

Integrated Impact Assessment Statement – Operational Efficiencies (excluding DSM)

A key strand of the Council's Change Strategy is an emphasis upon driving improvements to deliver the high-quality services that citizens both expect and deserve. In this vein, and in the spirit of continuous improvement, a Council-wide, year-on-year efficiencies target has been set for each of the next three years. In light of experience in its first year, however, the overall level of savings to be delivered has been re-assessed and has been set at (a lower) £2.905m in 2020/21 and £2.05m in each of the following years. Discussions are continuing as to the precise allocation of this overall target across both the constituent workstreams and Directorates, based on scoping work undertaken to date.

Given the stage of these discussions, it is proposed that a further update on work in this area be provided to an upcoming Finance and Resources Committee meeting (most likely 21 May) to provide members with greater assurance as to its deliverability and, where necessary, highlight areas where further action will be required to address any specific disproportionate impacts on people with protected characteristics, those vulnerable to falling into poverty, geographical communities or staff, nor on the economy or environment.

At a high level, the target is underpinned by a number of specific, and some more generic, strands as follows:

- Reducing further sickness absence, overtime and agency staffing;
- Streamlining processes and making increased use of automation;
- Maximising savings delivered through procurement and review of contracts;
- Reviewing travel and mileage claim expenditure to reduce spend and carbon-related emissions, including greater use of virtual meetings;
- Ensuring payroll-related allowances are aligned with national agreements; and
- Eliminating unnecessary expenditure related to mobile device use.

The first group of **workforce control-related savings targets** will be managed in accordance with existing relevant Council policies. Reductions in overtime and sickness absence have the potential to improve employees' work-life balance and wider physical and mental well-being. Reductions in agency staffing, while needing to strike an appropriate balance in maintaining flexibility in service delivery where, in particular, demand fluctuates, have the potential to provide benefits to the individuals concerned, as well as colleagues and service users, through enhanced continuity of service. This said, as the savings entail a decrease in overall resourcing levels, it is likely that some prioritisation of existing work will be required so as not to result in increased stress levels, and potential sickness absence, amongst other staff. Further details are included in the overarching IIA covering this area, allowances and travel/mileage that may be accessed [here](#).

The work of the **LEAN team** seeks to stop, reduce and transform processes across the Council by identifying inefficiency, wastage and duplication, as well as better exploiting the opportunities that technology affords through linkages with complementary **process automation** work. Whilst acknowledging that some corresponding reduction in staffing is inevitable, these reviews offer the potential to free up staff time to focus on less repetitive, and more rewarding, work, learning new skills and thereby increasing job satisfaction.

The **procurement-related** workstream targets the delivery of savings through a range of means, including:

- Control of existing spend by service areas within agreed frameworks;
- Examination of areas of spend across Directorates to look for synergies;
- Development of a strategy for contracts that are either close to renewal or potentially in scope for re-negotiation; and
- Greater control of choice on items such as phones, stationery and other sundries.

In common with savings in appropriately specifying **mobile devices**, these are expected to be realised without detriment to people with protected characteristics, those vulnerable to falling into poverty, geographical communities or staff, economy and the environment.

The savings relating to **allowances** and **travel-related expenditure** are included in a separate IIA that may be accessed [here](#).

Hugh Dunn,
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