changes to the LGPS Pension Regulations with the introduction of the CARE (Career Average Revalued Earnings).
 - Introduction of iConnect for LGPS and increased year end reporting
 - Pensions Automatic Enrolment and RE-Enrolment
 - The introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy
 - Gender Pay Gap Reporting
 - Holiday Pay on Overtime Calculations and Payments
 - GDPR
 - Numerous TUPE transfers
 - Introduction of Self-Service including support and maintenance
 - Electronic Expense Claims
 - Election payments made through the payroll
23. In addition to the legislation and process changes the demands on the team grow due to the increased complexity of payroll and pensions.
24. The service continues to perform to an extremely high standard however, the payroll industry service will continue to evolve and we need to ensure that we remain at the forefront of changes.

Key Headlines and Observations

25. The shared payroll team is a small close-knit team with a tremendous work ethic but they are struggling to keep up with increased demands with a reliance on the goodwill of the team at peak times in the year.

26. In addition to the increased complexity there will be a requirement to backfill colleagues who are working on the procurement and implementation of the new Human Resources Information System (HRIS).
27. It is recommended that the service looks to appoint a payroll apprentice to support the team and invest in the future of the service. The training costs will be met from the apprenticeship levy with the remaining costs required to be met from the shared service. It is anticipated that the shortfall in the budget to be meet the costs will be in the region of £13,298.

Based on the current apportionment split this would be met as follows:

- Cambridge City Council £7,580
- South Cambridgeshire District Council £5,718

Implications

28. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:

Financial

29. There is a small cost associated with the introduction of a Payroll Apprentice as set out in point 27 above. This can be found from within existing budgets.

Legal

30. None at this stage

Staffing

31. None at this stage

Risks/Opportunities

32. Payroll errors and failure to meet legislative requirements are not only severely disruptive for staff but also costly in terms of rectifying mistakes and the possibility of HMRC inspection and potential fines.
33. The ongoing development of the service and in particular the implementation of a new HR/Payroll system in 2021 provides further opportunity to realise efficiencies through business process changes and extending self service facilities.

Equality and Diversity

34. None at this stage

Climate Change

35. None identified.

Consultation responses

36. Members and managers at Cambridge City Council have been consulted and agreed to the continuation of the shared service and the addition of a new apprentice post.

Effect on Council Priority Areas

Growing local businesses and economies

Housing that is truly affordable for everyone to live in

Being green to our core

A modern and caring Council

37. The shared Payroll Service has already achieved its initial objectives in terms of efficiencies. Continuation of this arrangement and the implementation of a new system will enable further efficiencies and cost savings to be realised.

Background Papers

a) None

Appendices

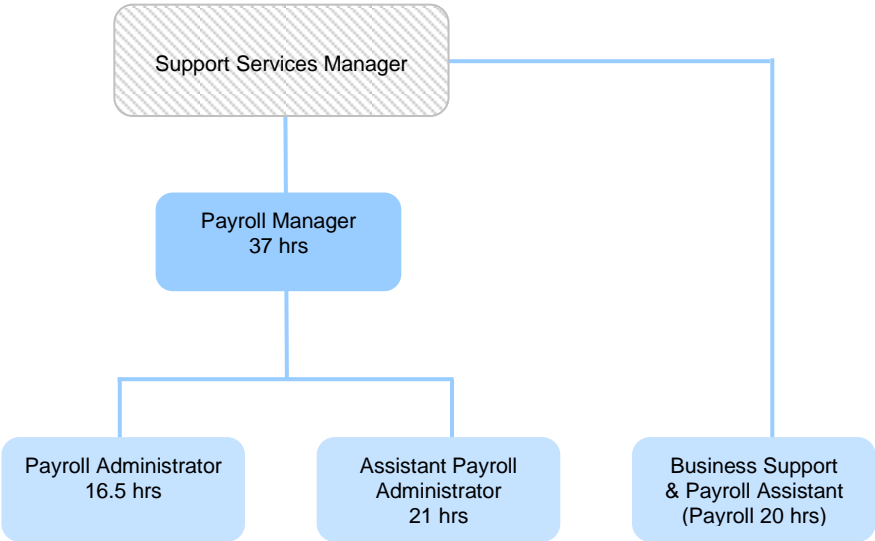
Appendix A: Staffing structures

Report Author:

