

24 November 2016

Rebalancing the Budget : Options for Consultation

Ward(s) All

Portfolio: Councillor S. Coughlan – Leader of the Council
Councillor C. Jones – Clean and Green
Councillor J. Fitzpatrick – Community, Leisure and Culture
Councillor A. Nawaz – Personnel and Business Support
Councillor L. Jeavons - Regeneration
Councillor D. Coughlan – Social Care (Money Home Job)

Executive Summary :

Rebalancing the Budget: Options for Consultation, as reported to Cabinet on 26 October 2016, includes the latest medium term financial outlook for the four year period from 2016/17 to 2019/20 and sets out to rebalance the council's finances over a four year period, to provide ongoing financial stability for the Authority, in a period of great uncertainty.

This report provides an extract of the savings proposals under the remit of the Corporate and Public Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

Reason for scrutiny :

To enable consultation and scrutiny of the savings proposals.

Recommendation

The committee are recommended to consider the savings proposals attached that relate to the remit of this committee, and make recommendations to Cabinet as appropriate.

Background papers

Various financial working papers.

Resource and legal considerations

Cabinet on 26 October 2016 presented a list of revenue savings for consultation, as part of a 4 year financial plan to rebalance the council's budget.

The full Cabinet report can be accessed with this link –
Rebalancing the Budget: Options for Consultation

Savings are split into two:

1. **Policy** - with a direct impact on services, and which require an Executive decision to proceed, these have now been referred for specific public consultation and equality impact assessment. Those under the remit of this committee are shown in **Appendix 1**, along with detailed supporting papers referenced at **Appendix 3**.
2. **Operational** – savings which officers have delegations to implement; examples include restructures, back office savings, operational efficiencies – the details of those under the remit of this committee are shown in **Appendix 2**.

Citizen impact

Details of potential impact are shown within the individual policy papers attached to this report.

Environmental impact

The impact on the environment is considered in all savings proposals.

Performance management

Financial performance is considered alongside service performance. Managers are required to deliver their services within budget and there are comprehensive arrangements in place to monitor and manage this.

Equality Implications

Service managers have regard to equalities delivering services and identifying saving options. Equality impact assessments will be undertaken as required prior to final recommendations being made to Council on the budget, along with any mitigating actions.

Consultation

Consultation is an integral part of the corporate budget process and arrangements are in hand to consult with a wide range of stakeholders (i.e. councillors, residents, service users, business sector, voluntary and community organisations, etc.). This is outlined in the report to Cabinet on 26 October 2016 entitled 'Rebalancing the Budget: Options for Consultation'.

Any feedback from consultation, including those from this committee, will be presented to Cabinet on 14 December 2016 for their consideration.

Any changes to these savings, following public consultation, will be reported to a future meeting of the committee, providing an opportunity to make further recommendations to Cabinet. Cabinet may wish to consider the feedback contained within this report in formulating their draft and final budget proposals

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APPENDIX 1

SUMMARY OF REVENUE POLICY SAVINGS BY PORTFOLIO FOR CONSULTATION

These are supported by policy papers (where stated in the table), shown in Appendix 3. Year 1 and 2 options are to be consulted on. For year 3 options, no policy document is required, as these options require further workup prior to formal consideration.

Saving reference	Detail of saving / efficiency	2017/18 £	2018/19 £	2019/20 £	Policy paper
Leader of the Council Portfolio					
1	Charging for Deputyships	30,000			See p9
2	Charging for Appointeeships		15,000		See p11
3	Apply decrease to Members allowances at same level as decrease in staff pay. *Requires a Council decision to implement.	7,055			No *
Clean and Green Portfolio					
15	Every other week bin collections – Decision approved by Cabinet 16 December 2015	460,500			N/A
16	Reduction in Public Health investment to lifestyle services	45,000		205,000	See p13
17	Introduce charging for garden waste collections		300,000		See p16
18	Reconfigure recycling collections to introduce 'Twin stream' collections		150,000		See p21
19	Review HWRC site and Transfer Station provision			137,772	N/A
20	Reduction in grass cutting - large areas	27,312			See p25
21	Consider cessation of bowling green and cricket wicket provision	58,464			See p30
22	Reduction in herbicidal weed spraying of highways	23,750			See p34
23a	Reduction in Street Cleansing service	250,000			See p37
23b	Further reduction in Street Cleansing service	182,907			See p37
24	Further review of waste collection arrangements			500,000	N/A
25	Reduce grass cutting on highway verges in rural areas	49,702			See p41
26	Reducing green waste collection season by 1 month	30,000			See p46
27	Reduction of one tree gang	60,000			See p50
Community, Leisure and Culture Portfolio					
28	Consider withdrawal of contract with Walsall Voluntary Action (WVA)			168,795	N/A

Saving reference	Detail of saving / efficiency	2017/18 £	2018/19 £	2019/20 £	Policy paper
29	Cease funding to Relate Walsall and First Base Walsall	7,500	22,500		See p55
30	Consider withdrawing funding to Community Associations	247,900			See 57
31	Remove Cohesion non staffing budget	74,356			See p60
32	Option for redesign of Library service	2,900,000			See p62
32a	Option 1 – move to a single library, home delivery and mobile service, combined with Leather Museum and Local History Centre on a single site				See p62
32b	Option 2 – invite options for a number of libraries based on viability (cost, access, usage, social and economic need) to include home and mobile service				See p62
32c	Option 3 – alternative solution within available budget				See p62
33	Relocate Leather Museum into Lichfield Street Central Library with Local History Centre	85,720	85,715		See p62
34	Relocate Local History Centre into Lichfield Street Central Library with Leather Museum	93,405	93,405		See p62
35	Removal of the council's revenue subsidy to the Forest Arts	100,000	100,000	185,816	See p72
36	Removal of the council's revenue subsidy to the New Art Gallery	100,000	(20,000)	390,000	See p79
37	Additional income from Active Living to fully recover costs of Darlaston Pool and Walsall Gala baths		519,383	783,559	See p85
38	Create a Local Authority Trading company, initially to manage Active Living sports sport and leisure services * Separate Options Appraisal required for Cabinet Consideration	175,000	175,000		No*
39	Change to provision of out of hours for Community Protection service	22,370			See p91
40	Review of the operation of the council's pest and animal control service to control demand, target resources more effectively and increase income	20,000			See p95
Personnel and Business Support Portfolio					
52	Cease retirement awards	26,000			See p100
53	Consider alternative funding for category 2 school crossing wardens	85,000			See p102

Saving reference	Detail of saving / efficiency	2017/18 £	2018/19 £	2019/20 £	Policy paper
Regeneration Portfolio					
54	Energy saving from major street lighting invest to save * <i>Separate Options Appraisal required for Cabinet Consideration</i>		50,000	450,000	No*
55	Reduction in the mtce of road signs	15,000		64,000	See p105
56	Reduced maintenance of road drainage following pilot on drainage and streams			72,000	N/A
57	Reduced maintenance road markings			31,500	N/A
58	Reduction in highways maintenance resulting from the re-procurement of the Highway Maintenance contract	150,000			See p107
59	Additional reduction in Highways maintenance revenue budgets		100,000		See p109
60	Increase cost of parking permits	6,000	6,000	6,000	See p111
61	Increasing Town Centre off street Parking Charges	15,000			See p113
62	Introduction of an additional charge for vehicle dropped crossings to cover the costs of preparing quotations	10,000			See p115
63	Introduction of a street and roadworks permit scheme		100,000		See p117
64	Redesign and reduce the traffic management function		75,000		See p119
65	Reduction in the reactive Highways maintenance budget	50,000			See p121
66	Merge Strategic Planning team with those of other Councils		100,000		See 123
67	Reduction in Economic Development			243,644	N/A
68	Stop cleansing after markets / collecting and disposing of market traders waste	175,000			See p125
69	Increase district centres market fees	35,000			See p127
70	Cessation of landscape service	40,000			See p129
71	Removal of all economic intelligence services			60,000	N/A
72	Significant reduction in Economic Development capacity			100,000	N/A
73	Review of investment portfolio			500,000	N/A
Social Care Portfolio					
74	Combined Welfare Rights service, Housing Advice and Crisis Support	200,000			See p131
75	Closure of banking hall in Civic Centre	100,000			See p135
76	Reduction in grant to CAB	132,458	45,966	66,191	See p138

SUMMARY OF REVENUE OPERATIONAL SAVINGS BY PORTFOLIO FOR CABINET APPROVAL

Saving reference	Detail of saving / efficiency	2017/18 £	2018/19 £	2019/20 £
Leader of the Council Portfolio				
83	Increase in income by the Insurance team	40,678	26,313	
84	Dividend review – Birmingham Airport	419,835	304,453	311,437
85	Treasury management – review of debt portfolio	85,646	173,855	
86	Treasury management – rescheduling of existing borrowing	420,000	(80,000)	(160,000)
87	Review and restructure in Finance and Financial Administration	309,191	65,472	65,003
88	Review of staffing in Legal Services	45,396	31,612	31,340
89	Review of Internal Audit Contract	13,000		
Clean and Green Portfolio				
102	Redesign of management roles	56,216		
103	Reduction in management	37,451		
104	Removal of one post within Strategy Management	88,743		
105	W2R PFI contract income	270,000		
106	Waste collection 4 day working week over a Monday to Friday	146,190		
107	Service redesign – Operational Team Leaders	14,000	7,000	
108	Reduction of Operational Manager		48,410	
109	Efficiency savings within Clean and Green	45,000		
110	Changes to working practices – legal HGV driver maintenance checks	60,000		
111	Reduction in grounds winter maintenance works	120,000		
112	Fleet services redesign			40,000
113	Charging for tipping at Fryers Road transfer station – private businesses		5,000	
114	Environmental enforcement	10,000		
Community, Leisure and Culture Portfolio				
115	Removal of post to support community development to the voluntary sector	12,058		
116	Reduce Community Safety non staffing budget	15,000		
117	Restructure Area Management and Town Centre Management	50,000		
118	Remove council subsidy to the Creative Development Team	66,998		
119	Increase bereavement fees (10% for cremations, 3% for burials)	20,000		

Saving reference	Detail of saving / efficiency	2017/18 £	2018/19 £	2019/20 £
120	Increase Crematoria fees further (8%/6%/6%)	240,000	180,000	180,000
121	Registrars to cover all direct costs by 2018/19	20,000	20,000	30,000
122	Cemeteries management restructure			70,000
123	Additional income from the Active Living Centres	875,444		
124	The Sports Development team to become self sustaining	61,934		
125	Staff savings within regulatory / enforcement		100,000	100,000
126	Building Control management restructure	25,000	25,000	22,000
Personnel and Business Support Portfolio				
129	Management review within Integrated Facilities Management	62,392		
130	Reduce Trade Union facility time	81,000		
131	Restructure of Human Resources	546,491	101,470	102,197
132	Review of Human Resources contracts	21,000		
133	Efficiency savings within ICT	171,304	60,321	
134	Efficiency savings across Procurement	8,860	8,783	17,340
135	Contracts review	1,000,000		
Regeneration Portfolio				
136	General efficiencies within Planning, Engineering and Transportation			10,000
137	Full year effect of re-procuring highways maintenance contract		50,000	
138	Restructure lighting maintenance support		14,000	
139	Reduction in highways maintenance asset management budget	15,000		
140	Introduce new Asset Management practices		25,000	25,000
141	Reduction in the Pollution Control supplies and services budget	10,000		
142	Review charges for the naming and numbering service	10,000		
143	Review of Pollution Control service and reduction in resource	15,000		
144	Further review of Pollution Control		42,000	
145	Review arrangements for winter service salt purchase	15,000		
146	Review of parking warden contract	25,000		
147	Parking warden contract re-procurement			50,000
148	Traffic signal energy efficiencies	1,000		
149	Deletion of vacant post in highways maintenance service	42,000		
150	Lighting PFI budget one off contribution	100,000		(100,000)
151	One off use of bus lane enforcement reserve	50,000	(50,000)	

Saving reference	Detail of saving / efficiency	2017/18 £	2018/19 £	2019/20 £
152	Use of grant reserves to replace LLPG ICT costs for one year only	20,000	(20,000)	
153	Staffing review within Development and Delivery	101,930		
154	Management reduction in Development and Delivery	61,086		
155	Reductions in services provided by Economy & Environment Directorate Support	60,000	61,000	50,000
156	Reduction in senior management capacity		100,000	100,000
157	Asset Management review	100,000	350,000	350,000
Social Care Portfolio				
158	Review and restructure across Money Home Job	673,679	300,000	764,000

SUPPORTING POLICY DOCUMENTS**PORTFOLIO: Leader of the Council****Directorate and Service Area: Change and Governance - Finance*****Option: Charging for Deputyships******Saving Reference: 1*****1. Financial Proposal**

Net Saving			
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	30,000	0	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	30,000	0	0
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. Description of the Proposal

- 2.1. Walsall does not charge for its administration of Deputyships.
- 2.2. Following an application to the Court of Protection a Deputyship may be granted to a person or local authority to enable them to manage and so protect the property and financial affairs of people who lack the mental capacity to make specific decisions on their behalf.
- 2.3. The Court of Protection has issued a practice guide of recommended charges for professional bodies and local authorities to apply when undertaking services for Deputyships. The proposal is to charge in accordance with Part 19 of the court of Protection Rules 2007 which contains a menu of charges including £195 for the preparation and lodgement of the required annual report and £585 annual management fee.

3. Implications Associated With Proposal**3.1 Corporate Plan**

This proposal is fully in line with the corporate priorities and supports vulnerable clients in the management of their financial affairs.

3.2 Customers

A Deputyship is granted in instances where there is an ongoing need for decisions to be made on behalf of a person who lacks capacity, if somebody has assets greater than £5,000 (including property), or if access is needed to their bank accounts to determine their assets.

3.3 **Employees/Staffing**

This proposal will secure an income stream that will contribute to the funding of a client welfare team in finance to undertake Deputyship duties. The number of deputyships is expected to increase over time.

3.4 **Partners**

There are no implications arising from this proposal

3.5 **Environmental Implications**

There are no environmental implications arising from this proposal.

3.6 **Health and wellbeing implications**

The proposal contributes to the wellbeing of vulnerable clients.

3.7 **Other Council Services**

There are no implications arising from this proposal.

3.8 **Procurement / Social Value Implications**

At this time there are no implications. This will be considered in the future.

4. **Associated Risks / Opportunities**

Through securing a funding stream the service will be able to provide a more consistent and robust level of support.

5. **Legal Implications**

- 5.1 The (OPG) Office of Public Guardian Investigation Report, which reviewed deputyship practices being followed by Walsall Council, in 2015 noted that Walsall had not taken up the opportunity to recoup some of its costs by levying fixed costs for deputyship clients, which is allowed under The Court of Protection practice guide.

<https://www.judiciary.gov.uk/publications/19b-fixed-costs-in-the-court-of-protection/>

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

- 6.1 It is proposed to consult on this proposal.

7. **Equality Implications**

- 7.1 A full equality impact assessment will be carried out.

PORTFOLIO: Leader of the Council

Directorate and Service Area: Change and Governance - Finance

Option: Charging for Appointeeships

Saving Reference: 2

1. Financial Proposal

Net Saving			
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	0	15,000	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	0	15,000	0
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. Description of the Proposal

- 2.1 An Appointee is the person who is appointed by the Secretary of State for the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to act on behalf of a benefit client who is unable to manage their benefit affairs - usually because of mental incapacity or severe physical disability.
- 2.2 Walsall does not currently charge for this service. The majority of our appointee clients are only be in receipt of state benefits and will generally have limited assets, therefore if a fee is to be charged, it would need to be low. Example of charges by other councils include:- a fee of £20 per calendar month if the account is in credit by more that £1,000, an administration fee for the Appointee Service that may be paid when the council stops being the appointee (i.e. when the client dies or when the health or social care worker agree that the client no longer needs an appointee, or alternatively, a number of councils keep any interest that is paid on the bank balance to cover administration fees).
- 2.3 Any charge that Walsall may introduce would dependent on the outcome of the consultation particularly with client advocates.

3. Implications Associated With Proposal

3.1 Corporate Plan

This proposal is fully in line with the corporate priorities and supports vulnerable clients in the management of their financial affairs.

3.2 **Customers**

It is expected that the number of clients will increase significantly following consultation with clients and their advocates who have expressed a desire to rejoin the council and leave their existing from their current supplier of advice and support.

3.3 **Employees/Staffing**

This proposal will secure an income stream that will contribute to the funding of a client welfare team to undertake Appointeeship duties. The number of Appointeeships is expected to increase over time.

3.4 **Partners**

The council will require client advocacy services to ensure that meaningful consultation is undertaken with clients affected.

3.5 **Environmental Implications**

There are no environmental implications arising from this proposal.

3.6 **Health and wellbeing implications**

The proposal contributes to the wellbeing of vulnerable clients.

3.7 **Other Council Services**

This proposal will require the support and co-ordination with Adult Social Care client support services.

3.8 **Procurement / Social Value Implications**

At this time there are no implications. This will be considered in the future.

4. **Associated Risks / Opportunities**

4.1 Through securing a funding stream the service will be able to provide a more consistent and robust level of support.

5. **Legal Implications**

5.1 Legal implications will assessed during the consultation phase.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

6.1 Comprehensive consultation will take place.

7. **Equality Implications**

7.1 A full equality impact assessment will be carried out.

PORTFOLIO: Clean and Green

Directorate and Service Area: Economy and Environment - Public Health

Option: Reduction in Public Health Investment to Lifestyle Services

Saving Reference: 16

1. Financial Proposal

Net Saving			
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	45,000	0	205,000
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	45,000	0	205,000
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. Description of the Proposal

- 2.1 Walsall Lifestyle Service is commissioned through the Public Health ring fence grant. The service delivers an integrated model of service delivery with a tiered approach of universal and targeted lifestyle support for adults and children in Walsall. This includes support around children's weight (e.g. healthy families programme), physical activity, emotional health and well being, health and work (e.g. healthy workplace programme), diet and nutrition and sustained behaviour change (e.g. tailored healthy lifestyle support). The service supports residents, particularly those in areas of increased health inequality, to address lifestyle issues which will lead to improved health and wellbeing as well as wider determinants of health (e.g. access to employment to residents out of work due to ill health).
- 2.2 The proposed saving of £250,000 will be achieved through releasing funds from the Lifestyle Services contract. The changes required to the Lifestyle's Service will be offset by development of parks and green spaces and a more joined up approach to health improvement (e.g. physical activity) across council and external partners, particularly the community and voluntary sector. A project group has already been set up which is identifying opportunities for evidence based as well new innovative approaches to increase usage of green spaces and improve resident's health, particularly physical activity and emotional health and wellbeing.
- 2.3 Whilst Lifestyle services are not mandated, Local Authorities do have a duty (under the Health and Social Care Act (2012)) to reduce health inequalities and improve the health of the local population.

3. Implications Associated With Proposal

3.1 Corporate Plan

The proposed change will impact on the following priorities for the council outlined in the Corporate Plan: Lifelong health wealth and happiness – Lifestyle Services plays a key role in improving the health and wellbeing of Walsall's residents. A healthy population is fundamental for strong local economy enabling residents to access and sustain employment.

- Safe Resilient and Prospering Communities – Development of the voluntary and community sector will be a key element of the proposed change. This will include support to the sector to develop sustainable health improvement activities and enable improved access to other sources of external funding.
- Sustainable Change and Improvement for All – Lifestyle services provides both targeted and universal support priorities those with the greatest health needs. Universal support includes a range of self help tools to enable residents to make improvements to their own health without the need of intensive and more costly support. The proposed change will also utilise a similar 2 tiered approach.

3.2 Customers

There is a potential impact would be on service users who live or work in Walsall, children and businesses.

3.3 Employees / Staffing

Employees directly impacted on would be the lifestyle service provider employees at Mytime Active.

3.4 Partners

Lifestyles services contribute to improving the health and wellbeing of local residents, thus reducing dependency on other services e.g. within health and social care.

