
Spending Review – Corporate Administrative Support Budget Savings 2017/18 - 2018/19

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to approve savings arising from a review of corporate administrative support budgets. The spending review programme set out a review of administration across the council to contribute to the council's overall financial position.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The City Mayor is requested:

- (a) To approve a reduction in administrative posts across all departments;
- (b) To approve reductions in budgets of £240,000 in 17/18, rising to £1.3m in 2018/19 as shown in **Appendix 1**, and to delegate authority to the Director of Finance to determine the budget ceilings to reduce;
- (c) Note the feedback received from Trade Unions, details of which can be found at section 4.

3. Background

3.1 In August 2016 a review was undertaken of how administration staff are utilised across divisions/departments and identified areas where savings, both resources and process efficiencies could be achieved.

3.2 All directors considered various options on how savings in their particular service areas could be achieved. The intention was for the analysis presented to inform a corporate 'review' of administrative staff and how best this could be approached.

The options presented included:

- Option 1 – do nothing
- Option 2 – delete net vacancies
- Option 3 – Remove Admin and Business Support Officer (ABSO) 'Management' Posts and absorb reporting lines into existing service structures

- Option 4 – Allocate departmental/divisional targets for individual reviews allowing local issues to be addressed
- Option 5 – Carry out a corporate review to reduce posts

3.3 Following detailed discussions it was agreed that scope for savings existed across all departments by virtue of the number of ABSO's (and related posts) in divisions who support front line and professional services. By contrast, deleting vacant posts would result in operational difficulties in some areas, and a corporate review would be insufficient as there was no indication that economies of scale would be achievable. The resulting savings target set per division is set out in **Appendix 1**:

3.4 The posts likely to be affected are administrative roles, defined as the following posts:

- Administration and Business Support Officer (ABSO) Level D
- ABSO Level C
- ABSO Level B
- ABSO Level A
- ABSO Team Leader
- ABSO Receptionist
- Corporate Business Support Manager
- Executive Assistants

3.5 The impact of delivering budget savings and reducing posts is expected to be minimal for some divisions. For others work has started to review and streamline business processes and this is reflected in the profiling of budget savings (being achievable in 2018/2019).

4. Briefing Trade Unions

4.1 Following on from the budget and spending review briefing at Authority Wide Consultative Committee (AWCC) where the administration savings target was mentioned, a meeting took place with Trade Union (TU) branch secretaries to brief them in more detail.

4.2 It was explained that an overall savings target had been set as part of the spending review programme and clarified that it had been agreed that individual divisions/departments would identify and deliver the savings. It was also made clear that this is not just a 'deleting posts' exercise it is about looking at efficient ways of working, business process re-engineering and moving away from manual processes as far as possible. This may involve, for example, in some divisions, an organisational review which will be designed not solely to achieve savings but also to improve efficiency with a view to providing effective support where it is most needed.

4.3 The following general observations were expressed by trade union representatives:

- Review leads were protecting and retaining professional staff at the detriment of administrative staff
- In reviews new jobs were being created rather than use the generic Admin & Business Support Officer grades

4.4 The feedback received from Trade Unions has been shared with Directors and Human Resources (HR). HR is responsible for the governance surrounding the job evaluation process and support managers during organisational reviews.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 There would be no legal implications arising from a decision to approve, in principle, savings to be made from administrative posts.

Paul Atreides, Head of Law (Employment, Education & Litigation)

6. Financial Implications

6.1 This report sets out savings options in connection with the corporate administration support review. Budgets will be reduced by £240k in 2017-18 rising to £1.3m in 2018-19 as detailed in Appendix A. Some of the £90k savings for Housing will accrue to the Housing Revenue Account.

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Division	Budgets to be reduced in 2017/2018	Budgets to be reduced in 2018/2019	Total savings by Division
	£	£	£
City Development and Neighbourhoods			
Planning, Transportation and Economic Dev		35,000	35,000
Estates & Building Services		130,000	130,000
Tourism, Culture and Inward Investment		60,000	60,000
Neighbourhood & Environmental Services	20,000	30,000	50,000
Housing		90,000	90,000
	20,000	345,000	365,000
Adult Social Care & Health			
Adult Social Care and Safeguarding		85,000	85,000
Adult Social Care & Commissioning		115,000	115,000
		200,000	200,000
Education & Children's Services			
Children's Social Care and Early Help		195,000	195,000
Learning Services		175,000	175,000
		370,000	370,000
Corporate Resources and Support			
Finance	50,000		50,000
Delivery, Comms and Political Governance	110,000		110,000
Legal (City Barrister)	60,000		60,000
Public Health		145,000	145,000
	220,000	145,000	365,000
Total	240,000	1,060,000	1,300,000