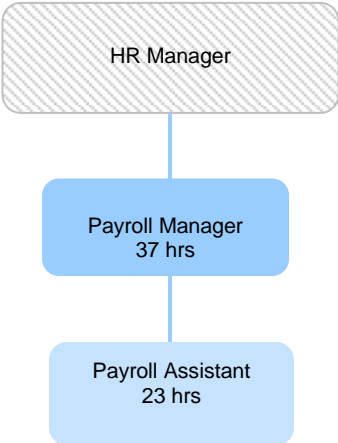
Susan Gardner-Craig, Interim Corporate Director
Telephone: (01954) 713285

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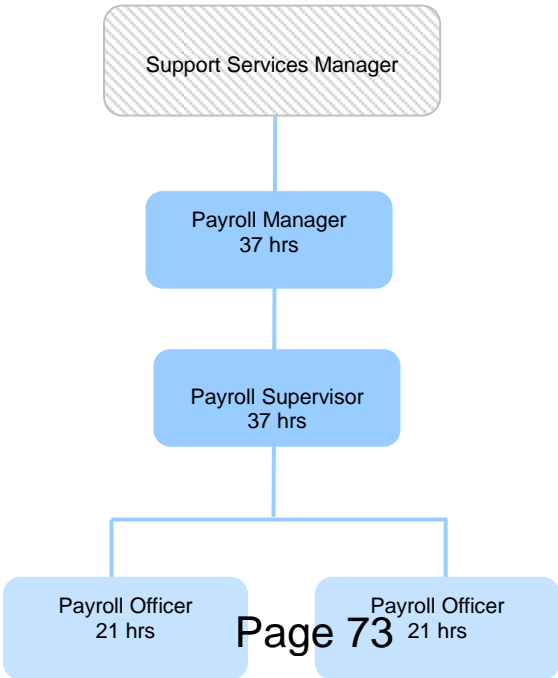
Cambridge City Council – Original Payroll Team Structure



South Cambridgeshire District Council – Original Payroll Team Structure

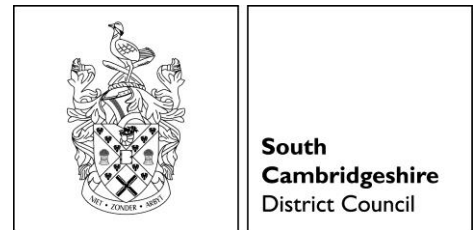


Shared Payroll Service – Following ETO Restructure



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Agenda Item 12



REPORT TO: Cabinet

4 December 2019

LEAD CABINET MEMBER: Councillor John Williams

LEAD OFFICER: Trevor Roff – Director of Finance

Applications for Council Tax Reduction under s13a of The Local Government Finance Act 1992 – Delegation of Authority for Decision Making

Executive Summary

1. To consider the current decision making process set out in the current policy, and request that Cabinet delegates authority for the determination of applications for discretionary Council Tax reductions to the Lead Cabinet Member for Finance.
2. This is not a key decision as the principles of the policy itself remain unchanged, other than the delegation for decision making.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that Cabinet agrees to delegate decision-making authority in such matters to the Lead Cabinet Member for Finance, as outlined in Option 1 pending a review of the policy.

Reasons for Recommendations

4. Residents seeking support under this mechanism require a prompt decision on their applications, as there is a direct financial implication.
5. There is an intention to review and update the policy with a more suitable decision-making timeline, but until that is completed it would be in the interests of residents to delegate authority to the Lead Cabinet Member in order that applications may be determined expeditiously.