3.5 Economic Implications

Lifestyle Services plays a key role in improving the health and wellbeing of Walsall's residents. A healthy population is fundamental for strong local economy enabling residents to access and sustain employment.

3.6 Environmental Implications

No environmental implications are anticipated.

3.7 **Health and wellbeing implications**

Lifestyle Services service are central to the delivery of Walsall's Health and Wellbeing Strategy as it impacts upon all the principles set out in the Marmot Review.

3.8 **Other Council Services**

Reducing lifestyle services may impact on Social Care and Children Services through ill health and long term illnesses.

3.9 **Procurement / Social Value Implications**

When procuring the Lifestyle service, Social Value was a criterion upon which the bid was scored. There is an expectation that the service contributes, wherever possible, to make investments in local people and business.

4. **Associated Risks / Opportunities**

- 4.1 A project group has been set up to review the evidence base, develop new ways of working and align priorities.

5. **Legal Implications**

- 5.1 Legal advice will need to be sought before commencing any contract negotiations with the present providers.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

- 6.1 A full consultation with service users, provider agencies and partner agencies will be undertaken.

7. **Equality Implications**

- 7.1 An equality impact assessment is being undertaken. This proposal will impact upon individuals who fall within the protected group categories as set out in the Equalities Act (2010).

PORTFOLIO: Clean and Green

Directorate and Service Area: Economy and Environment - Clean and Green

Option: Introduce Charging for Green Waste Collections

Saving Reference: 17

1. Financial Proposal

	Net Saving		
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	0	300,000	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Total Net Saving	0	300,000	0
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. Description of the Proposal

- 2.1 The council does not have a statutory obligation to make a separate collection of garden waste. Switching to a charged garden waste service is likely to reduce both participation in the service and the amount of material collected for recycling. This will impact on the recycling rate and disposal costs.
- 2.2 The estimated saving of £300,000 is based on 20% participation and an annual charge of £30 if booked before the 1 December for commencement of an alternate weekly collection service from 1 February in the following year. The cost will be £35 if booked after the 1 December. There will be an initial “one off” cost of £18.00 (paid by the resident) for purchasing a new wheeled bin. Replacement bins will be £22.50 thereafter for any lost/stolen as per the waste policy. Collections will operate for 10 months between 1 February and 30 November each year.
- 2.3 The proposed scheme and charges are in line with other local authorities.
- 2.4 Existing brown bins that the majority of residents already have will be utilised for proposed changes to the dry recycling collection service. Therefore a new colour of garden waste bin will be required for residents who choose to buy in to the charged green waste collection service. Cost of bins will be reviewed on an annual basis in accordance with the review of fees and charges. The possibility of the collection of additional bins for a supplementary charge will be available subject to operational service demands.
- 2.5 The savings would come from reduced staff numbers and reduced vehicle numbers plus income generated through the introduction of a charge. It may or may not lead to a fall in disposal costs as waste that is not collected at the kerbside is likely to be displaced to the highways waste recycling centre (HWRC).

- 2.6 A charged service will be demand-led and will change year on year. Currently, approximately 14,500 tonnes of garden waste is collected from the kerbside each year. This makes a significant contribution to the recycling rate.
- 2.7 It is envisaged that residents who wish to use the service will sign up to an annual service agreement. The council will incur costs to administer this process and this cost is reflected in the identified saving.
- 2.8 Clean and Green Services would look to promote home composting in tandem with introducing the charged service.
- 2.9 This proposal affects only the charging for garden waste service. Other proposed changes including reducing the period for collecting garden waste in 2017, revisions to recycling collection arrangements and the provision of HWRC facilities are considered in other budget related policy papers.
- 2.10 This proposal needs to be considered in relation to other proposed waste savings, as all the services are inter-related and changing one service will have a knock-on effect to another service. A change in the council's Waste Policy is required.
- 2.11 The free garden waste service would cease in autumn 2017. Promotion of the charged service would start in spring 2017 in readiness to start the new charged service on 1st February 2018.
- 2.12 Free garden waste collections are not a statutory service. The Environmental Protection (EPA) Act 1990 and The Controlled Waste Regulations 2012 allow for charges to be made for garden waste collections. Households will still be able to take their garden waste to any of the council's HWRC's at no charge. It is likely there will be an increase in customer complaints regarding the introduction of a charge for a service that was previously free.

3. **Implications Associated With Proposal**

3.1 **Corporate Plan**

There may be a negative impact on the council's priority "Sustainable Change and Improvement for All". There will be a perception that the Council is charging for a service that was previously free. There will be increased risks of fly tipping from those residents who do not wish to pay for with reduction in service. There will be increased risk of dry recycling contamination with some residents putting garden waste in their green recycling bin.

3.2 **Customers**

This service affects over 90% of households in the borough. It is popular with residents and has a high participation rate. There is likely to be a negative impact for customers and the service changes are likely to:-

- Increase fly tipping
- Be unpopular with residents due to the perception of currently receiving the free service through payment of council tax.
- Reduce the capacity each household has to dispose of their waste following the change to alternate weekly collections in October 2016.
- Push residents to put garden waste in the rubbish bin or worse the recycling bin
- Make some less affluent residents feel excluded from the scheme
- Home composting will have limited appeal to some residents
- Potential increase demand for and queuing at HWRC's, particularly during peaks such as bank holidays and weekends.

3.3 Employees / Staffing

Currently the garden waste collection service operates via agency staff used on a temporary basis during the collection season. A charge for service will be based on future demand which may change on a year on year basis. It is anticipated there will be a 20% participation rate so although the staffing levels would reduce, all staff reductions would be agency employees with no implications for full time employees.

3.4 Partners

There is no direct impact on partners. The council currently has a disposal contract in place to recycle the garden waste which ends in March 2019. This contract does not have a minimum annual tonnage so reduced tonnages can be accommodated.

3.5 Economic Implications

There are no significant identified economic implications with this proposal. The current disposal facility is located in Lichfield District and disposal is arranged under contract. A charge for service may emphasise the difference between affluent and more deprived areas of the Borough where residents are unable, or unwilling, to pay for the service.

3.6 Environmental Implications

There are potential negative environmental implications with this proposal. With the introduction of a charge, less green waste is likely to be recycled and recycling rates in Walsall are likely to reduce.

There may be an increase in fly tipping in the borough or the potential for rogue traders who are not licensed to carry waste, to offer the removal of waste and dispose of the waste illegally.

Some householders may choose to have garden bonfires to dispose of grass cuttings and other garden arisings that they are unable to contain within their grey (residual waste) bin. This would have a negative impact on air quality and also a negative amenity impact for householders of neighbouring properties.

3.7 Health and wellbeing implications

The council has a statutory duty to promote health and wellbeing. Two of the objectives to reduce inequalities from the Marmot review are that we “Ensure a healthy standard of living for all” and we “Create and develop healthy and sustainable communities” The introduction of a charge for collecting green waste may be seen to have a greater impact on those households that are less well off.

The promotion of home composting may help to promote sustainability by re-directing garden material out of the waste stream for re-use in householders gardens as a soil improver. This can be promoted through the council web-pages, promotional literature etc.

3.8 Other Council Services

Input from legal services will be required for the annual service level agreements with residents. Input from Finance will be required for processing payments for annual agreements and managing bad debts. Input from the First Stop Shop will be required for accepting application forms and processing payments

3.9 Procurement / Social Value Implications

There are no Social Value implications. There is no minimum tonnage requirement defined in the contracts the council has for the reprocessing of garden waste.

4. Associated Risks / Opportunities

4.1 The following risks have been identified:

- Negative public perceptions and complaints as charged service is likely to be unpopular with residents
- Increased fly tipping of garden waste.
- Increased residual waste disposal costs where residents don't use HWRC sites and put garden waste in grey residual waste bins
- Increased contamination and disposal costs of dry recycling, where residents put garden waste in green recycling bins
- Increased pressure on HWRC sites
- Longer queues at HWRC sites when residents deliver garden waste for recycling
- Failure to meet statutory recycling targets, which may incur fines or penalties from DEFRA

4.2 There is an opportunity for the promotion of home composting which is more sustainable and environmentally beneficial although this may have limited appeal with some residents.

5. **Legal Implications**

5.1 The garden waste collection service is not a statutory function. The Controlled Waste Regulations 2012 allows a charge to be made for the collection of domestic garden waste. Contracts / service level agreements will be required between the council and residents prior to the commencement of the service.

5.2 The Waste Framework Directive requires local authorities to be recycling 50% of household waste by 2020.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

6.1 Consultation will be carried out.

7. **Equality Implications**

7.1 A full equality impact assessment will be carried out on this proposal.

PORTFOLIO: Clean and Green

Directorate and Service Area: Economy and Environment - Clean and Green

Option: Reconfigure Recycling Collections to Introduce 'Twin Stream' Collections

Saving Reference: 18

1. Financial Proposal

	Net Saving		
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	0	150,000	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Total Net Saving	0	150,000	0
Capital investment	0	90,000	0

2. Description of the Proposal

- 2.1 The materials collected as part of the recycling scheme are household waste which the council has a statutory obligation to collect. This proposal needs to be considered in conjunction with the proposal to introduce a charge for collecting garden waste.
- 2.2 Currently dry recyclable materials (paper, card, plastics, glass and cans) are collected together (co-mingled) in the green bin on a fortnightly basis. If a chargeable garden waste service is introduced residents will be required to pay a one off cost for the purchase of a new bin (in addition to the annual fee) and brown bins could then be used differently.
- 2.3 Under this proposal the existing brown bins will be used to facilitate the introduction of a 'twin stream' recycling collection scheme. Residents will be required to place glass, cans and plastics into the green bins and paper and card into the brown bins. Paper and card will be collected in week 1, then plastic, glass and can in week 3. The recycling bins (green or brown) would be emptied first and the grey residual waste bins emptied later in the day. There is no overall reduction in the capacity residents have to dispose of recyclable waste.
- 2.4 A further detailed review of the split of materials would be required prior to implementation which would need to take into account the re sale values of the commodities collected.
- 2.5 The twin stream collection would be operated by the existing refuse collection crews.

- 2.6 The Waste Framework Directive (WFD) and Waste Regulation 2011 includes a target that separate kerbside collections of paper, glass, cans and plastic must be implemented by January 2015. Co-mingled recycling collections have been considered compliant with the WFD providing it can be evidenced that separate collections are not technically, environmentally and economically practicable (TEEP) and a high quality recyclate can still be achieved. The cost of implementing anything other than the existing co-mingled scheme has previously been prohibitive but the introduction of a chargeable garden waste collection scheme presents an opportunity to better meet the requirements of WFD.
- 2.7 A major drawback with co-mingled recycling schemes is high levels of contamination in the materials collected. In recent years Walsall has struggled to keep recycling contamination at a level that is acceptable to re-processors and avoid contractual difficulties. Single or twin stream collections help to reduce contamination levels
- 2.8 The value of the materials collected from co-mingled recycling schemes has decreased and disposing of the material we collect is now a cost to the Authority, whereas previously it was a source of income. Potentially materials collected from a twin stream collection scheme have a higher value.
- 2.9 This saving would come from a reduction in disposal cost. A change in the council's Waste Policy is required as detailed above.
- 2.10 Full year savings can be delivered from 1 April 2018. The savings amount is estimated as it is dependent upon market values and contractual fluctuations. The exact level of savings will not be known until re tendering is complete.
- 2.11 A small capital investment would be required to purchase brown bins for those properties who do currently participate in the brown bin scheme. An estimate of 5,000 bins at £18 per bin has been included in this proposal.

3. **Implications Associated With Proposal**

3.1 **Corporate Plan**

There would be a positive impact on the councils priority "Sustainable Change and Improvement for All", with improved quality recycling at a reduced cost supporting sustainable environmental improvements.

There may be a perception that the council is reducing a service by emptying recycling bins every other fortnight.

3.2 **Customers**

This service affects most households in the borough. Residents may perceive it as reduction in service, but the overall capacity they have to dispose of dry recycling will not change.

It is a requirement of the recycling scheme that all items should be washed and clean before being placed in the bin. This means there should be no issues with smells etc.

Residents may initially misunderstand the service change leading to the wrong items being placed in their bins, particularly if they continue to put garden waste in the brown bins.

3.3 Employees / Staffing

There are no implications for full time employees, existing refuse collection crews will continue to make recycling collections.

3.4 Partners

There is no direct impact on partners. The council currently has a disposal contract in place to re-process the co-mingled material collected which ends in March 2019, but this contract can be terminated (subject to contractual notice periods) and re tendered (subject to legal process) to allow a new service to commence in April 2018.

3.5 Economic Implications

There are no significant identified economic implications with this proposal.

3.6 Environmental Implications

There are potential positive environmental implications with this proposal. Recycling diverts waste from landfill as required by the Waste Hierarchy. Twin stream recycling will improve the quality of the recyclable materials the council can deliver to the Material Recovery Facility (MRF), meaning less material has to be rejected and subsequently land-filled and improving the end product the MRF can produce. This will bring environmental and financial benefits.

3.7 Health and wellbeing implications

The council has a statutory duty to promote health and wellbeing. Two of the objectives to reduce inequalities from the Marmot review are that we “Ensure a healthy standard of living for all” and we “Create and develop healthy and sustainable communities”. Provision of a quality, fit for purpose recycling collection scheme contributes towards the delivery of this duty.

3.8 Other Council Services

No impact.

3.9 Procurement / Social Value Implications

The current contract to dispose of co-mingled recycling expires in March 2019. The contract will be re-procured prior to this to reflect the move to twin stream collections as detailed above.

4. **Associated Risks / Opportunities**

4.1 The following risks have been identified:

- Dry paper / card recycling contamination with some residents, who do not participate in the chargeable garden waste collection scheme, continuing to put garden waste in their brown bin
- New service perceived as a reduction in service by customers.
- Fluctuation in prices for resale values of recycled materials doesn't deliver the identified savings
- Paying higher disposal costs if contamination levels are high.
- Contractual difficulties with re-processors if we continue to send contaminated co-mingled recycling to MRF's.
- Failure to meet statutory recycling targets, which may incur fines or penalties from DEFRA

4.2 The following opportunities have been identified:

- Reduced disposal costs
- Twin stream recycling will always be more valuable than co mingled collections
- To ensure continued compliance with the requirements of Waste Framework Directive and Waste Regulations 2011.

5. **Legal Implications**

5.1 The materials collected as part of the recycling scheme are household waste which the Council has a statutory obligation to collect under the Environmental Protection Act (EPA) 1990.

5.2 The Waste Framework Directive (WFD) and Waste Regulation 2011 includes a target that separate kerbside collections of paper, glass, cans and plastic (single stream) must be implemented by January 2015. Co-mingled recycling collections have been considered compliant with the WFD providing it can be evidenced that separate collections are not technically, environmentally and economically practicable (TEEP) and a high quality recyclate can still be achieved. Twin stream recycling collections are viewed as being a more compliant option than fully co-mingled collections, without moving to single stream collections which is costly and inconvenient for residents who potentially have to have a separate container for each material.

5.3 The Waste Framework Directive requires local authorities to be recycling 50% of household waste by 2020.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

6.1 Consultation will be carried out.

7. **Equality Implications**

7.1 An equality impact assessment will be carried out.

PORTFOLIO: Clean and Green

Directorate and Service Area: Economy and Environment - Clean and Green

Option: Reduction in Grass Cutting – Large Areas

Saving Reference: 20

1. Financial Proposal

	Net Saving		
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	27,312	0	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	27,312	0	0
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. Description of the Proposal

- 2.1 This proposal is to cease grass cutting on large areas with low amenity value which are currently cut by tractor with a gang unit. Areas that are currently cut on a fortnightly basis will cease for environmental reasons. Grass pathways will be cut to enable access across the sites for recreational use such as dog walking and smaller areas will be cut for recreational play.
- 2.2 Sites identified will be of a nature whereby sports pitch provision and play areas are not in situ. E.g. Pouke Hill, Reedswood Park, Delves Common, Walstead Road, areas of Aldridge Airport, Glastonbury open space, Green Lane open space, Kent Road recreation ground, Ross Farm open space, Clayhanger Common, Brownhills Common, Areas of Pelsall and Nest Common, Pelsall North Common, Areas of Barr Beacon, Areas of Pleck Park, Areas of Palfrey Park, Rhys Thomas open space. The list is not exhaustive and other sites may be identified / appropriate. Each site will be reviewed and appropriate consultation will take place
- 2.3 There will be some positive impact from increased biodiversity (flora, fauna, wildlife) plus deterring unauthorised encampments on green open space such as Delves Common, Aldridge Airport, Brook Meadow (Parkway), Stubbers Green Road where previous problems have been experienced.
- 2.4 Grounds maintenance activities are not specifically statutory services, but statute does have an influence on the activities carried out. Below are the identified acts and government guidance relevant to the grounds maintenance activities.

- Open Spaces Act 1906 – The council is required to maintain and keep any open space or burial ground transferred to or held in trust by the council in a good and decent state.
- National Planning Policy Framework - Planning for Open space, Sport and Recreation was previously determined by Planning Policy Guidance 17. This has now been replaced by the National Planning Policy Framework which recognises that access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities and requires there to be robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision.
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) - All public authorities have a duty under the act to have regard to conserving biodiversity as part of policy or decision making. Examples could be integrating biodiversity when developing policies and strategies and putting them into practice when managing our land.
- Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 – We are required to maintain public rights of way on council owned Countryside sites and open spaces.
- Control of Horses Act 2015 – Tackling Fly Grazing on council owned land
- Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Planning Act 2008

2.5 On council owned land or responsible land the minimum service is considered to be the service that maintains current safe accessibility, with minimum maintenance. Any existing assets (play areas, buildings, infrastructure etc) must be maintained safely and fit for purpose. Reduced grounds maintenance may encourage anti-social behaviour, in relation to impact on appearance of neighbourhoods which may show signs of neglect if areas appear unkempt with longer grass and possibly fly tipping.

2.6 There may be an impact on service awards for excellence in relation to In Bloom, Green Flag Awards etc which are supported and assisted by the community. There may be a potential increase in customer demands for services and complaints about service standards.

3. **Implications Associated With Proposal**

3.1 **Corporate Plan**

There may be a negative impact on the council's priority "Sustainable Change and Improvement for All". There will be a negative impact on the appearance of local neighbourhoods with longer grass and potentially more litter and an increased risk of anti social behaviour if areas show an appearance of decline and a perceived lack of maintenance.

3.2 Customers

Grounds maintenance is not a statutory service as detailed above. There is likely to be a negative impact for some customers, particularly those who live close by or use the areas affected. The impact is likely to be mainly visual. Alternative maintenance arrangements may be possible via members of the Community or Friends Groups etc but experience suggests that this is unlikely in the short term.

3.3 Employees / Staffing

There is no impact on Council employees; the activity is carried out by seasonal agency resources.

3.4 Partners

There is no direct impact on partners with these proposals however different standards will be highlighted e.g. Walsall Housing Group undertake like functions on adjacent land will continue to maintain their areas to current standards. This will accentuate differentials in standards across the community / neighbourhoods and highlight areas of perceived deprivation and decline. WHG currently undertake a fortnightly cut and collect service.

Reduced resources will impact on the ability to support community groups, friends groups and volunteers with clean up days, community events, carnivals and general maintenance works.

3.5 Economic Implications

There are recognised economic benefits associated with clean and well maintained highways, parks and green spaces, these help to support economic growth and attract investment. Clean and green towns attract more visitors, whose spending on shopping and leisure generates job opportunities

3.6 Environmental Implications

Green spaces are essential for supporting biodiversity, providing habitats and access to a variety of flora and fauna in an urban environment. Green space has an increasingly important role to play in mitigating the effects of climate change. Green spaces act as wildlife corridors that allow the migration of plants and animals acting as important stepping stone links between urban and rural areas.

