

## **(Updated) Savings & Transformation Strategy 2018/19 – 2020/21**

### **INTRODUCTION & CONTEXT**

By way of context, since 2010/11 the Council has seen its local government finance settlement (core funding) decrease by some 67% or £4.4m (from £6.6m in 2010/11 to £2.2m in 2018/19). Indeed there are further cuts planned in future years, with the indicative settlement figure for 2019/20 being some £1.3m.

The fall in core funding is, in part, negated by the grant award under the New Homes Bonus (NHB) scheme which in 2018/19 is around £3.3m. However, NHB funding is expected to fall sharply in future years as the changes made to the scheme in 2017 work their way through the system, and the high levels of housing growth seen in recent years fall out of the calculation. In due course, assuming no further changes are made to the scheme, it is estimated that NHB could be in the order of £1.5m.

We are fortunate that we do not have to make all the savings required in one year and can spread the challenge in ‘tranches’ over a few years, as set out within the Council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). Nevertheless, the Council have acknowledged that we need to balance customer expectations with the need to make these savings and achieve as much as possible in the earlier years to provide the best long-term financial sustainability.

Based on the indicative funding figures provided by the government over the multi-year settlement period 2016/17 to 2019/20 and the impact of the recent changes to the NHB scheme, amongst other things, latest projections point to a ‘funding gap’ between expenditure and income of about £1.0m; and the Strategy ‘refreshed’ to ensure that the new target can be delivered as required.

### **OBJECTIVES**

In developing this strategy, the Council has set the following objectives:

1. To deliver sufficient savings in order to bridge the funding gap identified in the Council’s MTFS, and to deliver those savings as quickly as possible in order to minimise risk to the Council’s finances.
2. To direct resources in line with the principles of the Council’s Corporate Strategy.
3. To maintain the Council’s reputation of good front line service provision.
4. To adopt a ‘mixed’ approach to addressing the funding gap through a series of ‘themes’.

5. To be open to accept 'cultural' change/transformation in the ways we work and offer services to the public in order to release efficiencies and savings.
6. To engage, as appropriate, with stakeholders when determining how savings will be achieved.

### THE STRATEGY

It is recognised that there is no one simple solution to addressing the financial challenges faced. The Council will need to embrace transformation in a multitude of ways in order to deliver the savings within an agreed timetable.

This Strategy sets out a measured structure and framework for delivering the necessary savings through a series of 'themes'. Each theme has a deliverable target within a timeframe.

Whilst the framework includes some major areas where savings can be made without direct effect on services, by adopting this Strategy the Council has recognised that it may need to decide that some service areas should change/transform to accommodate saving requirements. That might mean doing things differently, with even greater efficiency – for example, with the help of new technology – and with increased income opportunities where circumstances allow this. It might also mean that services will simply need to be run with fewer resources. All these approaches will require a shift in culture for the organisation so that we can be focused and flexible in the way in which we deliver services to our communities.

The Themes, Targets, and Timeframes for the Strategy are set out in the table below, and will be the subject of review at least annually.

Progress on identifying and implementing savings and transformational opportunities across the various themes will be regularly reported to and reviewed by Management Team and in-year update reports presented to Members as appropriate. The Council is committed to engagement with relevant stakeholders as proposals are brought forward.

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