

Savings Under Development

1. Review of County Council's role in running schools

The March White Paper 'Educational Excellence Everywhere' set out the Department for Education's (DfE) ambition for educational excellence and set out the end of local authorities role in running schools, it also set out the intention to revise statutory duties for local authorities. It is not known when or if the White Paper will continue in its current form. When the DfE sets out its expectation of local authorities in education provision a review of the County Council's role will be undertaken.

2. Disabled Children's Respite Care - new service model

Respite provision for children with disabilities is through a private sector contract and delivered in an institutional setting. A service review is being undertaken to determine whether a family based solution is able to provide a more flexible cost effective service.

3. Education of Children in Care

The education of children in care service has been grown over recent years; benchmarking data has identified Leicestershire as a high spending authority in this area. A review is underway to assess the cost effectiveness of the current service model and offer.

4. Lower cost adult social care provision

The most significant cost in ASC is for residential placements. Some exploratory work has been undertaken to better understand the market and scope to make savings from different models of placements for adults with learning difficulties. Further opportunities are being sought through an integrated review with Health and Rutland for fees for residential and nursing care to establish consistent pricing of placements.

5. Whole life disability

The County Council does not currently operate a fully integrated whole-life approach to disability services. Work is underway to establish the best options to deliver fully integrated care pathways for disabled people in Leicestershire, with the expectation that work can be undertaken in partnership to better meet the needs of service users. The County Council will also work with the private, voluntary and independent sectors to develop a robust local offer for Leicestershire. It is anticipated that through a more joined up approach internally and with partners, efficiencies can be made and outcomes improved for service users.

6. Promoting Independence in the home for high dependency service users

A significant proportion of the cost of care related to the delivery by multiple carers to one service user. A review will be undertaken to establish the potential to reducing double handed care provision through improved use of equipment and moving/manual handling practices.

7. Social Care and SEN Transport

A review is being undertaken of transport services provided for SEN and social care service users. These service areas have a current combined budget of £12.6m. Some measures have already been put in place that will save £0.3m (already built into the MTFS). A number of further potential initiatives have been identified that the County Council could pursue to reduce spend and offset growth pressures which will hopefully generate further savings to be included in the MTFS.

8. Increased revenues from Asset Investments

A number of asset investment possibilities are currently being appraised and when approved by the Corporate Asset Investment Fund Advisory Board, progressed. The benefits of making these investments will not only be to the local economy, but also generate an additional ongoing revenue stream (for example as rental income from farms or industrial units) or future capital receipts in excess of what is required for the initial investment.

9. Integrated ICT Systems

In line with a move towards a single outcome framework and to further enable existing MTFS opportunities including Prevention/Early Help and Whole Life Disability, the current ICT system landscape will be reviewed to enable greater cross-departmental working, for example implementing common systems. The intention is also to extend this principle of using ICT to enable closer joint working by investigating opportunities with partners including Health.

10. Review Structures and Delivery Models

As the single outcome framework is developed refocusing the County Council's priorities, the intention is to review the Target Operating Model for the organisation and from that how the Council's functions are organised, managed and delivered to reflect this. Similarly, given a number of factors including the living wage the intention is to review the relationship and balance between externally provided services and those which the Council continues to provide successfully in-house.

11. Proactively Manage Demand

Given the cuts to public service, the County Council's digital delivery plan is already targeting managing demand in a cost effective manner while providing a simpler customer experience. However, given that further savings will be required managing customer expectations will become more. Exploratory work will begin to understand whether a structured and coordinated approach to utilising behavioural

insight approaches can help manage these expectations. For example, removing the signs by the roadside which encourage customers to call if they wish to report a defect, instead encouraging self-serve digital options.

12. Commercialism

Following the work performed over the course of the year, traded services have been developed and an additional £2m of savings built into the MTFs. The Council intends to investigate broadening the scope of what it is currently trading, by reviewing the services provided that have income generation potential, exploring alternative delivery models such as joint ventures and explore potential insourcing. In due course a strategy will be delivered, clearly identifying where the Council should focus its efforts.

13. Commissioning and Procurement

A range of measures is being considered with the aim of improving the County Council's approach to commissioning and procurement. These measures should allow resources to be targeted where they will have the biggest potential impact and ensure that the most appropriate mechanisms are used, leading to lower cost services. Proposals that are currently being developed include more integrated ways of working, making greater use of community provision, strengthening contract management arrangements, and exploring the potential consolidation of some internal functions.

14. People and Performance Management

A number of measures are being considered, with the aim of improving performance and productivity across the organisation, and ultimately reducing the cost of delivering services. These could include: introduction of a performance management framework which will involve creating clear expectations about the role of the manager and associated accountability, more robust and challenging recruitment (for attitude and aptitude), development of managers, and a renewed focus on the Council's organisation design principles.

15. Digital Services

During this financial year the Council has finalised a digital strategy which aims to strengthen communities and grow the economy through skills and infrastructure; deliver easy-to-use digital services which help people do things for themselves; and enable better ways of working.

Underpinning this strategy is a digital delivery plan which is driving key pieces of work including a review of customer-facing transactions and a simpler, more cost effective way of managing IT.

Departments have been tasked with identifying areas for further research and development. Achieving additional savings through digital will require a cross-council commitment to working differently. It may also require a firmer determination to drive all transactions, except high-risk activities, digitally.

16. Property Initiatives

Over recent years the County Council has delivered reduced accommodation costs and generated increased rental income by using space more flexibly and ensuring that it is fit for purpose. This not only delivers a financial return but encourages relationships between organisations. The intention is to exploit this opportunity further in terms of not only how the County Council uses its buildings but also across all publicly held estates in Leicestershire. Working with public sector partners under the One Public Estate initiative to rationalise the Council's collective property estates, will release land for housing or job creation and reduce costs of accommodation and/or realise capital receipts.

17. Review of Council Tax and/Business Rates

By far the largest component of the County Council's funding is council tax. Due to the elimination of revenue support grant this is expected to fund 85% (£303m) of the net budget by 2020/21. To ensure that income can be incorporated into budgets at the earliest opportunity and income generate from council tax is optimised a review is proposed in collaboration with District Councils covering the following themes:

- Policy – do the current principles allow the optimum level of council tax to be billed?
- Collection – do the current operational processes and arrangements allow collection of billed amounts to be maximised?
- Planning – can the accuracy of forecasts be improved?