In respect of large grass areas, allowing grass and wildflowers to grow instead of being cut fortnightly clearly allows them to flower and set seed. The flowers will encourage and provide nectar sources for bees and other pollinating insects, which in turn provide food for other invertebrates, birds etc. The seed will allow plants to spread as well as some providing food for birds and small mammals.

Where the grassland areas are adjacent to or near other habitats or natural areas, they will increase the wildlife value of those sites. Public access to green space has clear health benefits, not just in terms of physical exercise, but also for mental health and wellbeing through contact with and appreciation of nature.

These areas contribute towards the council's Biodiversity Duty, in that all public bodies must have regard to biodiversity in the exercise of their functions. They also contribute towards the objectives of the Birmingham and Black Country Nature Improvement Area in terms of having more, bigger and better wildlife sites. Good management often involves simply doing less, allowing the area to develop and plants to set seed before cutting takes place.

- Native plants offer improved weed & soil erosion control and reduce the need to mow or spray herbicides, also reducing cost.
- Native plants are less likely to encroach on land bordering rights of way. Native plant communities will reduce runoff in the spring and act as snow fences in the winter, trapping & preventing snow from blowing across roads.
- Native plants are aesthetically pleasing & support more native wildlife.
- ***Seeding roadsides and open spaces with native vegetation can increase diversity of plants in local area and may provide more abundant pollen & nectar sources to adjacent areas.***

It should also be recognised, that longer grass can produce litter traps, an increase in potential anti-social behaviour such as fly tipping, create health and safety issues such as fire risks, visibility sight lines on the highway network and can be visually unappealing – but beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Previous experience indicates divides within the community regarding natural looking areas, native flowers etc. as opposed to manicured lawns and well kept green space.

3.7 Health and wellbeing implications

The council has a statutory duty to promote health and wellbeing. Two of the objectives to reduce inequalities from the Marmot review are that we “Ensure a healthy standard of living for all” and we “Create and develop healthy and sustainable communities”

Access to good quality, well maintained parks and green spaces have a significant impact on physical health and mental well being. The more attractive and accessible the green space is, the more likely it is to be used by a wide range of people. Green space encourages people to walk more, to participate in sport or to enjoy the green and natural environment. It is accepted that physical activity is a major contributor to good health and can reduce coronary heart problems, diabetes, certain cancers and mental health problems. Trees and woodlands help to reduce the effect of urban pollution.

Longer grass may have a negative impact with reduced access for users of large green spaces.

3.8 Other Council Services

There are no direct implications on other council services.

3.9 Procurement / Social Value Implications

There are no Social Value implications and the proposal does not involve procurement.

4. Associated Risks / Opportunities

Risk	Opportunity	Mitigation
Reduction in Grass Cutting – large areas <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Negative public perceptions and complaints• Dog fouling in long grass concealed• Potential risk of fly tipping in long grass• Perceptions of visual appearance, given previous maintenance regimes / standards• Potential fire risks?• Litter traps• Anti-social behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased biodiversity (flora, fauna, wildlife)• Deter unauthorised encampments	Continue cutting grass fortnightly

5. Legal Implications

5.1 There are no identified legal implications with these proposals. Guidance is contained in section 2 above.

6. Consultation and Customer feedback

6.1 Previous implementation of reduced / cessation of grass cutting to large grass areas has been carried out. Customer feedback has been varied, some customers being supportive and others against the reduced frequency / cessation of grass cutting on large areas. No further consultation is proposed.

7. Equality Implications

7.1 Initial screening suggests there are no or minimal equalities implications and therefore a full equality impact assessment is not required.

PORTFOLIO: Clean and Green

Directorate and Service Area: Economy and Environment - Clean and Green

Option: Consider Cessation of Bowling Green and Cricket Wicket Provision

Saving Reference: 21

1. Financial Proposal

	Net Saving		
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	58,464	0	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	58,464	0	0
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. Description of the Proposal

- 2.1 Cessation of provision of bowling greens and cricket wickets across the borough outside of the Arboretum. The council has bowling green provision at: Anchor Meadow, Walsall Arboretum, Leamore Park, Oak Park, Palfrey Park, Pelsall, Pleck Park, and Rushall.
- 2.2 There are currently 10 bowling clubs who hire bowling green's from the council, generating approximately £6,564 of income per year. The cost of maintaining the bowling green's is circa £40,000.
- 2.3 The council has cricket wicket provision at: King George V Playing Fields, Broadway West Playing Fields, Pleck Park, and Walsall Arboretum. One cricket team hires a cricket wicket from the council but no income is received. The cost of maintaining the cricket wickets is circa £20,000.
- 2.4 Bowling greens and cricket wickets will continue to be maintained at the Arboretum with alternative resources but all other grass will be cut at a minimum of once per fortnight to fit in with the other areas on the sites.
- 2.5 Grounds maintenance activities are not specifically statutory services, but statute does have an influence on the activities carried out. Below are the identified acts and government guidance relevant to the grounds maintenance activities.
- National Planning Policy Framework - Planning for Open space, Sport and Recreation was previously determined by Planning Policy Guidance 17. This has now replaced by the National Planning Policy Framework which recognises that access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities and requires there to be robust and up-to-date

assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision.

- 2.6 On council owned land or responsible land the minimum service is considered to be the service that maintains current safe accessibility, with minimum maintenance. Any existing assets (play areas, buildings, infrastructure etc) must be maintained safely and fit for purpose. Reduced grounds maintenance may encourage anti-social behaviour, in relation to impact on appearance of neighbourhoods which may show signs of neglect if areas appear unkempt.
- 2.7 There may be an impact on service awards for excellence in relation to In Bloom, Green Flag Awards etc which are supported and assisted by the community.
- 2.8 It is likely that there will be an increase in complaints from existing service users who have nowhere to play.

3. **Implications Associated With Proposal**

3.1 **Corporate Plan**

There may be a negative impact on the councils priority "Sustainable Change and Improvement for All". There may be a negative impact on the appearance of the park or where the current facility is located with the increased risk of anti social behaviour if areas show appearance of decline and a perceived lack of maintenance.

3.2 **Customers**

Grounds maintenance is not a statutory service as detailed above. There is likely to be a negative impact from customers who currently use either bowling green's or cricket pitches. Alternative maintenance arrangements may be possible via sports clubs but experience suggests that this is unlikely in the short term and will need licences to be prepared and appropriate public liability insurances to be in place.

3.3 **Employees / Staffing**

There will be an impact on 2 council employees is detailed below with an expected reduction to one post.

3.4 **Partners**

There is no direct impact on Partners with these proposals. There is a potential negative impact with public health outcomes related to the lifestyles working arrangements. Reduced resources will impact on the ability to support community groups, friends groups and volunteers with clean up days, community events, carnivals and general maintenance works.

3.5 Economic Implications

There are recognised economic and health benefits associated with clean and well maintained parks and green spaces where outdoor activities can take place. These facilities can help to support economic growth, attract investment and support the public health agenda.

3.6 Environmental Implications

There are no significant positive or negative environmental implications with this proposal as grass will be maintained but not to a standard suitable for use as a bowling green or cricket pitch.

3.7 Health and wellbeing implications

The council has a statutory duty to promote health and wellbeing. Two of the objectives to reduce inequalities from the Marmot review are that we “Ensure a healthy standard of living for all” and we “Create and develop healthy and sustainable communities”

Access to good quality, well maintained parks and green spaces have a significant impact on physical health and mental well being. The more attractive and accessible the green space is, the more likely it is to be used by a wide range of people. Green space encourages people to walk more, to participate in sport or to enjoy the green and natural environment. It is accepted that physical activity is a major contributor to good health and can reduce coronary heart problems, diabetes, certain cancers and mental health problems. Bowling green’s and cricket pitches contribute positively towards these objectives No Bowling Green’s or cricket facilities will have a negative impact with current users of these facilities.

3.8 Other Council Services

There are no direct implications on other council services.

3.9 Procurement / Social Value Implications

There are no Social Value implications and the proposal does not involve procurement.

4. Associated Risks / Opportunities

4.1 The following risks have been identified

- Negative public perception following the withdrawal of services
- Negative public perception of the visual appearance, given previous maintenance regimes and standards.

4.2 These risks will be mitigated by supporting the users and sports clubs to carry out ongoing maintenance them.

5. **Legal Implications**

5.1 There are no identified legal implications with these proposals.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

6.1 Consultation with users has taken place in previous years regarding reducing the subsidy for the provision of bowling greens and cricket pitches. There has been considerable resistance to increase fees and charges above the rate of inflation and users have stated that if prices were increased significantly then they would not be able to continue paying for the facilities.

6.2 Consultation will be undertaken as appropriate.

7. **Equality Implications**

7.1 A full equality impact assessment will be carried out.

PORTFOLIO: Clean and Green

Directorate and Service Area: Economy and Environment - Clean and Green

Option: Reduction in Herbicidal Weed Spraying of Highways

Saving Reference: 22

1. Financial Proposal

Net Saving			
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	23,750	0	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	23,750	0	0
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. Description of the Proposal

- 2.1 Reduction of herbicidal weed treatment to highway footpaths from twice per year to once per year. Areas that are currently treated twice per year in late spring and early autumn will be treated once per year in late spring / early summer. Priority will be given to strategic routes into the town and district centres.
- 2.2 Control of weed growth on the highway is part of the statutory street cleansing function and the following legislation is appropriate:
- The Highways Act 1980 - Highway Authorities have a duty under this Act to maintain 'any highway that is maintainable at public expense, other than trunk roads.
 - Environmental Protection Act (EPA) 1990 – Part IV – Litter etc. This defines local authorities as 'Principal Litter Authorities' responsible for all relevant land and any highway maintainable at the public expense other than a trunk road, and is used to ensure public spaces and highways are kept free from litter and refuse as far as is reasonably practicable. The requirement applies to the removal of detritus (small, broken down particles of synthetic and natural materials) as well as litter and refuse. The remains of weed growth contribute the build up of detritus and the removal of detritus is deemed to be practicable from metalled surfaces.
 - Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse (Nov 2006), read in conjunction with the EPA.
 - Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005.
- 2.3 The principal of the legislation and code of practice is to ensure duty bodies maintain highway and land to acceptable cleanliness standards and keep areas clear of litter and refuse. If the highway or land falls to an unsatisfactory level, it

must be returned to a clean level within a minimum time. Reduced street cleansing activities may encourage anti-social behaviour, in relation to the impact on the appearance of neighbourhoods which may show signs of neglect if areas appear unkempt with more weeds for longer periods of time.

- 2.4 There may be an impact on service awards for excellence in relation to In Bloom, Green Flag Awards etc which are supported and assisted by the community. There may be a potential increase in customer demands for services and complaints about service standards.

3. **Implications Associated With Proposal**

3.1 **Corporate Plan**

There may be a negative impact on the councils priority “Sustainable Change and Improvement for All”. There will be a negative impact on the appearance of local neighbourhoods with longer weeds that are more visible with an increased risk of anti social behaviour if areas show appearance of decline and a perceived lack of maintenance.

3.2 **Customers**

There is likely to be a negative impact for customers, particularly those who live close by the areas affected. The impact is likely to be mainly visual.

3.3 **Employees / Staffing**

There is no impact on council employees, the activity is carried out on a contract basis.

3.4 **Partners**

There is no direct impact on partners with these proposals however different standards may be highlighted, e.g. Walsall Housing Group undertake like functions on adjacent land and may treat their weed growth more frequently. It may accentuate differentials in standards across the community / neighbourhoods and highlight areas of perceived deprivation and decline.

3.5 **Economic Implications**

There are recognised economic benefits associated with clean and well maintained highways, parks and public spaces, these help to support economic growth and attract investment. Clean and green towns attract more visitors, whose spending on shopping and leisure generates job opportunities

3.6 **Environmental Implications**

There are potential negative environmental implications with this proposal as more weeds on the street for longer periods are likely to

- Be visually unappealing, generating increased customer complaints.
- Increase litter traps

3.7 **Health and wellbeing implications**

The council has a statutory duty to promote health and wellbeing. Two of the objectives to reduce inequalities from the Marmot review are that we “Ensure a healthy standard of living for all” and we “Create and develop healthy and sustainable communities”

Clean and well maintained streets can have a significant impact on physical health and mental well being. The more attractive a street is, the more likely it will be used by a wide range of people. Clean streets encourage people to walk more and enjoy the environment. It is accepted that physical activity is a major contributor to good health and can reduce coronary heart problems, diabetes, certain cancers and mental health problems.

3.8 **Other Council Services**

Increased or additional weed growth in highway channels, is likely to result in additional damage to tarmac surfaces and impact on drainage systems with an increased risk of localised flooding.

3.9 **Procurement / Social Value Implications**

This work is currently carried out on a contractual basis. Contracts are tendered in accordance with the Council’s Financial Regulations and procurement rules. Further consideration on social value implications may be necessary.

4. **Associated Risks / Opportunities**

- 4.1 There is a risk of Negative public perceptions and complaints and perceptions of visual appearance, given previous maintenance regimes / standards. A possible mitigation may be to encourage residents to take pride in their street and remove weed growth.

5. **Legal Implications**

- 5.1 There are no identified legal implications with these proposals.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

- 6.1 Consultation will be carried out as appropriate.

7. **Equality Implications**

- 7.1 Initial screening suggests there are no or minimal equalities implications and therefore a full impact assessment is not required.

PORTFOLIO: Clean and Green

Directorate and Service Area: Economy and Environment - Clean and Green

Option: Reduction in Street Cleansing Service

Saving Reference: 23A and 23B

1. Financial Proposal

	Net Saving		
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving (1)	250,000	0	0
Estimated Saving (2)	182,907	0	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Total Net Saving	432,907	0	0
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. Description of the Proposal

- 2.1 This proposal is a reduction in the street cleansing service, impacting 10 Environmental Operatives (Saving 1) and potentially a further 7 Environmental Operatives (Saving 2). 17 Environmental Operatives are currently deployed with each waste collection crew on a daily basis, deployed litter picking and supporting crews with recycling education, minimising contamination.
- 2.2 Saving 1 - A reduction of 10 Environmental Operatives would leave a more reactive street cleansing, litter picking service for most areas of the borough. The remaining Environmental Operatives carrying out routine litter picking would be deployed in areas of greater litter and faster deterioration.
- 2.3 Saving 2 - A total reduction of 17 Environmental Operatives would leave a reactive litter picking service with no routine litter picking carried out in residential housing estates.
- 2.4 Resources would be focussed on Walsall Town Centre, District Centres and shopping areas across the borough, litter picking and emptying litter bins. Routine mechanical sweeping would take place approximately every 30 days with reactive responses for cleansing complaints, removal of fly tipping, bulky waste collections, bin deliveries etc.
- 2.5 Street cleansing is a statutory service and the following legislation is appropriate:
- Environmental Protection Act (EPA) 1990 – Part IV – Litter etc. This defines local authorities as ‘Principal Litter Authorities’ responsible for all relevant land

and any highway maintainable at the public expense other than a trunk road, and is used to ensure public spaces and highways are kept free from litter and refuse as far as is reasonably practicable .

- Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse (Nov 2006), read in conjunction with the EPA.
- Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005

2.6 The principal of the legislation and Code of Practice is to ensure duty bodies maintain their land to acceptable cleanliness standards and keep an area clear of litter and refuse. If the land falls to an unsatisfactory level, it must be returned to a clean level within a minimum time. Reduced street cleansing activities may encourage anti-social behaviour, in relation to the impact on appearance of neighbourhoods which may show signs of neglect if areas appear unkempt with more weeds for longer periods of time.

2.7 There may be an impact on service awards for excellence in relation to In Bloom, Green Flag Awards etc which are supported and assisted by the community.

2.8 It is likely there will be a potential increase in customer demands for services and complaints about service standards.

3. **Implications Associated With Proposal**

3.1 **Corporate Plan**

There may be a negative impact on the council’s priority “Sustainable Change and Improvement for All”. There will be a negative impact on the appearance of local neighbourhoods with more litter on the streets for longer periods of time with an increased risk of anti social behaviour if areas show appearance of decline and a perceived lack of maintenance.

3.2 **Customers**

There is likely to be a negative impact for customers, particularly those who live close by the areas affected. The impact is likely to be mainly visual.

3.3 **Employees / Staffing**

The impact on council employees is detailed below. The council’s procedures would be followed, including requests for voluntary redundancy.

Post Title	Qty	Impact
Environmental Operative	10	Year 1- Deletion of 10 G4 posts via redundancy
Environmental Operative	7	Year 1- Deletion of 7 G4 posts via redundancy

3.4 **Partners**

There is no direct impact on partners with these proposals however different standards may be highlighted e.g. Walsall Housing Group undertake like functions on adjacent land and may carry out cleansing more frequently. It may accentuate differentials in standards across the community / neighbourhoods and highlight areas of perceived deprivation and decline.

3.5 **Economic Implications**

There are recognised economic benefits associated with clean and well maintained highways, parks and public spaces, these help to support economic growth and attract investment. Clean and green towns attract more visitors, whose spending on shopping and leisure generates job opportunities

3.6 **Environmental Implications**

There are potential negative environmental implications with this proposal as more litter on the street for longer periods are likely to be visually unappealing, generating increased customer complaints.

3.7 **Health and wellbeing implications**

The council has a statutory duty to promote health and wellbeing. Two of the objectives to reduce inequalities from the Marmot review are that we “Ensure a healthy standard of living for all” and we “Create and develop healthy and sustainable communities”. Clean and well maintained streets can have a significant impact on physical health and mental well being. The more attractive a street is, the more likely it will be used by a wide range of people. Clean streets encourage people to walk more and enjoy the environment. It is accepted that physical activity is a major contributor to good health and can reduce coronary heart problems, diabetes, certain cancers and mental health problems.

3.8 **Other Council Services**

There are no direct implications on other council services.

3.9 **Procurement / Social Value Implications**

There are no Social Value implications and the proposal does not involve procurement.

4. **Associated Risks / Opportunities**

- 4.1 Risks include a negative public perception and complaints, perceptions of neighbourhood decline with deterioration and visual appearance and a potential increase in further anti-social behaviour, including fly tipping and graffiti, etc.

4.2 Mitigating actions include implementation of Litter Control Zones around shopping areas and increasing Litter Enforcement activities to discourage littering.

4.3 Opportunities include the development of Big Society, encouraging volunteers, individuals and communities to maintain areas adjacent to where they live and the development of a voluntary Code of Practice (Litter Charter) for local neighbourhoods.

5. **Legal Implications**

5.1 The Environmental Protection Act 1990 gives a person the right (under section 91) to take legal action to require a duty body to remove litter on its land where this falls below the acceptable standard set out in the Code for longer than the period specified. If a Magistrates' Court is satisfied that the duty body is in dereliction of its duty under section 89, it may make a Litter Abatement Order, requiring the duty body to clean up.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

6.1 Consultation will be carried out on this proposal.

7. **Equality Implications**

7.1 A full equality impact assessment will be carried out.

PORTFOLIO: Clean and Green

Directorate and Service Area: Economy and Environment - Clean and Green

Option: Reduce Grass Cutting on Highway Verges in Rural Areas

Saving Reference: 25

1. Financial Proposal

Net Saving			
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	49,702	0	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	49,702	0	0
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. Description of the Proposal

- 2.1 This proposal is for a reduction of grass cutting on highway verges in rural areas. Rural grass verges are currently cut, full width, on a 2 – 3 week cycle during the growing season.
- 2.2 The first 1m from the edge of the carriageway will continue to be cut on a 2 – 3 week cycle to maintain vehicle and pedestrian sight lines, access for the public / dog walking and for health and safety reasons. The remaining areas will be allowed to grow to support and improve the environmental biodiversity (flora, fauna, wildlife).
- 2.3 These highway verges will be in rural areas e.g. Noose Lane (Willenhall) – verge running adjacent to Memorial Park, from junction of Beech Road, to the car park that serves the park itself; Wolverhampton Road West (Willenhall) – verges either side of the carriageway, between numbers 199 to 279; Hough Road (Pleck) – verge running adjacent to railway line, between numbers 2 – 130; Bosty Lane (Rushall) – verge running adjacent to farm land, between number 123 Royal Oak pub Little Aston Road (Aldridge) – verge adjacent to farm land, between numbers 173 and 205; Walsall Road (Aldridge) – verge running adjacent to farm land, between junction of Longwood Lane and number 214; Aldridge Road (Aldridge) – verges running adjacent to farm land, on both sides of carriageway, between number 19 and Longwood canal bridge; Aldridge Road (Streetly) – verge running along service road adjacent to hedgerow, between numbers 2 and 204; Sutton Road (Walsall) – verge running adjacent to farm land, both sides of the carriageway, between junction of Beacon Road and number 515; Beacon Hill (Streetly) – verge running adjacent to farm land, between junction of Beacon Road and junction of Aldridge Road; The Parade (Brownhills) – verge running adjacent to Holland Park – between junction of Chester Road North and the A5; Hawbush

Road (Leamore) – verge running adjacent to the canal, between numbers 58 and 60; This list is not exhaustive and other verges will be identified / appropriate.