Details

6. The Council has discretionary powers to reduce or remit the amount of council tax payable to any amount it sees fit, including reducing the amount payable to zero. This power may be exercised in relation to an individual case, or by determination of a group of cases, perhaps where a number of properties are affected by flooding, for example.
7. In April 2013, the Portfolio Holder adopted a policy relating to the determination of applications via this mechanism. This policy can be found in Appendix A.

8. The Policy sets out a number of factors for consideration, although each case must be considered on its own merits. It is ordinarily expected that there are exceptional circumstances to justify any reduction, which should be intended as short-term assistance only. It is also expected that all other routes are exhausted prior to seeking assistance via this method.
9. Two applications have recently been received for assistance via this mechanism. It is not possible for these matters to be considered until the Cabinet meeting on 8th January 2020.
10. It is not considered to be in the interests of the applicants to delay the decision until January, and so delegation is sought for the Lead Cabinet Member to make determinations on these and any other applications falling within this policy, until such time as the policy can be updated to reflect a more streamlined decision-making process.

Options

1. There are two Options that are available to Cabinet in this matter:

OPTION 1 – delegate authority to the Lead Cabinet Member for Finance. This option would allow a decision to be reached and communicated to the applicant(s) as soon as practicable.

OPTION 2 – Continue to determine such applications at a meeting of the Cabinet.

It is recommended that Cabinet adopts Option 1.

Implications

11. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:-

Financial

12. The full cost of any reduction under s13a of The Act falls to South Cambridgeshire District Council. Therefore, consideration should be given as to whether a reduction of Council Tax in this matter is in the interests of local Council Tax payers.
13. The Constitution allows for the Lead Cabinet Member to write off debts above level two.

Legal

14. Section 13A (1) (c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 empowers a billing local authority as follows:

“(1) Where a person is liable to pay Council Tax in respect of any chargeable

dwelling and any day, the billing authority for the area in which the dwelling is situated may reduce the amount which he is liable to pay as respects the dwelling and the day to such extent as it thinks fit.

(2) The power under subsection (1) above includes power to reduce an amount to nil.

(3) The power under subsection (1) may be exercised in relation to particular cases or by determining a class of case in which liability is to be reduced to an extent provided by the determination."

Appendices

Appendix A: Policy and accompanying report, April 2013

Report Author:

Katie Kelly- Revenues Manager
Telephone: (01954) 713335

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REVENUES SERVICES

PROTOCOL AND GUIDANCE FOR THE GRANTING OF LOCAL DISCOUNTS FOR COUNCIL TAX

April 2013

1.0 Scope and Purpose of this Protocol

1.1 The purpose of this protocol is to establish a framework to regulate the granting of local discounts for Council Tax properties and to ensure consistency. The protocol is intended to ensure that the granting of any discount is conducted in accordance with recognised best practice in the following areas:

- Debt collection.
- Accountancy code of practice.
- Audit controls

The policy applies to Council Tax owed to the Council.

2.0 Overview

2.1 The Council has both a statutory and fiduciary duty to ensure that all money that it is owed is collected promptly whenever possible. However, it has discretionary powers to reduce the amount of Council Tax payable to such an amount as it sees fit, including reducing the amount to zero. This power may be exercised in relation to a particular case, or by determining a collection of cases with the same issue. For example a fire may affect a single dwelling or a flood may affect several properties.

3.0 Legal Background

The Local Government Act 2003, Section 75, introduced Section 13A Billing Authority's (Power to Reduce Amount of Tax Payable) into the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

3.2 The Local Government Finance Act 1992 was amended by the Local Government Finance Act 2012, giving local authorities the discretion to reduce the amount of Council Tax a person has to pay. This is different legislation to that, which requires an authority to implement a local Council Tax Support scheme from April 2013.

3.3 As part of the requirements for introducing a localised Council Tax Support scheme, each local authority must state the procedure by which a person can apply for a discretionary relief under Section 13A (1) (c) of the 1992 Act

3.4 In situations where individuals or organisations can apply to the Council under the above provisions for a reduction in Council Tax, the Council should not hamper its discretion by applying a blanket approach.

