

Appendix 1a: Additional information in regard to Budget Savings proposals that are considered to have minimal, or no effect on front line service delivery levels

These proposals do not have a direct impact on the services for the public and do not therefore require public consultation. Where proposals involve a reduction in staffing, a consultation with Trade Unions and Staff will be required.

Adult Social Care

Reference	Categorisation	Budget savings proposal	Additional Information
ASC16	Demand Management	Strengths-based practice This initiative is to focus on people's strengths to support their health and wellbeing with a reduced, or no, ongoing care package. It will be used to support service users to remain independent for longer	This project will promote independence and support social care staff in meeting the assessed needs of individuals through a broader range of support mechanisms with less reliance on expensive commissioned care services. Additionally, the service will increase the use of digital technology to increase choice for service users in how their needs will be met and reduce the cost of care provision.

Children's Services

Reference	Categorisation	Budget savings proposal	Additional Information
CC08	Demand Management	Modernising foster care This project aims to increase local authority foster carers to reduce the number of children in residential and other settings to reduce costs and better meet children's needs.	This project will introduce a kinship care team that will provide training and a package of support to foster carers in order to prevent children coming back into care. The project will include a comprehensive marketing strategy to attract new foster carers
CC09	Demand Management	Introduce a reunification team This team would reduce the number of children in the Council's care by helping to place more children in the care of family members under a legal process called a Special Guardianship Order.	This team will be carrying out assessments and a legal process after which children will no longer be in the Council's care and will return home. The department have identified 67 children initially to be assessed and supported with a Special Guardianship Order (discretionary financial support).
CC10	Demand Management	Introduce edge of care team The team would support families who are experiencing difficulties, with the aim of keeping the family together. This will avoid children needing to be taken into care.	This project will introduce an Edge of Care team (strengthening families at home through intensive support to prevent further escalation which may lead to Children needing to come into Care).

Education and Partnerships

Reference	Categorisation	Budget savings proposal	Additional Information
EDC02	Efficiency	Deliver passenger assistance training internally Passenger assistants who support children on home to school transport would be trained by Council staff.	Providing training by Council staff to Passenger Assistants allows for improved flexibility and reduced cost for Home to School Transport Services, this will have no direct impact on the community.
EDC03	Efficiency	Increase transport capacity Increasing the number of vehicles the Council can lease or buy, along with extra staff, would reduce the amount spent on external businesses for home to school transport.	Increases in demand and changes in how the private sector market can provide the home to school transport service is limiting the supply chain for various types of vehicles. Increasing the number of vehicles the council can lease or buy will support increases in demand and complex needs within the home to school transport service; adding resilience into the service.
EDC04	Efficiency	Management review Up to one management post would be removed from Education and Partnerships following a review of the operational practices.	Streamlining processes and creating back office efficiencies in the home to school transport team, as a result one vacant management post is to be removed
EDC06	Income	Increase management fee income The Council will receive more income for services provided on behalf of the Department for Education in relation to home to school transport.	Middlesbrough Council will continue to support DfE and by association Middlesbrough Students where necessary. Where this support is of a non-statutory nature the council will be reimbursed in full by DfE in assisting with the delivery of this service.
EDC07	Efficiency	Travel training Providing training and support to enable more students to travel to school independently, reducing the reliance upon Council provision of home to school transport.	In preparation of greater independence and adulthood, the Council will support a greater number of eligible students through its Independent Travel Training Programme to increase their accessibility to education settings, along with wider benefits such as healthier lifestyles, safe and active travel, social activities and employment.

Environment and Communities

Reference	Categorisation	Budget savings proposal	
ECS13	Efficiency	Management review Up to four Environment and Community Services management posts could be removed following a review of the department's operational practices	A review of operational practices and reorganisation of roles and responsibilities will result in an improved alignment of services and result in approximately four posts to be removed .
ECS15	Income	Grant funding Funding from the Capital Transport Strategy Grant would be used to cover the costs of management.	Funding for the Capital Grants awarded to Highway Services have increased allowing for additional costs of project management to be charged.
ECS16	Efficiency	Change in Environment and Community Services staffing Review of Environment and Communities staffing will result in 5 FTE reduction through the removal of vacant posts	A reorganisation of Environment and Community Services capacity to where demand is required will enable efficiencies and result in 5 posts that can be removed
ECS17	Efficiency	One off - Use of Capital grant funding One off charging of eligible expenditure to capital on street lighting. There would be no change to levels of street lighting Maintenance	A one off Capital Grant from MHCLG for Street Lighting will enable eligible expenditure to be charged against this project.
ECS18	Income	One off - Maximisation of grants Further use of external grant funding to cover appropriate staffing costs within community safety.	A one off Grant for Community Safety will enable eligible expenditure to be charged against this project.

Regeneration

Reference	Categorisation	Budget savings proposal	
REG07	Service Reduction / Stop	Staffing review across Regeneration services Up to six Regeneration posts will be removed following a review of the department's operational practice.	A number of reviews will take place within the Regeneration directorate that will have an effect on structures and ways of working. Up to six posts will be removed, which will mainly include vacant roles, but will impact upon two or three employees.
REG08	Efficiency	Reduction in energy usage Restrictions on building use, energy efficiency measures and review of the way energy is purchased	The way the Council manages its energy use will be reviewed to reduce demand. This will involve energy efficiency measures that reduce the usage, energy generation to replace purchased energy, and looking at different ways of buying energy to reduce costs.