2.4 Grounds maintenance activities are not specifically statutory services, but statute does have an influence on the activities carried out. Below are the identified acts and government guidance relevant to the grass cutting activities.

- The Highways Act 1980 - Highway Authorities (County and Unitary Councils) have a duty under this Act to maintain 'any highway that is maintainable at public expense other than trunk roads. This can involve ensuring road verge management is to a standard to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe passage along a highway is not endangered.
- The 1988 Road Traffic Act, S 39, puts a duty on the local authority to undertake studies into road traffic collisions, and to take steps both to reduce and prevent them.
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) – States all public authorities have a duty under the act to have regard to conserving biodiversity as part of policy or decision making. Examples could be integrating biodiversity when developing policies and strategies and putting them into practice, or managing our land and buildings (nature reserves, gardens, parks, sports pitches, etc), waste, wood and plant products.

2.5 On council owned land or responsible land the minimum service is considered to be the service that maintains current safe accessibility, with minimum maintenance. Reduced grass cutting may impact on appearance of neighbourhoods which may show signs of neglect if areas appear unkempt with longer grass and possible fly tipping. It is possible there will be potential increase in customer demands for services and complaints about service standards.

3. **Implications Associated With Proposal**

3.1 **Corporate Plan**

There may be a negative impact on the councils priority "Sustainable Change and Improvement for All". There will be a negative impact on the appearance of local neighbourhoods with longer grass and potentially more litter and an increased risk of anti social behaviour if areas show appearance of decline and a perceived lack of maintenance.

3.2 **Customers**

Grounds maintenance is not a statutory service as detailed above. There is likely to be a negative impact for some customers, particularly those who live close by or use the areas affected. The impact is likely to be mainly visual. It is not considered that alternative maintenance arrangements will be necessary, but it may be possible via members of the community or local farmers etc, but experience suggests that this is unlikely in the short term.

3.3 Employees / Staffing

The impact on council employees is a reduction from 2 environmental operative posts to 1.

3.4 Partners

There is no direct impact on partners with these proposals, but there may be a visual difference between land maintained by the authority and that maintained by partners. Reduced resources will impact on the ability to support community groups, friends groups and volunteers with clean up days, community events, carnivals and general maintenance works.

3.5 Economic Implications

There are recognised economic benefits associated with clean and well maintained highways, parks and grass verges, these help to support economic growth and attract investment. Clean and green towns attract more visitors, whose spending on shopping and leisure generates job opportunities.

3.6 Environmental Implications

Overall it is considered that this proposal will have a positive impact on the environment. Green spaces and grass verges are essential for supporting biodiversity, providing habitats and access to a variety of flora and fauna. Green space and grass verges have an increasingly important role to play in mitigating the effects of climate change. Green spaces act as wildlife corridors that allow the migration of plants and animals acting as important stepping stone links between urban and rural areas.

In respect of grass verges, allowing grass and wildflowers to grow instead of being cut regularly clearly allows them to flower and set seed. The flowers will encourage and provide nectar sources for bees and other pollinating insects, which in turn provide food for other invertebrates, birds etc. The seed will allow plants to spread as well as some providing food for birds and small mammals.

Where the grassland areas are adjacent to or near other habitats or natural areas, the proposal will increase the wildlife value of those sites. These areas contribute towards the council's Biodiversity Duty, in that all public bodies must have regard to biodiversity in the exercise of their functions.

In respect of highway verges, when managed correctly road verges can support remarkable diverse collections of grass species. Good management often involves simply doing less, allowing the verge to develop and plants to set seed before cutting takes place:

- ***Native plants offer improved weed & soil erosion control and reduce the need to mow or spray herbicides, also reducing cost.***
- ***Native plants are less likely to encroach on land bordering rights of way. Native plant communities will reduce runoff in the spring and act as snow fences in the winter, trapping & preventing snow from blowing across roads.***
- ***Native plants are aesthetically pleasing & support more native wildlife.***
- ***Seeding roadsides with native vegetation can increase diversity of plants in local area and may provide more abundant pollen & nectar sources to adjacent areas.***

However, it is also recognised that longer grass can produce litter traps, an increase in potential anti- social behaviour such as fly tipping, create health and safety issues such as fire risks, visibility sight lines on the highway network and impact on local wildlife with litter ingestion.

3.7 Health and wellbeing implications

The council has a statutory duty to promote health and wellbeing. Two of the objectives to reduce inequalities from the Marmot review are that we “Ensure a healthy standard of living for all” and we “Create and develop healthy and sustainable communities”

Access to good quality, well maintained parks and green spaces have a significant impact on physical health and mental well being. The more attractive and accessible an area is, the more likely it is to be used by a wide range of people. Accessible grass areas encourage people to walk more and enjoy the green and natural environment. It is accepted that physical activity is a major contributor to good health and can reduce coronary heart problems, diabetes, certain cancers and mental health problems.

3.8 Other Council Services

There are no direct implications on other council services.

3.9 Procurement / Social Value Implications

There are no Social Value implications and the proposal does not involve procurement.

4. Associated Risks / Opportunities

- 4.1 There are a number of potential risks in reducing grass cutting on highways verges in rural areas, including; negative public perceptions and complaints, dog fouling in long grass concealed, a potential risk of fly tipping in long grass, perceptions of visual appearance, given previous maintenance regimes / standards, potential fire risks, litter traps and anti-social behaviour.

- 4.2 The above is mitigated in part as the first 1m from the edge of the carriageway will continue to be cut.
- 4.3 The proposal presents an opportunity to increase biodiversity (flora, fauna, wildlife).

5. **Legal Implications**

- 5.1 There are no identified legal implications with these proposals.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

- 6.1 Consultation will take place if appropriate.

7. **Equality Implications**

- 7.1 Initial screening suggests there are no or minimal equalities implications and therefore a full impact assessment is not required.

PORTFOLIO: Clean and Green

Directorate and Service Area: Economy and Environment - Clean and Green

Option: Reducing Green Waste Collection Season by 1 month

Saving Reference: 26

1. Financial Proposal

	Net Saving		
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	30,000	0	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Total Net Saving	30,000	0	0
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. Description of the Proposal

- 2.1 The proposal is to reduce green the waste collection season by one month, ending collections on 30September, rather than October. Collections will operate for 6 months between 1 April and 30 September each year.
- 2.2 The council does not have a statutory obligation to make a separate collection of garden waste. Reducing the collection of the garden waste season by 1 month, is likely to reduce both participation in the service and the amount of material collected for recycling. This will impact on the recycling rate and disposal costs.
- 2.3 The savings would come from reduced staff numbers and reduced vehicle numbers. It may or may not lead to a fall in disposal costs as waste that is not collected at the kerbside is likely to be displaced to the household waste recycling centre (HWRC).
- 2.4 The % of garden waste collected in October is around 10% of the garden waste collected throughout the year. In 2015/16 approximately 14,500 tonnes of garden waste was collected from the kerbside. This makes a significant contribution to the recycling rate.
- 2.5 This proposal affects the garden waste collection service season in 2017. Other changes being considered, including the introduction of charges for collecting garden waste in 2018, revisions to recycling collection arrangements and provision of HWRC facilities, are considered in other policy papers. This proposal needs to be considered in relation to other proposed waste savings, as all the services are inter-related and changing one service will have a knock-on effect to another service. A change in the council's Waste Policy is required.

2.6 Garden waste collections are not a statutory service. Households will still be able to take their garden waste to any of the council's HWRC's at no charge.

3. **Implications Associated With Proposal**

3.1 **Corporate Plan**

There may be a negative impact on the Council's priority "Sustainable Change and Improvement for All". There will be a perception that the council is reducing a service that is popular with residents.

3.2 **Customers**

The service affects over 90% of households in the borough. It is popular with residents and has a high participation rate. There is likely to be a negative impact from customers.

3.3 **Employees / Staffing**

Currently the garden waste collection service operates via agency staff used on a temporary basis during the collection season. All staff reductions would be agency employees with no implications for council employees.

3.4 **Partners**

There is no direct impact on partners.

3.5 **Economic Implications**

There are no significant identified economic implications with this proposal. The current disposal facility is located in Lichfield District and disposal is arranged under contract.

3.6 **Environmental Implications**

There are potential negative environmental implications with this proposal. Less green waste may be recycled and recycling rates in Walsall may reduce. There may be an increase in fly tipping in the borough.

Some householders may choose to have garden bonfires to dispose of grass cuttings and other garden arising's that they are unable to contain within their grey (residual waste) bin. This could have a negative impact on air quality and also a negative amenity impact for householders of neighbouring properties.

3.7 **Health and wellbeing implications**

The council has a statutory duty to promote health and wellbeing. Two of the objectives to reduce inequalities from the Marmot review are that we "Ensure a

healthy standard of living for all” and we “Create and develop healthy and sustainable communities”

The reduction of the collection of the green waste season may be seen to have a greater impact on those households that are less well off and do not have their own transport to take their green waste to the HWRC sites. The promotion of home composting may help to mitigate some of these concerns.

3.8 Other Council Services

There are no direct implications on other council services.

3.9 Procurement / Social Value Implications

There are no Social Value implications. The council currently has a disposal contract in place to recycle the garden waste which ends in March 2019. This contract does not have a minimum annual tonnage so reduced tonnages can be accommodated.

4. Associated Risks / Opportunities

4.1 The following risks have been identified:

- Increased risks of fly tipping from some residents.
- Increased risk of dry recycling contamination with some residents putting garden waste in their green recycling bin.
- Negative public perceptions and complaints as reduction in service is likely to be unpopular with residents
- Increased residual waste disposal costs where residents don't use HWRC sites and put garden waste in grey residual waste bins
- Increased pressure on HWRC sites and potentially longer queues
- Failure to meet statutory recycling targets, which may incur fines or penalties from DEFRA

4.2 There is an opportunity for promotion of home composting which is more sustainable and environmentally beneficial although this may have limited appeal with some residents

5. Legal Implications

5.1 The collection of garden waste is not a statutory service. The Waste Framework Directive requires local authorities to be recycling 50% of household waste by 2020.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

6.1 Consultation has previously been carried out as part of last years' budget process. From the survey consultation and a base of 144 people, 23% said they fully supported the proposal of a reduced collection season, 56% said they did not support the proposal. Additional quantitative surveys (with a base of 360 people) advised that 35% supported the proposal but 35% did not, the other 30% would support with concerns or amendments. Some of the proposed amendments included:-

- Collecting less frequently, but for longer e.g. 3 or 4 weekly between March and November
- Collecting for 6 months April – June and September – November

The above options have been considered and it is considered they would be difficult to implement and communicate to residents. Further consultation will be undertaken as appropriate.

7. **Equality Implications**

7.1 An updated equality impact assessment will be carried out.

PORTFOLIO: Clean and Green

Directorate and Service Area: Economy and Environment - Clean and Green

Option: Reduction of One Tree Gang

Saving Reference: 27

1. Financial Proposal

Net Saving			
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	60,000	0	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	60,000	0	0
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. Description of the Proposal

- 2.1 Clean & Green services undertake all tree maintenance and management of parks, open spaces, highways & town/district centres across the borough. This includes a range of tasks such as tree planting, cyclical maintenance programme, re-active work e.g. storm damage and out of hours services, sustainable timber management and income generation from log sales.
- 2.2 The tree service covers aspects such as tending to dead, diseased and dangerous tree, good housekeeping through routine pruning and maintenance of tree stock, increasing canopy cover by tree planting initiatives to provide sustainability, and environmental benefits.
- 2.3 The proposal is to reduce tree operations by 23% from 7 front line staff to 5. The overall impact would be on:
- Delivery of cyclical management programme from current 5year cycle to circa 8 year cycle
 - Re-active maintenance, with longer response times for storm damage e.g. severe winds etc. And compounding impact on the cyclical maintenance programme.
 - Long term effect on tree management plans and the council's Urban Forestry Strategy.
- 2.4 Tree management and maintenance activities are not specifically statutory services, but statute does have an influence on the activities carried out. Below are the identified acts and government guidance relevant to tree management and maintenance:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Occupiers Liability Act 1957/84 - The Council has a statutory duty of care under these acts to ensure that members of the public and staff are not to be put at risk because of any failure by the Council to take all reasonable precautions to ensure their safety
- Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999. - A Risk Assessment is required under the above act as there is a need to inspect trees in or near public places, or adjacent to buildings or working areas to assess whether they represent a risk to life or property, and to take remedial action as appropriate. The tree inspection programme has four stages
 - a) assessment of risk;
 - b) assessment of hazard;
 - c) prescription for remedial action.
 - d) a plan for the recording and re-inspection process

As part of the council's statutory obligations it is expected in the eyes of the law to have a proactive program of inspection. Walsall MBC has put in place a plan that ensures each individual tree in the Borough is inspected every 5 years. Where remediation has been identified works will be prioritised dependant on the level of risk.

- Town and Country Planning act 1990 – The Council has a duty to protect and maintain trees that are subject to Tree Preservation Orders or in conservation areas.
- Highways act 1980 – The Council has a duty to ensure trees on council and private land are safe and maintained (removal of epicormic growth / low branches etc) to allow the free flow of traffic and pedestrians over the highway
- Local government Miscellaneous provisions act 1976 - gives powers to local authorities to deal with dangerous trees
- Wildlife and countryside act 1981 – All birds, their nests and eggs are protected against damage and destruction. Bats and their roosts are also protected from disturbance, damage and destruction
- SIM 01/2007/05 & 5 STEPS (management risk of falling trees H.S.E)

3. **Implications Associated With Proposal**

3.1 **Corporate Plan**

There may be a negative impact on the councils priority "Safe, resilient and prospering communities". Trees, woodlands and urban forest are an essential part of the borough's character and identity and define the neighbourhoods and areas of where we live, work and play. They breathe life into communities, and provide a welcoming backdrop to the stresses and demands to everyday life. They provide us with a reminder of the seasons, acting as nature's clock in defining changes through the year with the coming of spring, leaf colour and fall, and the glistening of frost covered branches.

Walsall is geologically and topographically diverse, comprising leafier suburbs across the eastern side of the borough with denser tree canopies and a more rural landscape within a patchwork of farmland, green spaces and parks to the west, defining the industrial heritage of the town.

Walsall is steeped in heritage with its premier Victorian park (The Arboretum) centrally located within the town providing a rural escape and refuge bringing local communities together as well as attracting regional and national acclaim for its standards, events and attractions.

All local authorities have a duty to protect our natural heritage and value the asset of their trees. Walsall is no exception to this in managing large numbers of trees both directly and indirectly to ensure their preservation for future generations and contribute to tackling wider implications of climate change and biodiversity loss.

A reduction in tree planting, management and maintenance will have a negative impact on creating sustainable and safer communities.

3.2 Customers

There is likely to be a negative impact for customers. Public access to the urban forest and green spaces has clear health benefits, not just in terms of physical exercise, but also for mental health and wellbeing through contact with and appreciation of nature. The responses to customer requests for maintenance will be slower. Tree replacement programmes will become less frequent or cease. The risk to the public will be increased due to lack of inspection and maintenance with a risk of dead, diseased or dangerous trees not being identified and managed in a timely manner.

3.3 Employees / Staffing

The impact on council employees is a reduction of 2 posts. The council's procedures would be followed, including requests for voluntary redundancy.

3.4 Partners

There is no direct impact on partners with these proposals, however different standards may be highlighted e.g. Walsall Housing Group, Council maintained schools undertake like functions on adjacent land and may maintain their trees more frequently. It may accentuate differentials in standards across the community / neighbourhoods.

3.5 Economic Implications

There are recognised economic benefits associated with clean and well maintained trees, these help to support economic growth and attract investment. Clean and green well maintained towns attract more visitors, whose spending on shopping and leisure generates job opportunities

Trees can have positive impact on the economy:

- Potential increase in residential and commercial property values by as much as 15% by attracting people and businesses to leafier suburbs and town and district centres.
- Improvement to the environmental performance of buildings through reducing heat loss in the winter and cooling costs in the summer.
- Improving the health and well being of the urban population and as such reducing associated health care costs
- Provide potential long term renewable energy resource
- Timber as a resource for heating, furniture manufacture & crafts
- Training opportunities through tree planting, maintenance and woodland management

3.6 Health and wellbeing implications

The council has a statutory duty to promote health and wellbeing. Two of the objectives to reduce inequalities from the Marmot review are that we “Ensure a healthy standard of living for all” and we “Create and develop healthy and sustainable communities” By supporting our neighbourhoods and working with our communities there are a number of social benefits derived from good management of trees:

- Improvement to the quality and public perception of the urban forest where communities live and work.
- Creating community focal points, landmark links and a sense of place and local identity
- Higher public esteem and pride in the area by breaking up building lines and the built environment.
- Positive impact on physical and mental health and well being, providing areas of recreation and aesthetically pleasing environments
- Positive impact on the reduction of crime

3.7 Other Council Services

Consideration will be given to the implications, if any, to planning in relation to conservation areas, tree preservation orders and planning consents.

3.8 Procurement / Social Value Implications

There are no Social Value implications and the proposal does not involve procurement.

4. Associated Risks / Opportunities

- 4.1 Reduced inspections will mean less proactive maintenance and more reactive maintenance and is likely to increase the occasions when trees are damaged, particularly in times of severe weather. This is likely to increase, incidents,

customer complaints and insurance claims, incurring the council additional costs which cannot be quantified at this time. It is also likely the Councils reputation would be negatively affected

- 4.2 The council has a statutory duty of care under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Occupiers Liability Act 1957/84 to ensure that members of the public and staff are not to be put at risk because of any failure by the council to take all reasonable precautions to ensure their safety.
- 4.3 A Risk Assessment is required under the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999. There is a need to inspect trees in or near public places, or adjacent to buildings or working areas to assess whether they represent a risk to life or property, and to take remedial action as appropriate.
- 4.4 Each year on average five to six people in the UK are killed by falling tree branches. Thus the risk is low; the risk of being struck and killed in a public space is even lower. Up to three people are killed each year by trees in public spaces. As almost the entire population of the UK is exposed, the risk is about one in 20 million. However the low level of risk may not be perceived in this way by the public and courts, particularly when the cost of maintenance of individual trees is so low.
- 4.5 The council must be able to demonstrate it has a system in place, from a legal and moral perspective, that shows risk is controlled as far as reasonably practicable.

5. **Legal Implications**

- 5.1 The legal implications with this proposal are identified in paragraph 2.4 above.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

- 6.1 Consultation will be carried out.

7. **Equality Implications**

- 7.1 Initial screening suggests there are no or minimal equalities implications and therefore a full equality impact assessment on the proposal itself is not required.

PORTFOLIO: Community, Leisure and Culture

Directorate and Service Area: Change and Governance, Partnerships

Option: Cease funding to Relate Walsall & First Base Walsall

Saving Reference: 29

1. Financial Proposal

Net Saving			
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	7,500	22,500	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	7,500	22,500	0
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. Description of the Proposal

To reduce funding by 25% to Relate Walsall & First Base Walsall in 2017/18 and fully remove from 2018/19. A 25% reduction in 2017/18 would allow the organisations time to seek alternative funding before the funding is completely removed in 2018/19. This is a non-statutory service.

