

BUDGET STRATEGY BUSINESS CASE

Budget Strategy Theme	Efficiency		
Introduction to Theme	This theme describes the opportunities to further optimise the efficiency of council services, tasks and processes. This can be achieved by accelerating our shift to digital and implementing innovative and modern solutions to how we manage, organise and process work within the organisation. We will seek simplicity in every process, capture efficient new ways of working that have emerged since Covid-19 and look to automate processes where possible.		
Workstream One Description	Payments and Purchasing Due to internal role moves and the success of an interim structure we can now review the structure of this area and deliver savings against salary budget costs. Proposals to utilise system improvements to enable purchase orders to be completed within teams, supporting the development of a more proactive purchasing team which will add value to procurement savings.		
	Identified Savings		
Description of saving	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Staff resource reduction	70	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	The interim arrangement have successfully tested different ways of organising the team and the allocations of tasks. Also, recent system upgrades have released opportunities to process work in a more efficient way. Ability of key system supplier to continue to deliver system changes poses some risk. There is a risk of significant redundancy costs.		
Workstream Two Description	Contact and Support - Call Handling Efficiencies (CBH) A new housing system is being implemented (Northgate) ready for 20/21. This system will deliver processing efficiencies in our management of customer enquiries. This added to recent improvements in call management will allow for savings against salary budget costs.		
	Identified Savings		
Description of saving	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 – 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Contact and Support Team Resource reduction	56	0	0
Positive benefits issues, risks and impacts	Currently there is vacancy within the team that can contribute toward the identified savings. Delay on Northgate implementation could create risk to projected savings and attainment of service KPI, however the team are currently exceeding service targets and work is ongoing to further promote the use of e-communications to CBH tenants in receipt of benefits which will again reduce telephony contact, this stream is separate to the Northgate implementation.		

Workstream Three Description	Contact and Support – Call Handling and Processing Efficiencies - Community & Environmental Digital development of processes within this team has recently accelerated with more development scheduled. Manual processing for fishing permits, allotments and credit claim has been reduced with automated and digital solutions. This reduction in processing has also led to a reduction in telephone enquiries. A new system for regulatory services is being implemented (Northgate). This system will deliver processing efficiencies in our management of customer enquiries. We can now review the structure of this area and deliver savings against salary budget costs.		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Contact and Support Team Resource reduction	42	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	Digitalisation of processes is well established and has gathered considerable momentum due to positive service liaison. Key dependencies being Neighbourhood Services where considerable cross service development is underway which will reduce customer contact. Delay on Northgate implementation could create risk to projected savings. Spikes/unplanned service demand could create greater demand in short term until digitalisation programme fully rolled out.		
Workstream Four Description	Contact and Support – Planning, Building Control, Licensing - Processing Efficiencies The impact of Covid-19 rapidly changed the way we communicated with customers and processed tasks. Agents, developers and interested parties are now routinely submitting plans and work requests digitally. Additionally, innovative solutions are being introduced to process taxi application virtually removing the need for resource heavy in-person appointments. A new system for Built Environment/Licensing Services is being implemented (Northgate). This system will deliver processing efficiencies in our management of customer enquiries. We can now review the structure of this area and deliver savings against salary budget costs.		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Contact and Support Team officer Resource reduction	31	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	Some services improvements are linked to the sourcing and adoption of suitable ICT equipment for officers. Further behaviour change of some customers is needed but this is in the minority. Delay on Northgate implementation could create risk to projected savings.		
Workstream Five Description	More Efficient Processing of Benefit Claims Recent development to our core systems combined with a reduction in onerous verification, through policy changes, has led to simplified and more cost effective processes. This has given a foundation for further		