Finance

Reference	Categorisation	Budget savings proposal	
FIN12	Transformation	Digitise procurement activity (Council Wide) Organise high volume-low value spending by using a third party to competitively buy goods and services with the use of technology.	This proposal aims to improve the administrative efficiency of purchasing a range of goods and services and also reduce the price paid for those goods and services. There is no direct impact upon the level of service provided to the community.
FIN13	Transformation	Procurement Contract Management (Council Wide) Introduce processes, procedures, guidelines and additional resource to strengthen contract management to reduce expenditure on goods, works and services to deliver improved value for money	This proposal aims to improve the Council's contract management arrangements to achieve better value from its contracts for goods, works and services. There is no direct impact upon the level of service provided to the community.
FIN14	Efficiency	Cost of finance system Renewal of the contract for the Business World finance system during 2024 has resulted in a lower contract price for the system by rationalising the number and type of licenses.	The Council has recently concluded a renegotiation of the contractual terms for its finance system which will cost less than the budgetary provision. There is no direct impact upon the level of service provided internally or to services provided to the community.
FIN15	Service Reduction / Stop	Central stationery reduction The budget for stationery will be reduced by 30% to align with current spending levels.	The budget has been reduced to align to expected stationery usage. There is no direct impact upon the level of services to the community.
FIN16	Efficiency	Accounts payable staffing change A vacant post within the accounts payable finance team will be held temporarily vacant for 2025/26	This proposal will have no direct impact on the community.
FIN17	Income	Maximisation of grants Increasing the eligible administrative support charges claimed through external grant funding from 8% to 10% will increase the external funding secured to meet the Council's cost of administering grants.	This proposal increases the external grant contributions towards the cost of existing service provision and has no direct impact on the community.

Legal and Governance Services			
Reference	Categorisation	Budget savings proposal	
LGS09	Efficiency	Legal Services Resource Review of operations will result in the deletion of a vacant Legal Assistant post.	This is the deletion of a post that has been vacant for a significant period. The work has been absorbed by the other legal assistants and this will continue. The impact will mean that some tasks take longer to complete, however there will be no direct impact upon the level of services to the community
LGS10	Service Reduction / Stop	Governance, Policy and Information Review of operations will result in the deletion of vacant posts within team	No redundancies will occur as a result of the proposal which will see vacant posts following a recent service review, formally removed from the structure.
LGS11	Efficiency	Members allowance budget rebasing Rebasing of members allowance budget to reflect the maximum amount that can be claimed in the current governance structure.	The budget has been amended to align to the maximum amount that can be claimed in the current governance structure. There is no direct impact upon the level of services to the community.

Council Wide			
Reference	Categorisation	Budget savings proposal	
CRC01-2526	Efficiency	Financial Management of Pay budgets This initiative standardises the budgeting for employee costs across all directorates to recognise underspends that occur naturally due to staff turnover. It also tightens budgetary control arrangements relating to the management of over and underspending to control expenditure within the overall approved budget.	<p>The Council's approach to budgeting for pay currently provides for all posts at the top of the pay grade for each role, irrespective of whether posts are actually vacant or are occupied at a lower point within the grade. In addition there is variation in approach between directorates in relation to the budgetary impact of staff turnover (i.e. a percentage vacancy factor applied to pay budgets to reflect the underspend that will be generated during the period between one postholder leaving the Council's employment and a new employee taking up their role. Some directorates make no provision, whilst others make significant provision for vacancies which restricts the provision of planned service delivery. These disparate practices result in over-budgeting for employee costs at a whole council level which have generated underspends on employee budgets of between 5% and 13% over the period since 2021/22. Such underspends have commonly been informally applied by budget holders to offset overspends on non pay expenditure and/or income shortfalls, rather than being managed in a controlled and systematic manner in accordance with the 'budget virement' (budget transfer) rules set out in financial regulations with the involvement of finance officers. The Council needs to exercise a firmer grip upon its financial management and control and to evidence its spending decisions to demonstrate value for money and control expenditure within the overall budget. The vacancy allowance that will be applied will be:</p> <p>in 2025/26 The higher of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - existing vacancy allowance for a directorate or - 2.5% of an adjusted pay budget (taking account of posts that are business continuity critical and funded from grant which would be lost if not applied in year) <p>A further step up of 2.5% in 2026/27 will be applied.</p> <p>To achieve this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Directors will manage the vacancy allowance at directorate level rather than being held at individual service level to enable a corporate and cross cutting approach to managing the pay budget. - Financial regulations will be further refined and training provided to Directors and their budget holders to ensure compliance with budget virement rules in 2025/26. Through this process, transfers of underspending on pay budgets in order to fund identified need to spend in excess of non-pay budgets will be undertaken in accordance with financial regulations and with active involvement of finance officers. Where The finance team will also work with Directors to review the overall approach to pay budgeting. - Where unmanageable non-pay pressures are identified as a result of these strengthened financial management arrangements, the s151 Officer will exercise their delegation to consider the potential to provide transitional funding from a newly established Delivery Risk Budget subject to the conditions that will be applied to the use of the Risk Budget. <p>Once this approach is embedded, it will form the foundation from which to move in 2026/27 to a more dynamic approach to budgeting which reflects the actual grade and costs of staff in post and planned on an annual basis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no established posts will be deleted as a result of this initiative.

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