3. Implications Associated With Proposal

3.1 Corporate Plan

Reducing and then removing these grants potentially impacts all areas of the Corporate Plan.

3.2 Customers

Both the counselling service and homeless support play a role in supporting the role of vulnerable people who find themselves in a period of difficulty. Services that provide support during that crisis time support vulnerable people and allow for a more effective recovery from that crisis.

3.3 Employees / Staffing

There are no staffing implications for the council.

3.4 Partners

None.

3.5 **Economic Implications**

There are no economic implications.

3.6 **Environmental Implications**

There are no environmental implications.

3.7 **Health and wellbeing implications**

People needing support from these organisations are often extremely vulnerable. Reduced access to these services will have an impact on their health and wellbeing

3.8 **Other Council Services**

None.

3.9 **Procurement / Social Value Implications**

None.

4. **Associated Risks / Opportunities**

4.1 Services may close due to a lack of funding. This is mitigated by a phased approach to the reductions.

5. **Legal Implications**

5.1 There are no legal implications.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

6.1 Consultation will be carried out with the organisations concerned and their users.

7. **Equality Implications**

7.1 A full equality impact assessment will be carried out.

PORTFOLIO: Community, Leisure and Culture

Directorate and Service Area: Change and Governance, Partnerships

Option: Consider withdrawing funding to Community Associations

Saving Reference: 30

1. Financial Proposal

Net Saving			
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	247,900	0	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	247,900	0	0
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. Description of the Proposal

2.1 Some Community Associations within the borough receive grants from the Partnerships team. This proposal is to consider withdrawing funding of Community Associations fully in 2017/18. These Grants are:

- Community Development Sustainability Funding
- Community Development New Initiatives/Schemes Funding
- Building Management Funding
- Luncheon/Breakfast Club Funding

This proposal seeks to consider the suitability and impact of removal of these grants on Community associations and the role they play within the community.

This provides an option that would result in greater capacity at Streets Corner or for this site to be part of a property rationalisation initiative and closure with potential accommodation savings.

This is a non statutory service.

3. Implications Associated With Proposal

3.1 Corporate Plan

Reducing grants to Community Associations impacts all areas of the corporate plan as often a Community Association will play a part in delivering priorities of:

- Lifelong Health, Wealth and Happiness.
- Sustainable change and Improvement for all

- Safe, Resilient and Prospering Communities.

Community Associations undertake a wide and varied level of activities which support vulnerable people. They are a focal point for community activity and allow individuals opportunities to take part in a range of activities.

3.2 Customers

This is a non-statutory function.

3.3 Employees / Staffing

0.5 of a full time equivalent post supports the monitoring and development of grants.

3.4 Partners

No implications.

3.5 Economic Implications

No implications.

3.6 Environmental Implications

No implications.

3.7 Health and wellbeing implications

The impact of this proposal would negatively impact some of the most deprived areas in the borough.

3.8 Other Council Services

Other council services often operate activities either through or in Community Associations. This has reduced over time but still needs to be considered.

3.9 Procurement / Social Value Implications

Social Value is a key part of this grant expenditure as a Community Association provides a wide range of activities and support over and above the value of their grants.

4. **Associated Risks / Opportunities**

- 4.1 Community Association finances can often be finely balanced and small changes impact their viability. There is a potential for the closure of some Community Associations if they are not strong enough financially to manage the reduction in grant funding.

5. **Legal Implications**

- 5.1 There are no legal implications

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

- 6.1 Consultation will be carried out with Community Associations and their users.

7. **Equality Implications**

- 7.1 A full equality impact assessment will be carried out.

PORTFOLIO: Community, Leisure and Culture

Directorate and Service Area: Change and Governance, Communities and Partnerships

Option: Remove Cohesion non staffing budget

Saving Reference: 31

1. **Financial Proposal**

	Net Saving		
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	74,356	0	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	74,356	0	0
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. **Description of the Proposal**

- 2.1 This proposal would remove the non staffing cohesion budget which would result in the ceasing of all grants funded by the cohesion budget for community events and activities.
- 2.2 There is no statutory duty to fund cohesion focused activity although as part of the work on the cohesion strategy targeted work may be identified and funding for those activities would be considered as part of that process.

3. **Implications Associated With Proposal**

3.1 **Corporate Plan**

The council has a priority to create “sustainable change and improvement for all” and ensure “our communities are engaged and sustainable”. This is achieved in a number of ways however this small budget can only ever have a marginal impact, if any, given the diversity of the borough. Some events historically rely on this funding and other more creative ways will need to be identified to mitigate any impact.

3.2 **Customers**

This is a non- statutory function. Some events, activities and projects historically rely on this funding and other more creative ways will need to be identified to mitigate any impact.

- 3.3 **Employees / Staffing**
No impact.
- 3.4 **Partners**
Activities involving faith or other voluntary sector groups will be impacted but the level of funding means this impact will be marginal.
- 3.5 **Economic Implications**
Some events, activities or projects will be impacted and if they ceased there may be a marginal economic effect
- 3.6 **Environmental Implications**
None .
- 3.7 **Health and wellbeing implications**
A cohesive community would have positive impact on the health and wellbeing of its residents. This funding is marginal and therefore its removal would have minimal impact.
- 3.8 **Other Council Services**
The cohesion team will continue to support Council services with their engagement activities but this will not be impacted by the loss of this funding.
- 3.9 **Procurement / Social Value Implications**
The activities that this money supports will often have social value but the marginal benefit it provides could be replaced by non council funding and events such as Love Your Neighbour which was put on by the council without core funding.
4. **Associated Risks / Opportunities**
- 4.1 Certain events, activities and projects may not take place but this can be mitigated by identifying non council funding which may ultimately prove to be more sustainable.
5. **Legal Implications**
None.
6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**
- 6.1 We will consult directly with previous beneficiaries to understand the potential impact. If this proposal is agreed we would then support organisations to identify funding from other sources.
7. **Equality Implications**
- 7.1 A full equality impact assessment is being carried out. There will be a marginal impact on people with protected characteristics.

PORTFOLIO: Community, Leisure and Culture

Directorate and Service Area: Economy & Environment - Leisure, Culture & Operations

Option: A Re-design of the Borough's Library Service

Saving Reference: 32A, 32B, 32C Libraries, 33 Leather Museum, 34 Local History Centre

1. Financial Proposal

1.1 The proposal is to reduce the number of libraries within the borough subject to public consultation and the viability of the service. The proposal also includes the redesign and transfer of the Local History Centre and Leather Museum into the Lichfield Street Central Library premises.

1.2 *Library Service:*

The proposal is to make a revenue saving of c.£2.9m per annum and deliver a library service for a budget of c.£1m.

Net Saving – Library Service			
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	2,900,000	0	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	2,900,000	0	0
Capital investment	2,000,000	2,000,000	0

1.3 *Local History Centre:*

Net Saving – Local History Centre			
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	93,000	93,000	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	93,000	93,000	0
Capital investment	160,000	200,000	0

1.4 **Leather Museum:**

Net Saving – Leather Museum			
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	85,000	86,000	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	85,000	86,000	0
Capital investment	0	0	0

1.5 The capital investment required will be to modernise, repair and redesign the Lichfield Street site and integrate the Local History Centre and Leather Museum into the single site. Savings from these are shown below but should be taken as a single “consolidation” project. Additional capital investment may be required to undertake modifications to any buildings that the agreed service delivery model includes.

2. **Description of the Proposal**

2.1 This proposal affects the current Library service plus the Local History Centre in Essex Street and the Leather Museum in Wisemore. The proposed savings can only be made through consolidating the three services together into a single hub and redesigning the whole service and its operation.

2.2 The Library Service consists of sixteen libraries, two mobile library buses and the Home Delivery Service to the housebound costing approximately £3.9m net. The Schools’ Library Support Service (SLSS) falls within the remit of the Library Service but operates at no cost.

2.3 Usage data from 2014/15 and 2015/16 shows that the static library service has c.1m visits with approximately 775,000 books borrowed each year. There are 205,000 ICT usages.

2.4 Walsall’s residents will be consulted on three options:

- a) To reduce the number of static library sites from sixteen down to one (Lichfield Street, Walsall), retain one Mobile Library Bus and the Home Delivery Service. The single library site would be redesigned and developed as a “Hub” in conjunction with an integrated Local History Centre and Leather Museum. The one Mobile Library Bus would be used to deliver a library service to areas of the borough with reduced access and greater need.
- b) To reduce the number of static library sites from sixteen to a maximum of five dependent on cost. The proposal should retain a Mobile Library Bus service and the Home Delivery Service. The libraries to be retained would be selected on consideration of viability.

- c) Respondents would be invited to suggest alternative proposals subject to a budget limit of £1m.
- 2.5 The Lichfield Street “Hub” proposal would include consolidating a smaller Local History Centre from Essex Street and a smaller Leather Museum from Wisemore into a single operational entity. The Lichfield Street building would be redesigned internally, repaired and essential maintenance would be undertaken.
- 2.6 The Lichfield Street “Hub” will focus on knowledge, skills, business start-up and development, plus research on local history, family backgrounds and heritage. The premises would offer lending, reference and children’s books, the Local History Centre & Archive, Leather Museum, a café & shop, wi-fi & ICT lounge, learning resource centre, and space for jobs & skills development. Wedding ceremonies would be possible in the large first floor room and a Tourist Information offer will also be made available. Consolidation into a single site should offer a 7 day a week offer. The Essex Street and Wisemore sites would be released.
- 2.7 The “Hub” is estimated to be a capital scheme in the region of £4.6m. Whilst funding may be available from the Carnegie Trust, Heritage Lottery Fund or The National Archive, the timescale for delivery of the savings and the complexity of the project will not allow time to work up such a scheme, submit the applications and receive a response and funding. Such work is a project in itself and will be subject to full tendering and procurement process. It may be possible to undertake the consolidation (of the “Hub”) over a phased six month period and decorate / repair the building on a rolling programme whilst keeping all services open to the public, albeit perhaps on a reduced basis.
- 2.8 Any site closure or disposals would be jointly managed by Integrated Facilities Management. The Estates team would consider any site development opportunities.
- 2.9 Following the release of the budget proposals at the 26 October 2016 Cabinet consultation will commence and it is currently planned that this will cease at Christmas allowing Cabinet Members the opportunity to adequately review the findings.
- 2.10 Consolidating the archive at the Local History Centre and the displays at the Leather Museum will take some considerable planning as will the project to move the environmentally controlled records store and specialist racking.
- 2.11 To have a library service is a statutory function of the council under the Public Libraries and Museum Act 1964. This states that local authorities must maintain a “comprehensive, efficient” and free library service. It does not stipulate what size and shape this should look like. Furthermore, the Chartered Institute for Library and Information Professional’s (CILIP) CEO confirmed that, contrary to general opinion, libraries can be closed as long as the opportunity to deliver something better was not missed.

- 2.12 The Local History Centre is the council's professional archives service. With regard to this service, there are several Acts that apply:-
- Local Government Act 1972 section 224; to be the authorised repository for the official records of Walsall MBC
 - Public Records Acts 1958 and 1967; local repository for public records (central government and its local agencies)
 - Local Government (Records) Act 1962; deposit of manorial and tithe records, as well as gifts or bequests of records
- 2.13 The proposal to consolidate three separate sites into a single town centre location, close to other amenities, transport links and parking, offers the opportunity to redesign the service, make improvements and efficiencies whilst also protecting service delivery overall in the longer term. It is planned that the "Hub" would be open seven days a week and for longer hours; potentially up to 105 hours a week, rather than the 49.5 hours a week at the current Central Library.
- 2.14 From economic intelligence modelling various heat maps have been considered comparing the various sites and the effect that these would have on public access. Consideration has been given to walking, public transport and car ownership. Multiple indices of deprivation have also been considered, as have the Marmot principles.
- 2.15 Walsall is a relatively small geographical area. The furthest residential properties are within 9km (5.6 miles) of the Lichfield Street "Hub" location. Walsall has a good public transport network and the availability of several large public car parks. Alongside greater ICT use by the public, it is believed that a single Lichfield Street "Hub" could be an "efficient and comprehensive" service to meet the needs of Walsall residents.

3. **Implications Associated With Proposal**

3.1 **Corporate Plan**

Lifelong health wealth and happiness – Good education and training for all

- The new library service is likely to be different from the existing sixteen site service. The Lichfield Street "Hub" itself will be a much enhanced facility linked to personal skills, business start-up advice, heritage, archives and community. Access is intended to be over seven days a week and for longer hours. Bringing a variety of services together will make them more efficient and sustainable, offering residents a wider and better offer.

Safe, resilient and prospering communities – Supporting business growth

- The Lichfield Street "Hub" will offer extended opening hours and be able to share staff between the three services effectively becoming a single leisure, cultural and learning hub. This will offer lending, reference and children's books, Local History Centre, Leather Museum, tourist information, café &

shop, wi-fi & ICT lounge, learning resource centre, and jobs & skills development. Collectively this proposal will offer support for business growth.

Sustainable change and improvement for all – Service delivery linked to local need, Facilities are accessible and encourage and support healthy living plus Maximising the potential in electronic access to services

- The whole principle of the service redesign is to make a service that is fit for the 21st century, flexible and sustainable at a time when need has probably never been greater. Retention of the Mobile Library Bus(es) and the Home Delivery Service are recognition of particular needs. The need for advice (for jobs and applications) and information generally is particular requirement to develop the economy. Excellent ICT provision will be vitally important.

3.2 Customers

The council faces significant financial challenges over the Efficiency Plan period to 2020. This presents a challenge to the Library Service, however also offers an excellent opportunity to redesign the service in a different way, improve what is on offer and extend opening hours. A broader range of complementary services for residents and visitors to Walsall can be made available.

All residents in Walsall have the potential to be affected by this proposal. A reduction in the number of supported library buildings is a significant decision. It is possible that existing library users may be unable to visit their existing local library.

From a summary of the previous five years of public consultation it would appear that libraries are not actually about literacy and books, nor necessarily about ICT access, but more about two things:-

1. as a community space for people to meet, and,
2. a space that people think other people ought to have access to, even though they don't use it themselves.

What is required is something that offers a variety of services and residents will be consulted on several options. Consideration will be given to retain one or both Mobile Library Buses and also the Home Delivery Service as part of any final service delivery model on the basis of:

- The Mobile Library Bus(es) would be used to provide a service to those areas of the borough based on greatest need. This is likely to be to those areas with multiple deprivation, lower educational attainment and least car ownership.
- The Home Delivery Service would provide a service to those who are house-bound and rely on it for the delivery and collection of books, but also for personal contact that this group of people find essential and worthwhile.

The council has looked at a variety of different delivery options in terms of which library sites might be retained, closed or the management handed over to community groups in recent years. Whilst different proposals were made more recently for 2014/15 and 2015/16, no changes were made. Budget pressures for 2017/18 financial year are now much more severe.

There are a significant number of permutations that could theoretically be considered. For example, with sixteen libraries, two buses and a home service, if there were to be just three sites, this would present approximately 1,000 different permutations.

As a result of the multiple possible options, the Cabinet (Libraries) Working Group have considered the data available to them and the preferred option for a service costing £1m would be for the Lichfield Street “Hub”, one Mobile Library Bus and the Home Delivery Service.

3.3 Employees / Staffing

This proposal would lead to the anticipated redundancy of up to approximately one hundred and thirty staff. This proposal affects the Library Service, Local History Centre and the Leather Museum.

3.4 Partners

It may also be possible that local community groups may wish to take over the delivery of a community book exchange from within their locality. Initial support through a professional librarian for an initial period of two years and a small (£10,000 per annum) grant could be available for each site.

In 2014 and 2015, several community groups expressed indicative interest in working with the Council to take over several libraries as community libraries and this option may still be possible. It should be noted however that it is unlikely that the council will be able to afford any on-going financial support to such community libraries.

3.5 Economic Implications

The reduction in the number of libraries would affect residents’ access to the book stock and 180 public access computers. This is likely to make their ability to search for jobs and make job applications more difficult.

The intention to redevelop the Lichfield Street Central Library site into a “Hub” with a focus on skills, training, advice and business start-up would offer an enhanced service but also over a greater number of hours a week than from the current service spread over more sites.

3.6 Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications unless anything such as asbestos is found within the buildings to be disposed of and in the Lichfield Street “Hub” project.

3.7 Health and wellbeing implications

The council has a statutory duty to promote health and wellbeing. Having fewer sites may have the impact of encouraging more active travel. Encouraging residents to walk further is likely to have indirect benefits to their physical and mental health (through exercise) and overall health and well-being.

The key objectives of the Marmot Review (in addressing deprivation and health inequalities within the borough) are to be at the heart of our work. These are as follows:

- Give every child the best start in life

All children will have access to the Lichfield Street “Hub”. Additional opening hours and days will increase access to books, ICT, training and skills, the Local History Centre and Leather Museum. The Mobile Library Bus will offer children living in the areas with the highest level of multiple deprivation additional access to the service but in their own locality.

- Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives

The redesigned Lichfield Street “Hub” will offer; lending, reference and children’s books, the Local History Centre, Leather Museum, café, wi-fi & ICT lounge, learning resource centre, and jobs & skills development. The service will continue to offer support and access to all residents in their short and long-term objectives.

The benefit will be to fully utilise the available space, offer residents and visitors a town centre Local History Centre, linked to the Central Library provision. The site is close to town centre parking and other amenities and will help contribute to the regeneration of, and footfall in, Lichfield Street.

- Create fair employment and good work for all

The “Hub” is predicated around improving access to skills, training, knowledge, education and business knowledge, with the access to archival, family and historical records.

- Ensure a healthy standard of living for all

The “Hub” will offer fair and equal access to all residents, complemented by the Mobile Library Bus and the Home Delivery Service to the housebound

➤ Create and develop healthy and sustainable communities

Services available within the Lichfield Street “Hub” can be linked with other services such as Sport & Leisure at the Gala Baths to encourage “more people to be more active, more often”. This will improve mental and physical health and all-round health and well-being. Happier, healthier people are better placed to enjoy life, work, earn money and be(come) sustainable

➤ Strengthen the role and impact of ill-health prevention

Information and access to on-line resources should be available to the health service as well as sign-posting to other complementary and support services

3.8 Other Council Services

The proposed changes to the library service may have an indirect impact on other services within the council in that:-

Children’s Services may be concerned about a possible impact on educational attainment through not having local libraries. It is thought likely that most, if not all, schools will have their own library albeit limited to school term-time and only be available to children registered at that particular school. There is no impact on the Schools’ Library Support Service.

All children would have access to the Lichfield Street “Hub” provision, the reference library and on-line services.

Residents in receipt of services from Adult and Social Care may make use of their local library. The proposals outlined in this Policy Paper are likely to remove this service access point. The development of the Lichfield Street “Hub” and consolidation of the Library / Local History Centre / Leather Museum into a single town centre site, open on more days and for more hours, will however offer a better overall service to Walsall’s adult population.

3.9 Procurement / Social Value Implications

The project to redesign the Lichfield Street building and consolidate the Local History Centre and Leather Museum into a single site will be subject to the relevant procurement and construction legislation. Local business and employment will be used wherever possible however it must be noted that several areas of the work may be defined as specialist (1st floor ceiling restoration and environmental archive for example) and appropriately trained, experienced and qualified contractors will be used for this work.

4. **Associated Risks / Opportunities**

- 4.1 Due to the sensitive nature of any library closure proposals a judicial review of the council's decision may be a possibility. There is a risk that the council might be challenged in respect of predetermination if only one option is presented in the consultation. The risk will be minimised by ensuring a robust consultation process, by presenting more than one option and providing sufficient information to support the process.
- 4.2 Extensive public consultation will be required to give the public the opportunity to comment on the proposal and submit other proposals for the council to consider.
- 4.3 The proposal includes the intention to integrate the Local History Centre and Leather Museum into the Lichfield Street "Hub". Potential funding partners will need to be involved in working up such the scheme, submit funding applications and receive a response and funding. Such work is a project in itself and will be subject to full tendering and procurement process.