	automation which can be underpinned by an effective compliance regime. We can now review the structure of this area and deliver savings against salary budget costs.		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 – 2023	2023 – 2024
Benefits Processing Team resource reduction	35	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	The team are currently processing new claims and changes very quickly and well within target - whilst maintaining quality standards. Automation of Universal Credit notifications and wider expansion of e-notifications are underway and will lead to a reduction in contact/processing. Covid-19 still present risks to this area as the fiscal landscape is directly reflected into caseload numbers however this has been factored into our thinking and assumptions on caseloads have been made. A radical shift in excess of our assumptions would create pressure in the short term.		
Workstream Six Description	Complaints/FOI Processing Efficiencies Development of SharePoint solutions (escalator / informer) has released efficiencies in the ways complaints and FOI's are allocated and processed. The next step of development is to deliver a front end to the informer site and to enhance information provided on our website which will avoid unnecessary contact. We can now review the structure of this area and deliver savings against salary budget costs.		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Customer Information staff resource reduction	30	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	Complaints and FOIs could rise the unlikely event of dramatic reduction in wider service delivery, but this risk is deemed low to minimal. Delivery of a customer self-serve front end to the informer process will reduce the need for manual intervention, however delay to this development could lead to short term pressure. Developments delivered in this area have resulted in a stable and effective processing which now allows for a final stage of enhancement.		
Workstream Seven Description	Electoral Services It is anticipated the annual registration process will undergo further reform allowing for more effective processing. Also, wider efficiencies in payroll processing, contract management and system development could deliver savings against salary budget costs.		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Electoral Services Team resource reduction	0	25	0

Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	Savings are dependent on further relaxation of legislative framework and efficiencies being delivered in process/contracts/system development. Savings are net of additional temporary resourced need at election period. Compliance and accuracy are paramount in holding successful elections and any error could lead to additional costs, disenfranchising of electors and loss of reputational currency. These risks will need to be judged against progress of process and task development/efficiency.		
Workstream eight Description	Finance Team Review By reviewing and revising how capital budgets are monitored we can perform this function more efficiently.		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 – 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Reduction in posts to monitor Capital Budgets	45	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	This proposal would result in a risk of redundancy costs. It would also reduce the overall capacity of the Finance Team and will necessitate a review of the responsibilities of all team members to mitigate this impact and ensure capital budgets are appropriately managed.		
Workstream Nine Description	People and Performance Team Efficiencies Several vacant posts have not been filled in People and Performance but the team have demonstrated through the efficient way they operate and a move to greater self-serve and through effective use of technology that they can deliver support services with less resource than previously.		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 – 2023	2023 – 2024
Research Team Efficiency	20	0	0
Human Resources Efficiency	33	0	0

Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	<p>These posts are all vacant so there is no direct impact on existing staff. The teams have also shown through efficiency improvements they can deliver effective support services with these posts removed.</p>		
Workstream Ten Description	<p>ICT Team Efficiencies By restructuring several roles in the ICT service, this can be delivered with a reduced amount of resource.</p>		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Master Data Management Efficiencies	40	0	0
Combining existing management roles.	43	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	<p>The LLPG and Street Naming and Numbering are statutory duties and reducing would give us enough resource to complete these statutory duties and complete essential tasks on the other elements. There could be pinch points around one off project work led by services (such as elections or planning) but we would need to look at solutions for this as needed. Back up and contingency could be provided by working more closely with other organisations.</p> <p>The proposed ICT management changes would mean less available resource to Project Manage service based work or deal with operational issues for service owned systems (like Call Centre technology) but should be sufficient to allow the overall management of the team and the programme of work.</p>		
	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 – 2022	2022 – 2023	2023 – 2024
TOTAL POTENTIAL SAVINGS FROM EFFICIENCY THEME	445	25	0

Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Areas	Resources Customer		
Implementation Costs			
Item	Cost	Comment	
Redundancy	Not fully known	Specific details / postholders are unknown at this stage.	
Number of posts reduced in FTE	2021 – 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
TOTAL	13.8 FTE	1 FTE	
Number of new posts in FTE	2021 – 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
TOTAL	1FTE		
Conclusion	Northgate system implementation will allow for significant redesign /digitalisation of processes across a number of teams. Also, Covid -19 has led to innovative and new ways of working which have relied on digital and virtual solutions not only making us more efficient but allowing us to meet increased demand in some areas and to question former established ways of working . These factors will build on the digital development we have already successfully implemented and add to the momentum in driving efficiencies across the organisation. The efficiencies detailed will result in reductions to the staff establishment and this carries some risk of some short impact on service provision and redundancy cost.		