

**TO: THE EXECUTIVE
10 MAY 2016**

**GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2016/17 – FURTHER SAVINGS PROPOSALS
Chief Executive/Borough Treasurer**

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To approve the further savings proposals outlined in this report.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **That the Executive recommend to Council the savings proposals outlined in paragraph 7.1 below.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 To approve further savings that will enable the Council to deliver its Medium Term Financial Strategy.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 The alternative is not to approve the savings. Alternative proposals would then need to be developed and consulted upon if the Council is to deliver its Medium Term Financial Strategy.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

5 BACKGROUND

- 5.1 On the 24 February 2016 the Council set its budget and council tax for 2016/17. As a consequence of the previously unannounced changes introduced by the Local Government Finance Settlement the Council was faced with the challenge of setting a legal and balanced budget within a very short time scale.
- 5.2 Due to the short time available there were very few options available to the Council. In practice, this meant that the Executive recommended to Council a significant use of balances (£5.161m). In doing so, it was recognised that using such an amount was not sustainable over the medium term and a range of further savings proposals were, therefore, agreed for consultation. This approach would enable the Council to put money back into balances during 2016/17 and deliver its Medium Term Financial Strategy.

6 CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS

- 6.1 In accordance with the Council's constitution the further savings proposals were published for consultation on 24 February. The consultation period varied, with those proposals having the potential to impact upon groups with protected characteristics under equalities legislation or involving the voluntary sector having an extended consultation period.

- 6.2 The outcome of the consultation process will be reported, in full, to the meeting of the Executive on 14 June. In the interim, a small number of the savings proposals that contain staffing implications (and have been subject to a shorter consultation period) need to be agreed so that the necessary employment processes can be completed and the savings delivered as soon as possible.
- 6.3 Very few specific comments were made about the savings proposals that are the subject of this report. Those that may be relevant are set out in Annex A.

7 SAVINGS PROPOSALS

- 7.1 The savings proposals with staffing implications, following the shorter consultation period, are as follows:

Description	2016/17 £000	2017/18 £000
<p>Transport Capital Works</p> <p>Continue with planned preventative maintenance by a significant reduction in highway improvement schemes, Sustainable Modes of Travel to School (SMOTTS) schemes and access improvements to employment areas. Part of the integrated transport grant will instead be used for planned preventative maintenance, allowing the equivalent revenue budget to be saved. This will lead to the reduction of 3 transport engineering posts, due to reduced capital works.</p>	-200	0
<p>Highway Drainage</p> <p>Only urgent repairs to current drainage situation with no improvements. Minor local drainage improvement schemes intending to resolve local flooding issues will be scrapped, only £25k retained for critical works. Loss of 1 post (from 1) meaning no ability to respond on behalf of residents to both drainage and non-drainage engineering queries.</p>	-50	-40
<p>Road Safety Education</p> <p>Remove Road Safety Officer post and reduce road safety education, training and publicity work. Retain financial support for "Safer Roads Berkshire" only (a Berkshire wide road safety partnership proving evidence led road safety initiatives) – from the end of this academic year.</p>	-25	-35
<p>Highways Adoptions</p> <p>Reduction of one adoptions supervisor. This means reducing supervision of works to be adopted giving rise to potential quality control issues through poor workmanship which will be passed on to the Council at adoption stage.</p>	-12	-12

Unrestricted

Concessionary Fares		
Remove concessionary fares administrator, function to move to customer services.	-8	-8
Early Help Offer		
Deletion of 2.2 FTE Development Officer posts that support childminders, after school clubs, play schemes and wrap around provision.	-78	0
Property Services		
Restructuring of Construction and Maintenance team requires a deletion of one post and redistribution of duties and responsibilities.	-45	0
TOTAL	-418	-95

- 7.2 Subject to the agreement of the Executive, Employment Committee will consider the employment issues, including proposed redundancies, related to the posts contained within these savings proposals.

8 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 8.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report

Borough Treasurer

- 8.2 The savings outlined in this report will enable the Council to return some money to balances and contribute towards the delivery of its Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 8.3 There are no specific equalities issues arising from the proposals outlined in this report.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 8.4 The delivery of the savings proposals outlined in this report are crucial to the setting of a sustainable budget in 2016/17 and the achievement of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

9 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

- 9.1 The Overview & Scrutiny Commission was consulted on the budget proposals. In addition, the report setting out all of the budget proposals and the supporting information was made available to any individual or group who wished to comment on any of the proposals.

Method of Consultation

9.2 The specific methods of consultation were:

- Through consideration of this report by the Overview & Scrutiny Commission, and
- A web based consultation with residents

Representations Received

9.3 Representations received are summarised in Annex A.

Background Papers

Report to the Executive on 23 February 2016

Consultation responses received via the web, email or correspondence

Contact for further information

Timothy Wheadon - 01344 355609

Timothy.wheadon@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Alan Nash – 01344 352180

Alan.nash@bracknell-forest.gov.uk