5. **Legal Implications**

- 5.1 There are several Acts that apply.

The Library Service

- Public Libraries and Museum Act 1964; local authorities must maintain a "comprehensive, efficient" and free library service

The Local History Centre service

- Local Government Act 1972 section 224; to be the authorised repository for the official records of Walsall MBC
- Public Records Acts 1958 and 1967; local repository for public records (central government and its local agencies)
- Local Government (Records) Act 1962; deposit of manorial and tithe records, as well as gifts or bequests of records
- The Local History Centre is the Council's professional archives service

- 5.2 The council should be able to demonstrate that it has done everything reasonably practicable to consider the needs of its residents and undertaken full, comprehensive, transparent and meaningful consultation in order to make its decision. It is possible that someone or a group may wish to issue a judicial review against the decision. Having a sound, well reasoned and proactive proposal will help mitigate against such a challenge but also be strong enough in the face of scrutiny.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

- 6.1 Whilst there has been extensive public consultation in previous years, the consultation on the proposals outlined in this paper will commence after the 26 October 2016 Cabinet.

6.2 The Cabinet (Libraries) Working Group met on 21 and 30 September 2016 to consider the Marmot Indicators, library data from 2014/15 and 2015/16, partnership offers, the Lichfield Street “Hub” proposal, high level budgets and the accessibility information. The Working group concluded that their preferred option was for the Lichfield Street “Hub” (with Local History Centre and Leather Museum), one Mobile Library Bus and the Home Delivery Service at an overall cost of c.£1m.

7. **Equality Implications**

7.1 A full equality impact assessment will be carried out for the service redesign and consolidation.

PORTFOLIO: Community, Leisure and Culture

Directorate and Service Area: Economy and Environment, Leisure, Culture & Operations

Option: Removal of the Council's Revenue Subsidy to the Forest Arts Centre.

Saving Reference: 35

1. Financial Proposal

- 1.1 This will see a gradual reduction in the financial support that the council gives to the operational costs of the centre over a four-year period. It is anticipated that the centre will have to operate on a more commercial basis and become self-sustaining or close
- 1.2 The council's net subsidy is £385k, plus central and property costs, a total cost of c.£443k. The current proposal outlined in the council's savings is to reduce the subsidy as follows:-

Net Saving			
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	100,000	100,000	185,816
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	100,000	100,000	185,816
Capital investment	0	0	0

- 1.3 It is anticipated that this option would be delivered through a combination of operational efficiencies, budget reductions, staffing and new income generation. Such an approach would give the Forest Arts Centre the opportunity to become self-sustaining.

2. Description of the Proposal

- 2.1 This proposal affects the Forest Arts Centre in Hawbush Road. "Forest Arts" is an amalgamation of the Arts Centre itself, Forest Community Association and the Music Education Hub (the outreach music service to Walsall's pupils). It is a combination of various buildings; two theatre halls, meeting rooms, recording studios and other arts spaces and music rooms. It also includes the new refurbishment of an old sports hall (July 2016) to create the A3 Arena. This is a specialist hall for large scale arts activities, show development, professional rehearsals, film production, aerial performances and circus arts.
- 2.2 To contribute towards the council's savings requirement, the proposal is to incrementally reduce the subsidy to the Forest Arts Centre. This approach would allow Forest the opportunity to review its entire operation, reduce costs and generate new business and additional income, in particular through the A3 Arena.

- 2.3 The Music Education Hub's operation is self-financing. Arts Council England (ACE) partially fund the Music Education Hub with an existing three year grant award of £463k per annum. This is about to change to a four-year period and it is worth noting that a bid will shortly be required for the academic years 2017/18 to 2020/21. The rest of the Music Education Hub costs are met by income from Service Level Agreements with schools and an annual Schools' Forum grant.
- 2.4 The council's direct subsidy of £385k plus central costs is in-line with ACE's own contribution and is spent on funding the Forest Arts Centre itself.
- 2.5 An added complication of the council removing (or reducing) its subsidy to the Forest Arts Centre is that this may lead to ACE reducing their grant to the Music Education Hub by a similar amount. There is however no statutory requirement for the council to deliver the Music Education Hub nor the Forest Arts Centre or Community Association.
- 2.6 The proposal would give the Head of Leisure, Culture & Operations the opportunity to work with staff to redesign the Forest Arts Centre business operation and model over a phased four-year period. This proposal would involve considering a different staff structure, reduction in costs, attracting new business and additional income. The new A3 Arena would help drive this business model.
- 2.7 Initial work suggests that up to £100k of costs could be removed from the Forest Arts Centre with effect from April 2017 and that the A3 Arena should be able to earn a further £100k of additional income by 2018/19 (year 2). This would leave the remaining £185k subsidy but it is expected that a commercialisation of the centre and its operation ought to be able to reduce this further. This is the same approach that the council has applied to Creative Development, Outdoor Activity Service, Sports Development as well the Gala Baths and Darlaston Swimming Pool.
- 2.8 A recent external review of the whole Forest operation (summer 2016) by consultants V4 Services made the recommendation that the Forest Arts Centre and Forest Community Association (CA) teams could be merged into a single management team. The CA would effectively become an integral part of the Forest Arts Centre. This may become part of a review of the Walsall Adult and Community College. Forest Community Association has an expired lease on the old sports hall (now the A3 Arena), the second theatre and two meeting / conference rooms. Whilst there is a CA Manager and one other member of staff, all other officers used in running the activities and operation on "the Forest" site are from Forest Arts Centre and are council employees.
- 2.9 At some point in the future the council could consider the sale of the entire two hectare Hawbush site for residential development. Leaving the Hawbush site and vacating the A3 Arena would lead to the clawback of the £95k ACE capital grant. Other grant monies totalling an estimated £0.231m would almost certainly also be reclaimed.

2.10 The Forest Arts Centre is not a statutory service. The Music Education Hub (schools' music service) is also not a statutory service.

3. **Implications Associated With Proposal**

3.1 **Corporate Plan**

Lifelong health wealth and happiness – Good education and training for all

- Forest Arts Centre offers all residents the opportunity to experience, become involved in and benefit from the social, physical and mental attributes that music, art, dance, drama, cinema and theatre offer. In addition the Music Education Hub offers Walsall's schools access to in-school music tuition; a component of a well-rounded education and learning experience. If a new delivery plan can be developed for Forest Arts Centre it is anticipated that the hours of access will be extended in particular through the A3 Arena. Overall it would be the intention to deliver a more efficient and sustainable service, offering residents a wider and better offer.

Safe, resilient and prospering communities – Supporting business growth

- Forest Arts Centre's activities and those of the Music Education Hub offer children, young people, adults and the elderly the basis for developing their abilities, confidence and enjoyment that spill over into supporting themselves, their families, being employed and therefore the local economy. Indirectly the service offers generic support for business growth in Walsall.

Sustainable change and improvement for all – Service delivery linked to local need, Facilities are accessible and encourage and support healthy living

- The Forest Arts Centre is constantly seeking to improve its offer to its customers and thereby help individuals and groups to improve themselves; often based on local need for music, dance, drama and the arts generally. Forest is accessible for all ages and all residents. The services of the Music Education Hub can be commissioned by all Walsall schools.

3.2 **Customers**

The council faces significant financial challenges over the Efficiency Plan period. This presents a challenge to the Forest Arts Centre however also offers an excellent opportunity to redesign the service in a different way, improve what is on offer and extend opening hours. A broader range of complementary services for residents and visitors to Walsall could also be made available.

If the Forest Arts Centre was unable to operate within the reducing budget and was to close, there is the potential for all residents in Walsall to be affected by this

proposal, in particular children and young people. In the worst case scenario, existing Forest Arts users would not actually be able to visit the Centre.

Subject to Arts Council England agreement, it may be possible to deliver the Music Education Hub from another site thereby protecting front-line music tuition in Walsall's schools. The council has looked at a number of different delivery options in terms of how the Forest Arts' services might be delivered albeit possibly from a different location in Walsall.

3.3 Employees / Staffing

To meet the re-designed operational plan it is likely that up to five staff may be made redundant.

3.4 Partners

Arts Council England is the single largest contributor other than the council. Their interest is predominantly with the Music Education Hub however this is strongly intertwined with the Forest Arts Centre.

The Music Education Hub delivers a music tuition service to fifty-nine schools in Walsall and in 2015/16 this was to 4,500 children a week. A total of 430 children also benefit from music delivered by the Hub directly from the Forest Arts Centre.

At some point it may be possible that a community group may express an interest in taking over the Forest Arts Centre. The Forest Community Association is inextricably linked to "Forest" however much of its operational delivery is actually delivered by the council's own staff and the Arts Centre.

3.5 Economic Implications

There are not thought to be any direct economic implications arising from this proposal.

3.6 Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications unless anything such as asbestos is found within the buildings to be disposed of.

3.7 Health and wellbeing implications

The council has a statutory duty to promote health and wellbeing. Music and the arts are well recognised as having a significant and positive effect on the individual's mental and physical health and overall well-being. Whether listening to music, playing an instrument, participating in dance or a play, or watching a show; these activities generally give a strong sense of well-being and offer a genuine feel-good factor.

The key objectives of the Marmot Review (in addressing deprivation and health inequalities within the borough) are to be at the heart of our work. These are as follows:

- Give every child the best start in life

All users of the Forest Arts Centre and the Music Education Hub service are able to benefit from the social, physical and mental benefits that music, art, dance, drama, cinema and theatre offer. Not every child is educationally gifted yet they may however be artistically very talented, or in fact just enjoy it. Such involvement may offer them an opportunity to become confident and improve as an individual – which can have a positive impact on their educational attainment that might not otherwise have been achieved.

- Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives

The activities on offer at the Forest Arts Centre are available to all residents and sections of the community, irrespective of age. A good example is the Centre's Gamelan, a traditional Indonesian ensemble of percussive instruments. Imported from Bali in the late 1990's it is made up of metallophones and xylophones played by mallets, hand-played kendhang drums and gongs of approximately thirty pieces. Full, authentic hand-carved wood sets (such as Forest's) are rare in Britain but offer a very different, interesting and rewarding experience – available to Walsall residents.

Services offered also benefit the elderly when at a time that social interaction, physical activity, communication and mental health is particularly important.

- Create fair employment and good work for all

The activities at Forest offer the opportunity for individuals to improve their personal confidence - a key factor in improved self-worth. This is an important factor in improving personal skills that can be transferred to the workplace but also encourage individuals to extend themselves professionally.

- Ensure a healthy standard of living for all

All users of the Forest Arts Centre and the Music Education Hub service are able to benefit from the social, physical and mental benefits that music, art, dance, drama, cinema and theatre offer.

- Create and develop healthy and sustainable communities

A gradual reduction in subsidy, allowing the Centre and its users / supporters the opportunity to review and commercialise the operation may enable the Centre to become self-sustaining, making it possible to further develop healthy and sustainable communities.

- Strengthen the role and impact of ill-health prevention

Physical activity, whether undertaken through participation in sport or the arts, makes a significant and positive contribution to an individual's mental and physical health and general well-being. Services in Leisure are tasked with contributing to improve the health and well-being of all Walsall's residents.

Participating in music, art, dance, drama, cinema and theatre is to be valued as a solid foundation in avoiding ill-health.

3.8 Other Council Services

The proposed changes to the Forest Arts Centre and Music Education Hub service may have an indirect impact on other services within the council in that:-

Children's Services may be concerned about a reduction or loss in music tuition to the Borough's children; however, there is no statutory requirement for a music support service to be provided by local education authorities. Music is no longer a part of the official National curriculum and is not a subject specific Ofsted requirement. Music is only considered as a "benefit" to whole school provision in the cultural environment of the school. It should be noted that many schools do little or no music whilst others support it only as an extra-curricular activity.

There has however been some considerable growth in the private sector - providing individual or groups of schools with music lessons and music support outside of the Music Education Hub framework. This may offer schools the opportunity to arrange their own arts provision.

3.9 Procurement / Social Value Implications

If the Forest Arts Centre were to be able to develop a plan where it could continue its operation, local business and employment would continue to be used wherever possible. Appropriately trained, experienced and qualified contractors would be used for this work.

4. Associated Risks / Opportunities

- 4.1 Working alongside Arts Council England, the Head of Leisure, Culture & Operations and Forest staff will seek to minimise and mitigate against any risks. The council's budget conversation will give the general public the opportunity to comment on the proposal and submit other suggestions for the council to consider.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 There is no statutory requirement for the Forest Arts Centre or Music Education Hub services to be provided by local education authorities.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

- 6.1 Due to the radical extent of the service redesign, extensive public consultation will be required to give the public the opportunity to comment on the proposal and submit other proposals for the council to consider. Consultation will commence on 27 October 2016 as part of the council's budget conversation.

7. **Equality Implications**

- 7.1 A full equality impact assessment will be carried out.

PORTFOLIO: Community, Leisure and Culture

Directorate and Service Area: Economy and Environment, Leisure, Culture & Operations

Option: Removal of the Council's Revenue Subsidy to the New Art Gallery.

Saving Reference: 36

1. Financial Proposal

This will see a reduction in the financial support that the council gives to the operational costs of the centre. It is anticipated that the Gallery will have to operate on a more commercial basis and become self-sustaining over the period of the medium term financial outlook, or may close.

The council's net subsidy is £470k, plus central and property costs, a total of c.£900k. The current proposal outlined in the council's savings is to reduce the subsidy as follows:-

Net Saving			
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	100,000	(20,000)	390,000
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	100,000	(20,000)	390,000
Capital investment	0	0	0

It is anticipated that this option would be delivered through a combination of operational efficiencies, budget reductions, staffing and new income generation. Such an approach would give the Gallery the opportunity to become self-sustaining.

2. Description of the Proposal

- 2.1 This proposal affects the New Art Gallery (NAG), located in the town centre adjacent to the canal wharf. The council's net subsidy is £470k, plus central and property costs, a total of c.£900k. Arts Council England (ACE) contribute a further £881k per annum.
- 2.2 The Gallery was built in 2000 in partnership with ACE as one of its National Portfolio Organisations (NPO) and has approximately 200,000 visits a year. The NPOs represent some of the best arts practice in the world and play a vital role in helping ACE meet their mission of great art and culture for everyone. ACE are investing just under £1 billion in 663 art organisations (of which NAG is one) from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2018.

- 2.3 The New Art Gallery hosts the Garman Ryan Collection, gifted to the Borough in 1973 by Kathleen Garman, widow of the 20th century sculptor Jacob Epstein. The Collection includes 365 works by Jacob Epstein, Van Gogh, Monet, Constable, Turner, Picasso, Degas, Matisse and Lucian Freud, alongside a wide range of artworks from throughout the world. In addition to the Collection, the New Art Gallery consists of temporary exhibition space, an Artists' Studio, Art library, the Family Gallery, a shop and a Costa coffee franchise.
- 2.4 To contribute towards the council's savings requirement, the proposal is that the council reduces the subsidy to the New Art Gallery over a period equal to the current medium term financial outlook, as identified in the table above. The gradual reduction in subsidy would allow the Gallery the opportunity to review its entire operation, reduce costs and make efficiencies, whilst also looking to generate new business and additional income.
- 2.5 The application to ACE for NPO funding for the next four-year period (2017/18 to 2020/21) will need to be submitted to ACE in January 2017. A decision will be made in early July 2017. Initial confidential discussions have already been held with ACE officers about the council's financial position, how this may affect NAG and what opportunities exist for alternative funding.
- 2.6 Cabinet have requested that opportunities for sponsorship and / or philanthropic support to NAG be investigated and this work is on-going. It should be noted that such work and any subsequent negotiations and legal agreements can take some months to come to fruition.
- 2.7 There is a possibility that if the council removes (or reduces) its subsidy to the New Art Gallery, this may lead to ACE reducing their grant by a similar amount. There is however no statutory requirement for the council to deliver the New Art Gallery. Whilst this is a possibility, ACE have made it clear that they do want to continue to work with the council to ensure that NAG remains open as part of their NPO network.
- 2.8 The proposal to gradually reduce the net operating subsidy to the New Art Gallery over a four-year period is in-line with similar proposals for the Forest Arts Centre. This is the same approach that the council has already applied to Creative Development, Outdoor Activity Service, Sports Development as well the Gala Baths and Darlaston Swimming Pool in recent years. The phased budget reduction gives officers the chance to redesign services, develop partnerships and to explore other revenue generating and commercial opportunities.

3. **Implications Associated With Proposal**

3.1 **Corporate Plan**

Lifelong health wealth and happiness – Good education and training for all

- The New Art Gallery offers all residents the opportunity to experience, and gain an appreciation and an understanding of the arts, this being a key component of a well-rounded education and learning experience. If a new delivery plan can be developed for New Art Gallery, alongside a sponsor / philanthropist / partner, it would be the intention to deliver a more efficient and sustainable service, offering residents a wider and better offer.

Safe, resilient and prospering communities – Supporting business growth

- The New Art Gallery's activities offer children, young people, adults and the elderly the basis for developing their abilities, confidence and enjoyment that spill over into supporting themselves, their families, being employed and therefore the local economy. Indirectly the service offers generic support for business growth in Walsall.

Sustainable change and improvement for all – Service delivery linked to local need, Facilities are accessible and encourage and support healthy living

- The New Art Gallery is constantly seeking to improve its offer to its customers and thereby help individuals and groups to improve themselves; often based on local need for music, dance, drama and the arts generally. The Gallery is accessible for all ages and all residents and good use of the NAG is made throughout the year by Walsall schools.

3.2 Customers

The council faces significant financial challenges over the Efficiency Plan period to 2019/20. This presents a challenge to the New Art Gallery however also offers an excellent opportunity to redesign the service in a different way, reconsider what is on offer and explore the opportunities of a more commercial and partner-led arrangement. A broader range of complementary services for residents and visitors to Walsall could also be made available.

If the New Art Gallery were to close, there is the potential for all residents in Walsall to be affected by this proposal. There would undoubtedly also be significant negative coverage in the national press in the same way that Sandwell Council experienced throughout the first ten years of The Public.

Officers are looking at a number of different options in terms of sponsorship, philanthropy and partnership and how the space within NAG might be used differently.

3.3 Employees / Staffing

There are no planned redundancies derived from the proposal to gradually reduce the revenue subsidy. Only if the NAG were unable to continue to operate on a viable basis would this be considered. A maximum of twenty-four staff could ultimately be affected.

3.4 **Partners**

Arts Council England are the single largest contributor other than the council. The Walsall Museums and Art Galleries Development Trust pre-dates the Gallery, is a charitable trust, and oversees the actual art collection and new acquisitions.

3.5 **Economic Implications**

There are not thought to be any direct economic implications arising from this proposal.

3.6 **Environmental Implications**

There are no environmental implications unless anything such as asbestos is found within the building, if it were to be disposed of.

3.7 **Health and wellbeing implications**

The council has a statutory duty to promote health and wellbeing. The arts are well recognised as having a significant and positive effect on the individual's mental and physical health and overall well-being. Experiencing the arts generally gives a strong sense of well-being and offer a genuine feel-good factor.

The key objectives of the Marmot Review (in addressing deprivation and health inequalities within the borough) are to be at the heart of our work. These are as follows:

Give every child the best start in life

- All users of the New Art Gallery are able to benefit from the social, physical and mental benefits that the Gallery offers. Not every child is educationally gifted yet they may however be artistically very talented, or in fact just enjoy it. Such involvement may offer them an opportunity to become confident and improve as an individual – which can have a positive impact on their educational attainment that might not otherwise have been achieved.

Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives

- The galleries and activities on offer at the New Art Gallery are available to all residents and sections of the community, irrespective of age. Walsall residents are in the special position of having the opportunity to experience works of art by Jacob Epstein, Van Gogh, Monet, Constable, Turner, Picasso, Degas, Matisse and Lucian Freud.

Services offered also benefit the elderly when at a time that social interaction, physical activity, communication and mental health is particularly important.

Create fair employment and good work for all

- The activities at the Gallery offer the opportunity for individuals to improve their personal confidence - a key factor in improved self-worth. This is an important factor in improving personal skills that can be transferred to the workplace but also encourage individuals to extend themselves professionally.

Ensure a healthy standard of living for all

- All users of the New Art Gallery are able to benefit from the social, physical and mental benefits that the arts offer.

Strengthen the role and impact of ill-health prevention

- Physical activity, whether undertaken through participation in sport or the arts, makes a significant and positive contribution to an individual's mental and physical health and general well-being. Services in Leisure are tasked with contributing to improve the health and well-being of all Walsall's residents.
- Participating in the arts, travelling to the Gallery and generally being stimulated is to be valued as a solid foundation in avoiding ill-health.

3.8 Other Council Services

The proposed changes to the New Art Gallery service may have an indirect impact on other services within the council in that:-

Children's Services may be concerned about a reduction or loss in interaction with the arts to the Borough's children, however, there is no statutory requirement for an arts service to be provided by local education authorities. Art is no longer a part of the official National curriculum and is not a subject specific Ofsted requirement. Music is only considered as a "benefit" to whole school provision in the cultural environment of the school. It should be noted that many schools do little or no music whilst others support it only as an extra-curricular activity.

The Gallery's arts provision, library and gallery space are extensively used by all ages, but can be particularly valued by the older generation, especially where mental health and stimulation are held to be particularly advantageous.

3.9 Procurement / Social Value Implications

If the New Art Gallery were able to develop a plan where it could continue its operation, local business and employment would continue to be used wherever possible. Appropriately trained, experienced and qualified contractors are used for particular areas of work, both to the art itself but also to the building.

4. **Associated Risks / Opportunities**

- 4.1 Working alongside Arts Council England, the Head of Leisure, Culture & Operations and the New Art Gallery Director will seek to minimise and mitigate against any risks. The council's budget conversation will give the general public the opportunity to comment on the proposal and submit other suggestions for the council to consider.

5. **Legal Implications**

- 5.1 There is no statutory requirement for the New Art Gallery to be provided by the local authority.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

- 6.1 Consultation on the proposals outlined in this Policy Paper will commence on 27 October 2016 as part of the council's budget conversation.

7. **Equality Implications**

- 7.1 A full equality impact assessment will be carried out.

PORTFOLIO: Community, Leisure and Culture

Directorate and Service Area: Economy and Environment - Leisure, Culture & Operations

Option: Additional income from Active Living (to fully recover costs of Darlaston Pool and Walsall Gala Baths)

Saving Reference: 37

1. Financial Proposal

	Net Saving		
	2017 / 2018 £	2018 / 2019 £	2019 / 2020 £
Estimated Saving	0	519,383	783,559
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	0	519,383	783,559
Capital investment	0	1,143,000	0

The sums above are the full costs of Darlaston Pool and Walsall Gala Baths, including depreciation, impairment and the apportionment of various central costs.

2. Description of the Proposal

- 2.1 Walsall currently has two Active Living Centres at Bloxwich, Walsall Wood (Oak Park), Darlaston Swimming Pool and Walsall Gala Baths.
- 2.2 As a discretionary service the council has set an aspiration that the leisure centres should operate at no cost to the council by 2018. It is anticipated that the new Bloxwich and Oak Park Active Living Centres ought to meet this target. It is likely that Darlaston Swimming Pool and the Gala Baths in isolation will be unable to do so.
- 2.3 A potential operating model is a move to a full-cost-recovery Local Authority Trading Company (LATCo) model for Sport & Leisure Services. A full cost recovery model previously allowed the retention of the Outdoor Pursuits team. The anticipated surplus generated from the new Active Living Centres could subsidise the continuation of other elements of the service – specifically Darlaston Swimming Pool, Walsall Gala Baths and the Sports Development unit.
- 2.4 The likely savings yielded from the LATCo model will be confirmed in the coming months working alongside Corporate Finance and VAT specialists and therefore is not currently part of this proposal. The trading surplus of the Active Living Centres will become more apparent by the end of the first year's trading (August 2017). This will inform the shape of the service that can be funded beyond 2017/18.

2.5 In the event that the surplus from the Active Living Centres is insufficient to fund all the other services, an alternative saving could be closure although closure of Gala Baths and Darlaston Pool is NOT an element of this current proposal.

2.6 **Darlaston Swimming Pool**

Darlaston Pool was built in 2000 and was principally funded by Sport England. The Pool is the least likely of the council's four leisure facilities to recover a large amount of its running costs. The centre is located outside the Darlaston district centre away from main transport routes with a small car park. The centre also has significant local competition from new leisure centres in Wednesbury and Bilston.

Darlaston Pool has previously made significant savings. As part of the 2015/16 budget savings the on-site centre manager post was removed and the centre is now managed as a satellite centre from Walsall Gala Baths. Further efficiency savings from the centre are considered unlikely.

The nature of the Darlaston Pool construction and the constrained site restrict the potential for major refurbishment to improve income generation. However a smaller-scale refurbishment to refresh the centre and give a cosmetic uplift has been proposed (and after 16 years' operation is long overdue), and is funded in the 2017/18 Capital Programme.

2.7 **Walsall Gala Baths**

At service level the closure of Walsall Gala Baths would be considered a *last resort*. The council invested £1m in a refurbishment of the centre – fully reopening in July 2016. Initial trading has indicated a substantial increase in usage and income from the refurbished centre; the first month recorded a 55% increase in income compared to pre-refurbishment. Whilst Gala Baths remains unlikely to achieve a break-even budget position in isolation, a substantial reduction to the £317k net controllable cost is anticipated.

Walsall Gala Baths is also a competition and training venue for national-level water polo and Prince William visited Gala Baths in 2008 as part of the Under 18s National Water Polo Championship.

The timing of the savings included in this proposal allow Walsall Gala Baths the greatest chance to realise a potential increase in trading in order to cover any current subsidy by 2019/20.

3. **Implications Associated With Proposal**

3.1 **Corporate Plan**

The purpose of the Active Living project is to offer better opportunities for Walsall residents to undertake more activity – leading to the adopted philosophy of *more*

people, more active, more often. By doing so, physical activity has the potential to improve the lives and life chances of everyone.

The Chief Medical Officer also highlights that there is a health cost of inactivity. Higher levels of activity have a positive impact on five key diseases (bowel cancer, breast cancer, diabetes, coronary heart disease and strokes) as well as helping reduce obesity levels.

There is a clear evidence base that shows physical activity improves health and well being, including independence for older people and the protection of vulnerable people. It helps create safe, sustainable and inclusive communities, supports the life chances for children and young people and raise aspirations. Healthier people are more likely to be more employable and efficient.

3.2 Customers

There is no statutory requirement for Sport & Leisure Services. There is however specific support for the provision and encouragement of sport and leisure in the following legislation: Public Baths and Washhouses Act 1846, Public Health Act 1875, Public Health Act 1936, Physical Training and Recreation act 1937, Local Government Act 1972, and Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

Given the scale of the budget savings required, previous efficiencies and substantial fixed overheads associated with leisure centres, alternate savings short of centre closures would have a proportionately greater impact on service for every £ saved.

3.3 Employees / Staffing

16 staff (11 full time equivalents) are employed at Darlaston Pool and 23 (16 full time equivalents) at Gala Baths. There are no employee indications in respect of this proposal. Should the Active Living Centres not fully cover the costs of Darlaston Pool and Gala Baths then alternative options may be required, which may impact employee numbers.

3.4 Partners

There is no explicit impact on the work of partners. Existing partnerships, where they are mutually beneficial and affordable – including those with Sport England and National Governing Bodies of Sport (such as the Amateur Swimming Association) – should continue.

The relationship with Sport England is strong. Sport England understands the financial challenge facing Walsall Council and a key component in their £2m investment in Active Living Centres was to provide a financially sustainable leisure estate. Sport England has also acknowledged the shortcomings of the Sport England-led design of Darlaston Swimming Pool.

3.5 Economic Implications

The economic costs of physical inactivity and obesity to Walsall are estimated as £70m a year. The reduction / cessation of funding for Sport and Leisure will need to have due regard to protecting physical activity outcomes.

3.6 Environmental Implications

None.

3.7 Health and wellbeing implications

The purpose of the Active Living project is to meet the council's philosophy to get "*more people, more active, more often*" and thereby improve their physical and mental health as well as overall well-being.

The key objectives of the Marmot Review (in addressing deprivation and health inequalities within the borough) are to be at the heart of our work. These are as follows:

Give every child the best start in life

Children's leisure provision is an integral function of Sport & Leisure, with children actively encouraged to swim from birth. *Parent and Toddler* sessions are a key element of the programmes of all council leisure facilities. The council's learn-to-swim programme currently has more than 2,500 children enrolled on weekly lessons, delivering a vital life-skill that underpins the nation's most popular participation sport.

Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives

Physical activity fitness has been acknowledged as a key determinant of independence, self-esteem and confidence. The Sport & Leisure service hosts a range of activities and programmes to both encourage physical fitness and to support and rehabilitate those for whom physical activity is a challenge.

Create fair employment and good work for all

Physical activity again underpins *fitness to work*. Overweight and obesity-related diseases result in the loss of 43,000 working days across the local economy, with £9m-£14.5m in lost earnings and a £40m loss to the wider Walsall economy. The leisure industry has been identified as a key growth industry. The sector is particularly highlighted as presenting strong career development with accessible entry-level roles and few barriers to progression.

Ensure a healthy standard of living for all

There is solid evidence of the preventative and therapeutic benefits of physical activity on a range of conditions including obesity, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer and musculoskeletal disorders.

Create and develop healthy and sustainable communities

Sport and Leisure facilities create environments in which communities can come together for a shared positive activity. Families frequently participate as a complete family unit with children enjoying activities (particularly swimming) alongside their parents and grandparents. The demographic breakdown of Sport & Leisure's users is strikingly representative of the borough's demographics in terms of gender, age and ethnicity.

Strengthen the role and impact of ill-health prevention

There is solid evidence of the preventative and therapeutic benefits of physical activity on a range of conditions including obesity, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer and musculoskeletal disorders.

3.8 Other Council Services

Optimising the surplus from the new Active Living Centres will require Sport & Leisure Services to take a commercial approach to several aspects of service delivery. It is essential that both the management of the service and council support services are in a position to support this commercial approach. Sport and Leisure does not fit the profile of a traditional council service with substantial income generation and a workforce deployed up to 18 hours a day, 7-days a week. Council systems may need to evolve to provide more bespoke and rapid support to meet the needs of the service.

3.9 Procurement / Social Value Implications

None.

4. Associated Risks / Opportunities

- 4.1 There is an opportunity that given a further two years' trading, the subsidy to Gala Baths and Darlaston Pool may be reduced to a point where they can be funded from the anticipated trading surpluses from Bloxwich and Oak Park Active Living Centres.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 There is no statutory requirement for Sport & Leisure Services.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

- 6.1 Previous budget consultation has identified Sport and Leisure as an area of council spend that residents would like to protect. An unsubstantiated rumour about the future of Gala Baths led to a 2,000 signatory petition to “save the Gala Baths” being presented to Council on 8 July 2013. This petition led to the decision to invest £1m in the refurbishment of the site comprising: completely remodelled reception and foyer, new changing village, new pool boom to create a new learner pool and new sauna provision.
- 6.2 No public consultation is required for this proposal.

7. **Equality Implications**

- 7.1 An initial screening has taken place and a full equality impact assessment is not required.

PORTFOLIO: Community, Leisure and Culture

Directorate and Service Area: Economy and Environment, Public Health

Option: Change to Provision of Out of Hours Provision for the Community Protection Service

Saving Reference: 39

1. Financial Proposal

Net Saving			
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	22,370	0	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	22,370	0	0
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. Description of the Proposal

- 2.1 There has been a routine out of hours noise service for many years. This is provided every Friday, Saturday and Sunday night (with a few exceptions). With a service redesign in April 2016, the service also covers other aspects of the work that is within the remit of the Community Protection Team.

Historically there was very limited service for residents outside these hours. The proposed change would give a more consistent service to residents who suffer from relevant issues regardless of the time when the issues are experienced.

- 2.2 The proposal is to change how the out of hours' service is delivered. Rather than a routine service with officers at work every weekend at set hours, the service will be provided in a more targeted manner. Complaints and intelligence will be analysed and service prioritised to target hot spot locations or to assist particularly vulnerable residents.

This can be delivered by analysis of complaints and intelligence and targeting work to geographic area or at times specific to the identified and evidenced problem and to meet the needs of vulnerable residents.

This is a change in working practice and can be implemented relatively easily. When the service was redesigned for the 2016/2017 savings proposals, the new job descriptions contained a provision about modifications to this service and the fact that the service would be reviewed was clearly communicated to staff. There was full consultation on the new job descriptions at that time.

- 2.3 The authority has a statutory duty to investigate breaches of certain legislative requirements, including but not limited to statutory nuisance. In the case of the latter, there is a duty to issue an abatement notice. However, there is no requirement to provide an out of hours service of the nature currently provided.

3. **Implications Associated With Proposal**

3.1 **Corporate Plan**

The work of the Community Protection Team delivers against all the corporate priorities. In particular:

- Safe resilient and prospering communities – licensing issues, enviro-crime, neighbourhood disputes, crime and anti-social behaviour impact on the safety of residents, promote fair trading environments, enable businesses to trade and people to work and study, promotes community cohesion. It is recognised by Regulatory Delivery (part of the department for Business Innovations and Skills) that well delivered regulation promotes business growth.
- Lifelong health, wealth and happiness - when residents are free from stress, crime, antisocial behaviour and disorder their health and wellbeing are improved and they better able to work and study to promote this objective. Residents able to help themselves can be supported with advice and guidance, freeing up services for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged and to target the most difficult offenders and perpetrators.
- Sustainable change and improvement for all - the changed delivery model will target the service to meet local needs, rather than a standard service delivered in the same way to all areas and residents.

3.2 **Customers**

It is a statutory function to investigate many criminal complaints and to issue notices on breach. Appended is a list of the legislation within scope of the team. The impact on customers is that a service that many are used to will be withdrawn in the form with which they are currently familiar but it will be replaced with a different, more targeted service. The service will not be delivered on demand, but will be based on evidenced need and prioritised to target the most vulnerable or difficult hotspot areas. There will be a need to communicate with residents and educate them on the new ways of working. Where persons affected by problems or causing problems are tenants of Registered Social Landlords, there is a service provided by them to deal with such issues, although the level of service varies by RSL.

The neighbouring Black Country Authorities do not provide a service comparable to the current out of hours' service. They typically operate a service that is an intelligence-led and similar to that proposed by this service change. In some instances other services deal with some aspects of the service delivery. However, in Walsall, the equivalent service is part of the one Community Protection Team already.

3.3 **Employees / Staffing**

This option maintains the same number of employees but gives more flexibility in service delivery. The employees will no longer receive the 5% unsocial hours payments so will effectively be a pay cut to those affected.

3.4 **Partners**

There will be minimal impact on partners. There will be a need to discuss with them the revised service and how it will be delivered. Some residents who call the out of hours service may call the police or social landlords instead but they will only respond in accordance with their duties, priorities and capacity.

3.5 **Economic Implications**

Any implications concerning the economy, regeneration, business sector will be marginal and may be positive in some instances and negative in others.

3.6 **Environmental Implications**

The service deals with environmental issues. Some nuisance, eg noise, may continue and not be dealt with at the time it is occurring but will be dealt with at a different time.

3.7 **Health and wellbeing implications**

The council has a statutory duty to promote health and wellbeing.

3.8 **Other Council Services**

There may be complaints to officers working on other out of hours call services who currently field the incoming requests for out of hours' service until residents become accustomed to the alternative service delivery.

3.9 **Procurement / Social Value Implications**

The Social Value element derives from the council's legal duty to have regard to how economic, social and environmental well being can be improved by the procurement exercise – please consult the Councils Social Value Policy.

4. **Associated Risks / Opportunities**

- The opportunity is that officers are available at different times to meet customer need that the service does not have the flexibility to meet currently.
- The risk is that a vulnerable person calls for service when it is no longer available on demand. However, this is no different to that person needing service when the out of hours rota is not currently operational.
- In mitigation, vulnerable persons are able to call emergency services or third sector providers. Where a problem is ongoing, officers will be communicating with the vulnerable person on a regular basis and be working when the identified need is greatest or be able to refer to additional support from relevant services.

5. **Legal Implications**

- 5.1 This is discussed in paragraph 3.2 and derives from a number of statutes. A list of relevant statutes is attached. The council has a duty to provide a service to deal with the legislation but does not specify how that is done. The proposal would still be compliant with legal requirements

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

- 6.1 Consultation has not been undertaken to date for confidentiality reasons.. However future consultation will need to be undertaken with:
- Members of staff within the Community Protection Team who will be directly affected
 - Partner services, e.g. police, RSLs
 - Residents and community groups
 - Elected Members

Consultation will be backed up with analysis of work patterns.

7. **Equality Implications**

- 7.1 A full equality impact assessment will be carried out.

List of legislation:

Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963	Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974
Animal Health and Welfare Acts 1981 and 1984	Highways Act 1980
Animals Act 1971	House to House Collections Act 1939
Animal Welfare Act 2006	Licensing Act 2003
Animals Act 1971	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Acts 1976 & 1982
Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003	Noise and Statutory Nuisance Act 1993
Breeding of Dogs Acts 1973 and 1991	Noise Act 1996
Breeding and Sale of Dogs (Welfare) Act 1999	Offices Shops and Railway Premises Act 1963
Building Act 1984	Pet Animals Act 1951
	Police, Factories & (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1916
Children and Young Persons Acts 1933, 1963, 1969	Powers of Criminal Courts Act 1973
Clean Air Act 1993	Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949
Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005	Public Health (Control of Diseases) Act 1984
Control of Pollution Act 1974	Public Health Acts 1936 and 1961
Control of Pollution (Amendment) Act 1989	Refuse Disposal (Amenity) Act 1978
Criminal Attempts Act 1981	Riding Establishments Acts 1964 and 1970
Criminal Justice & Public Order Act 1994	Road Traffic (Consequential Provisions) Act 1988
Dangerous Dogs Acts 1989 and 1991	Road Traffic Acts 1988 & 1991
Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996	Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988
Environment Act 1995	Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013
Environmental Protection Act 1990	Sunday Trading Act 1994
Equality Act 2010	The House to House Collections Act 1939
European Communities Act 1972	Town Police Clauses Act 1847
Factories Act 1961	Vehicles (Crime) Act 2001
Fraud Act 2006	West Midlands County Councils Act 1980
Food and Environment Protection Act 1985	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
Gambling Act 2005	Zoo Licensing Act 1981
Guard Dogs Act 1975	
Health Act 2006	

PORTFOLIO: Community, Leisure and Culture

Directorate and Service Area: Economy and Environment - Public Health

Option: A Review of the Operation of the Councils Pest and Animal Control Service to Control Demand, Target Resources more effectively and Increase Income.

Saving Reference: 40

1. **Financial Proposal**

Net Saving			
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	20,000	0	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	20,000	0	0
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. **Description of the Proposal**

- 2.1 Walsall Council provides a pest control service on an appointment basis for a variety of pests. Priority has traditionally been given to those pests (public health pests) that spread disease such as rats, mice, cockroaches and bedbugs. To prevent charges creating a financial barrier to using the service for vulnerable persons and those suffering most financial hardship these pests have traditionally been treated for free. As a consequence of having trained and well equipped pest controllers the service has also offered a service for non public health pests such as wasps, fleas, ants etc this has raised income to offset the cost of the free service and provided additional work for the staff throughout the year. This chargeable work has also had an element of protection for certain residents in that the full cost of treatment was discounted for those on benefits.
- 2.2 The system currently in operation where individual appointments are booked on any day in any part of the borough places a practical and administrative burden on the service as well as not concentrating effort in any one location to resolve infestations affecting groups of premises. The variety of charges for different pests and the difficulty in proving all persons claiming the discounted rates are in fact entitled to it requires simplifying.
- 2.3 The service is seeking to establish
- a) How the service will be staffed at present there are 3 operational posts one of which is vacant. It would be beneficial in order to drive this proposal forward to fill the vacant post but give it the additional responsibilities of day to day coordination of activity to ensure resources and income generating opportunities are effectively implemented.