3.5 Any guidance from the Department of Communities and Local Government or the Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuation will be considered.

4.0 Calculation of Rate Relief

4.1 Any individual application for a reduction under Section 13A would be considered. Each case would be considered on its merits but the guidelines are intended to ensure that a consistent approach is taken and that applicants understand how their application will be assessed

5.0 Cost to the Council

- 5.1 The cost of any reduction under Section 13A falls to South Cambridgeshire District Council.
- 5.2 It is anticipated that any discounts are likely to be few in number and for short periods

6.0 Policy

- 6.1 Section 13A (1) (c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 empowers a billing local authority as follows:

*“(1) Where a person is liable to pay Council Tax in respect of any chargeable dwelling and any day, the billing authority for the area in which the dwelling is situated may reduce the amount which he is liable to pay as respects the dwelling and the day to such extent **as it thinks fit**.*

(2) The power under subsection (1) above includes power to reduce an amount to nil.

(3) The power under subsection (1) may be exercised in relation to particular cases or by determining a class of case in which liability is to be reduced to an extent provided by the determination.”

- 6.2 The Council will consider using its powers to reduce Council Tax liability for any Council Tax payer. Ordinarily, the Council would expect there to be exceptional circumstances to justify any reduction and that the reduction will be intended as short term assistance and should not be considered as a way of reducing Council Tax liability indefinitely. Each case will be considered on ‘its merits’. The Council will have regard to the following criteria, in particular in relation to an application:

- Requests for reductions in Council Tax liability will be required in writing or by electronic communication from the customer, their advocate/appointee or a duly authorised third party acting on his/her behalf. The request should set out the circumstances on which the application is based and any financial hardship or personal circumstances relating to the application.
- Only applications relating to financial hardship will be considered, not environmental. The purpose of the policy is consider the circumstances of residents who have fallen on hard times
- In receiving a request the Portfolio Holder would expect that there would have to be evidence of exceptional, unforeseen circumstances to justify any reduction and that it will be intended only as short term assistance and must not be considered as a way of reducing Council Tax liability indefinitely.
- The attempts made by the applicant to resolve his/her own personal circumstances. Any application made under Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 should be one of last resort and any

entitlement to benefit, discounts or exemptions or Valuation Office/Valuation Tribunal action and appeal should be explored prior to an application being made

- The Council's finances to allow a reduction to be made. The cost of any reduction awarded under Section 13A falls solely to the billing authority and so the determination must bear in mind the impact on the Council Tax payer in general.
- The application will require a full income and expenditure breakdown (Financial statement) of the applicant together with that of any other household members. The Council may request reasonable relevant evidence in support of the application.
- The customer's entitlement to Council Tax Benefit at the property for which the reduction is sought.
- All other discounts/reliefs have been awarded to the customer for which he/she would be eligible.
- If the Council Tax account is in arrears, the Portfolio Holder must be satisfied that non-payment was due to reasonable basis of withholding payment.
- The length of time of the proposed reduction will apply for is a maximum period of twelve months.

7.0 Authority to Award Relief

- 7.1 Cabinet will determine all Section 13A applications. The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Staffing will consider applications and present them to Cabinet with a justification for the discount to be granted. The amount of any discount or reduction will take into account the amount of the debt and/or future liability and the extent to which the criteria or guidelines are met.

8.0 Notification of Decision

- 8.1 The Council will notify a customer of its decision within 21 days of receiving sufficient information to make a decision.

9.0 Appeals

- 9.1 Under the Local Government Finance Act 1992, there is no right of appeal against the Council's use of discretionary powers. However, the Council will accept a customer's written request for a further review of its decision. The Council will then consider whether the customer has provided any additional information against the required criteria that will justify a change to its decision.

10.0 Duration of Relief

- 10.1 The length of time of the proposed reduction will apply for a maximum period of twelve months.

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