- b) The true cost of an appointment
- c) Which services that are provided ought to be charged for and what that charge ought to be (based on 1 above)
- d) Whether discounted or free treatments ought to be stopped other than where proactive area based treatments are undertaken.
- e) Whether missed appointments where the fault is with the resident will be charged at the full rate or call out charge less than the full rate.
- f) How to effectively operate an area based, proactive project to treat pests in a defined area known to have a large demand.

2.4 It would be beneficial to have the proposal implemented in time for 1st April 2017 as this is the start of the insect season and when income generation begins in earnest. Publicity around any changes in the lead up to this would be vital as changes to this traditional frontline and key public service is likely to cause frustration amongst residents. Liaison with key social housing providers would also be key to implementation.

3. **Implications Associated With Proposal**

3.1 **Corporate Plan**

➤ **Lifelong health wealth and happiness**

The role of pest control within local authorities is to protect residents from ill health and disease and protect food and premises from destruction and damage. Pests can affect whole communities if they remain untreated. Cooperation between individuals to control pests is difficult unless there is a central body such as Local Authority to coordinate activity voluntarily or through enforcement if necessary. Infestation of pests is the most common cause of Environmental Health closing food businesses due to their presence creating an immediate risk to health.

➤ **Safe, resilient and prospering communities**

Having houses, streets and communities infested with pests such as rats, mice or cockroaches does not inspire confidence or pride. The types of situations where pests proliferate poorly kept premises, refuse accumulations, litter, defective sewers etc are all issues that signal problems with pride and the cohesiveness of communities in general.

➤ **Sustainable change and improvement for all**

It is becoming increasingly difficult to provide a responsive service to all residents at a time and date convenient to them, free of charge but largely uncoordinated. Altering our services and using intelligence and local knowledge to prioritise our work is likely to be a key way to develop in future.

3.2 **Customers**

In terms of the statutory basis for pest control there are three main elements as described in the legal section. The council can choose how to operate their service – cessation of services may create legal challenge. Changing services may not create a legal challenge but may be unpopular and counterproductive in some cases particularly where charges may prevent persons accessing a previously free service.

3.3 **Employees / Staffing**

Staffing numbers would be maintained at current levels. It would be recommended that a current vacant post is altered to give more responsibility for coordination of activity based on the changes being suggested as part of this proposal.

3.4 **Partners**

There may be an effect on Registered Social Landlords such as WHG and Caldmoreaccord as their tenants may be disproportionately affected by changes to charges or practices. They may however benefit from proactive area based projects if this was possible to implement.

3.5 **Economic Implications**

A rise in levels of pests infestations could adversely affect the food industry. The main cause of food premises closure and subsequent prosecution by environmental health officers locally is for infestations of mice and rats.

3.6 **Environmental Implications**

All pests live in the local environment in close proximity to the human population. The Pest Control service contains these pests whilst also taking into account the Councils responsibility to protect non target species (birds, voles, fish, pets, humans) from primary and secondary poisoning.

3.7 **Health and wellbeing implications**

Pest Control forms part of the council's disease control responsibilities. The service has been working with Public Health on transformational projects to ensure areas of most need are identified and visits carried out. The service has assisted in collecting information of poor quality housing, waste accumulations, possible Prevent and MDS issues. Apart from disease implications living with pests can cause mental stress affecting well being. If your home is infested it will have a significant effect on your mental health as well as physiological health.

3.8 **Other Council Services**

First Stop Shop and the Contact Centre assist with taking appointments and taking payments. They would be supportive of a simplification of the system and taking more control of demand. They will be consulted on any changes made to our procedures and charges. Should pest control reduce its availability complaints to enforcement teams may increase as infestations aren't controlled properly and peoples tolerance of infestations from neighbouring premises reduces. Landowning departments are responsible for pest control on their premises. The Pest Control Service can provide a responsive service for these Departments or

they can potentially administer contracts with private companies which may be more expensive and administratively cumbersome.

3.9 **Procurement / Social Value Implications**

At present no contracting proposals are being considered, however in-house staff linked directly to enforcement, health and other key services provides great opportunities to emphasise council priorities and values that maybe lost with a large external provider.

4. **Associated Risks / Opportunities**

4.1 **Opportunity** If demand is controlled through charges the service can carry out more proactive operations in areas of highest need.

Risk if demand isn't controlled through charging then income will increase but the ability to carry out area based treatments will be difficult.

Opportunity - Area based treatments allow a more holistic approach making treatment of premises more effective. It also enables other council services to gain intelligence from our access to domestic premises.

Risk - This is a popular front line service, any change made could result in major dissatisfaction with the public and poor publicity in the press.

Opportunity - If the service operates proactively it can link to RSL's, Clean & Green, enforcement teams, etc., to identify areas of major pest and associated problems and deal with them more effectively.

Risk - Reductions in service may create additional burdens on other services that will have to respond to issues on their land or through enforcement actions on private land.

The service has the ability to control the flow of appointments so in times of high demand it can switch to a reactive only service. In times of less demand it can reduce appointments and work more proactively. This does however require a higher level of coordination than we currently have and without a post to manage the process could create significant backlogs, customer dissatisfaction and loss on income.

5. **Legal Implications**

5.1 In terms of the statutory basis for pest control there are three main elements as described below. The Council can choose how to operate their service – cessation of services may create legal challenge. Changing services may not create a legal challenge but may be unpopular and counterproductive in some cases particularly where charges may prevent persons accessing a previously free service.

Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 - Places a duty on local authorities to take such steps as may be necessary to secure so far as practicable that their district is kept free from rats and mice, and in particular:

- (a) from time to time to carry out such inspections as may be necessary for the purpose aforesaid;
- (b) to destroy rats and mice on land of which they are the occupier and otherwise to keep such land so far as practicable free from rats and mice;
- (c) to enforce the duties of owners and occupiers of land under the following provisions of this Part of this Act, and to carry out such operations as are authorised by those provisions.

Public Health Act 1936 - Where a local authority, upon consideration of a report from any of their officers, or other information in their possession, are satisfied that any premises:

- (a) are in such a filthy or unwholesome condition as to be prejudicial to health, or
- (b) are verminous,

the local authority **shall** give notice to the owner or occupier of the premises requiring him to take such steps as may be specified in the notice to remedy the condition of the premises by cleansing and disinfecting them, and the notice may require among other things the removal of wallpaper or other covering of the walls, or, in the case of verminous premises, the taking of such steps as may be necessary for destroying or removing vermin.

Environmental Protection Act 1990 - Any insects emanating from relevant industrial, trade or business premises and being prejudicial to health or a nuisance... **it shall** be the duty of every local authority to cause its area to be inspected from time to time to detect any statutory nuisances which ought to be dealt with under section 80 and, where a complaint of a statutory nuisance is made to it by a person living within its area, to take such steps as are reasonably practicable to investigate the complaint. Where a local authority is satisfied that a statutory nuisance exists, or is likely to occur or recur, in the area of the authority, the local authority shall serve a notice ("an abatement notice") imposing all or any of the following requirements:

- (a) requiring the abatement of the nuisance or prohibiting or restricting its occurrence or recurrence;
 - (b) requiring the execution of such works, and the taking of such other steps, as may be necessary for any of those purposes,
- and the notice shall specify the time or times within which the requirements of the notice are to be complied with.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

- 6.1 No consultation has taken place to so far. Consultation with primary housing providers, residents groups etc would be worthwhile to check the value they place upon pest control and their reaction to changes proposed.

7. **Equality Implications**

- 7.1 An equality impact assessment is being undertaken there is a possibility implementing a full charging policy for all pests would have a significant impact on vulnerable or low income individuals and families.

PORTFOLIO: Personnel and Business Support

Directorate and Service Area: Change & Governance, Human Resources

Option: Cease Retirement Awards

Saving Reference: 52

1. Financial Proposal

Net Saving			
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	26,000	0	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	26,000	0	0
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. Description of the Proposal

- 2.1 To cease the council's Retirement Awards scheme with effect from 1st April 2017. Such an award is as detailed in the council's retirement award procedure. And it is payable to all council employees, including those employed at schools, upon retirement, who have a minimum of 10 years aggregated service.
- 2.2 The Award scheme pays £12.50 for each year of Walsall Service subject to a minimum of 10 years aggregated service. The payment is pro rata for part time staff. The scheme is not a long service award it is based purely on retirement from the service. It is a non-contractual payment.

3. Implications Associated With Proposal

3.1 Corporate Plan

None.

3.2 Customers

None.

3.3 Employees / Staffing

The cessation of this award has no impact on employee numbers.

3.4 **Partners**

None.

3.5 **Economic Implications**

None.

3.6 **Environmental Implications**

None.

3.7 **Health and wellbeing implications**

None.

3.8 **Other Council Services**

None.

3.9 **Procurement / Social Value Implications**

None.

4. **Associated Risks / Opportunities**

4.1 It is recognised that such a cessation may for some staff have a negative impact on their motivation and morale. However as such an award only applies to a relatively small number of staff each year (less than a hundred in 2015/16) who by being eligible to receive such an award will already be in receipt of monies linked to their retirement, such an additional award is viewed as non-essential particularly recognising the difficult financial climate the council faces.

5. **Legal Implications**

5.1 As such an award is non-contractual then only reasonable notice of its cessation is required, which this process will provide.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

6.1 Consultation will be carried out as appropriate including through the council's Employee Relations Forum and Directorate JNCC's with the unions and the Schools Forum.

7. **Equality Implications**

7.1 A full equality impact assessment will be undertaken

PORTFOLIO: Personnel & Business Support

Directorate and Service Area: Change and Governance, Integrated Facilities Management

Option: Consider alternative Funding for Category 2 School Crossing Patrol Wardens

Saving Reference: 53

1. Financial Proposal

Net Saving			
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	85,000	0	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	85,000	0	0
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. Description of the Proposal

2.1 There are two categories of school crossing patrols and these are risk assessed by the council's Road Safety Team as to which criteria they meet in line with national standards for road safety:

- **Category 1** is for a school crossing patrol warden to be on duty at specific times during school opening hours because of the potential road safety risks and is not supported by secondary crossing facilities i.e. pedestrian, pelican, zebra crossings etc.
- **Category 2** is for a school crossing patrol warden supported by secondary crossing facilities i.e. pedestrian, pelican, zebra crossings, therefore these are risk scored lower than a category 1.

2.2 There will be a review of Category 2 school crossing patrol wardens with the view to schools funding the costs. If funding is not found then the service will be removed as this is not a statutory service.

2.3 School patrols are a discretionary service. They were established by the School Crossing SCP Act 1953 and instituted on 1st July, 1954 through the School Crossing SCP Order 1954.

The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (Sections 26-28) gave 'Appropriate Authorities' (defined as county councils, metropolitan district councils, the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police and the Common Council of the City of London) the power to appoint SCPs to help children cross the road on their way to

or from school, or from one part of a school to another, between the hours of 8.00 a.m. and 5.30 p.m.

Section 270 of the Transport Act 2000, which came into force on 30th January, 2001, amended the 1984 Regulations to allow SCPs to operate “at such times as the Authority thinks fit”. Therefore, SCPs may now work outside the hours of 8.00 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. and can stop traffic to help anyone (child or adult) to cross the road. The same amendments were also introduced in Section 77 of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2001.

3. Implications Associated With Proposal

3.1 Corporate Plan

Road Safety plays a part in providing “safe, resilient and prospering communities”. Category 2 school crossing patrols are supported by secondary crossing facilities therefore the risk to children is lesser, but not removed completely, than Category 1 school crossing patrols.

3.2 Customers

This is a discretionary function. The council will seek alternative funding streams.

3.3 Employees / Staffing

38 part time posts will be impacted, currently 14 are vacant. This equates to 7 full time equivalents.

3.4 Partners

No implications.

3.5 Economic Implications

No implications.

3.6 Environmental Implications

No implications.

3.7 Health and wellbeing implications

There is a risk of an increase in road accidents mitigated by further road safety awareness campaigns and regular reviews of school crossing patrol sites.

3.8 Other Council Services

Highways currently carry out regular reviews of Category 1 and 2 crossings. These reviews will still continue.

3.9 **Procurement / Social Value Implications**

None.

4. **Associated Risks / Opportunities**

- 4.1 There is a risk of an increase in road accidents mitigated by further road safety awareness campaigns and regular reviews of school crossing patrol sites.

5. **Legal Implications**

- 5.1 School Crossing Patrols are a discretionary service. They were established by the School Crossing SCP Act 1953 and instituted on 1st July, 1954 through the School Crossing SCP Order 1954. See section 2 for further information.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

- 6.1 Fresh consultation will take place with all schools impacted by this proposal.

7. **Equality Implications**

- 7.1 A full equality impact assessment will be carried out.

PORTFOLIO: Regeneration

Directorate and Service Area: Economy and Environment - Planning, Engineering and Transportation

Option: A Reduction in the Maintenance of Road Signs

Saving Reference: 55

1. Financial Proposal

Net Saving			
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	15,000	0	64,000
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	15,000	0	64,000
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. Description of the Proposal

- 2.1 Following a pilot project in 2015/16 it was demonstrated that a small reduction in budget would have a negligible impact on our ability to satisfy our statutory duties as Highway Authority. In line with our agenda to de-clutter the highway (hence reducing maintenance liabilities) this proposal aims to introduce this small maintenance budget reduction. The year 3 proposal will be subject to the review of the success of the year 1 proposal.

3. Implications Associated With Proposal

3.1 Corporate Plan

Implementation of this proposal will have a negligible impact on the council's ability to deliver the following priorities for the reasons set out in this paper:

- Economic development, employment and improving employability
- Improving health, including wellbeing and independence for older people

3.2 Customers

Ensuring that the highway is in a reasonable and safe condition reduces the risk of accidents and injuries to road users. Less maintenance will mean that residents, businesses and road users are placed at greater risk of injury and damage to their property, however this saving is seen as very low risk.

3.3 Employees / Staffing

None.

3.4 **Partners**

None.

3.5 **Economic Implications**

None.

3.6 **Environmental Implications**

None.

3.7 **Health and wellbeing implications**

None.

3.8 **Other Council Services**

None.

3.9 **Procurement / Social Value Implications**

None.

4. **Associated Risks / Opportunities**

- 4.1 Recent Case Law has shown that a lack of resources is no defence for an authority to fail to comply with its statutory duty. Any reduction of this budget means an increased risk of this liability. As the saving is small the actual risk associated with it is viewed as minimal.

5. **Legal Implications**

- 5.1 It is a legal requirement for a relevant authority to keep the highway in a reasonably safe and efficient condition. Any reduction in budgets such as these decreases the council's ability to satisfy this duty. This saving is however low risk. The council has a statutory duty imposed by the Traffic Management Act 2004 to provide and adequately maintain signage necessary to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of vehicles on the road network.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

- 6.1 The Department for Transport requires all local authorities to reduce street clutter created by unnecessary and obsolete signage. This will result in less signage to maintain.

7. **Equality Implications**

- 7.1 An initial screening has been undertaken and a full assessment is not needed for this proposal.

PORTFOLIO: Regeneration

Directorate and Service Area: Economy and Environment - Planning, Engineering and Transportation

Option: Reduction in Highway Maintenance revenue budgets resulting from the re-procurement of the Highway Maintenance Contract.

Saving Reference: 58

1. Financial Proposal

	Net Saving		
	2017 / 2018 £	2018 / 2019 £	2019 / 2020 £
Estimated Saving	150,000	0	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	150,000	0	0
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. Description of the Proposal

- 2.1 This savings proposal reduces the highway maintenance budgets by £150,000, to be delivered through the re-procurement of the Highway Maintenance term contract.

3. Implications Associated With Proposal

3.1 **Corporate Plan**

Implementation of this proposal will have a minimal detrimental impact on the council's ability to deliver the following priorities for the reasons set out in this paper:

- Economic development, employment and improving employability
- Improving health, including wellbeing and independence for older people

3.2 **Customers**

Maintaining the highway in a reasonably safe condition is an explicit statutory function placed on the council under the Highways Act 1980. Less maintenance may mean that pedestrians and road users are placed at greater risk of injury and damage. The aim of this proposal is to re-procure the contract with in-built efficiencies.

3.3 **Employees / Staffing**

If there are less works orders placed through the new term contract there may be a need to reduce staff numbers that have previously been transferred under TUPE arrangements.

3.4 **Partners**

This may mean that there are fewer works orders placed with the new term contractor than at present.

3.5 **Economic Implications**

It is recognised by central government that the condition of the highway has a direct effect on the economic strength of an area. The ability to move goods and people around the transport network is an essential contributor to economic wellbeing.

3.6 **Environmental Implications**

None.

3.7 **Health and wellbeing implications**

The tendering process aims to secure efficiencies without any significant impact on the level of services delivered. If efficiencies are not delivered, and maintenance is reduced, a reduced condition of highway and footways across the borough may place users at greater risk of personal injury.

3.8 **Other Council Services**

None.

3.9 **Procurement / Social Value Implications**

None.

4. **Associated Risks / Opportunities**

4.1 The tendering process aims to secure efficiencies without any significant impact on the level of services delivered. There is a risk however that should rates increase then the net result of this saving would be a reduction in services.

5. **Legal Implications**

5.1 It is a legal requirement for the council to maintain the highway in a reasonably safe condition. If the council is less able to do this there is an increased risk that it will be held to have failed to comply with its statutory duty.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

6.1 Consultation will be undertaken as appropriate.

7. **Equality Implications**

7.1 An initial screening has been undertaken and an equality impact assessment is not needed for this proposal.

PORTFOLIO: Regeneration

Directorate and Service Area: Economy and Environment - Planning, Engineering and Transportation

Option: Additional reduction in Highway Maintenance revenue budgets resulting from the re-procurement of the Highway Maintenance Contract.

Saving Reference: 59

1. Financial Proposal

	Net Saving		
	2017 / 2018 £	2018 / 2019 £	2019 / 2020 £
Estimated Saving	0	100,000	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	0	100,000	0
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. Description of the Proposal

- 2.1 This savings proposal further reduces the highway maintenance budgets by £100,000. This is in addition to savings identified through the re-procurement of the Highway Maintenance term contract and will result in the reduction of services, and quality of highway maintenance.

3. Implications Associated With Proposal

3.1 **Corporate Plan**

Implementation of this proposal will have a detrimental impact on the Council's ability to deliver the following priorities for the reasons set out in this appendix:

- Economic development, employment and improving employability
- Improving health, including wellbeing and independence for older people

3.2 **Customers**

Maintaining the highway in a reasonably safe condition is an explicit statutory function placed on the council under the Highways Act 1980. Less maintenance will mean that pedestrians and road users are placed at greater risk of injury and damage.

3.3 **Employees / Staffing**

If there are less works orders placed through the new term contract there may be a need to reduce staff numbers that have previously been transferred through TUPE arrangements.

3.4 **Partners**

This may mean that there are fewer works orders placed with the new term contractor than at present.

3.5 **Economic Implications**

It is recognised by central government that the condition of the highway has a direct effect on the economic strength of an area. The ability to move goods and people around the transport network is an essential contributor to economic wellbeing.

3.6 **Environmental Implications**

None.

3.7 **Health and wellbeing implications**

A reduced condition of highway and footways across the borough will place all users at greater risk of personal injury.

3.8 **Other Council Services**

None.

3.9 **Procurement / Social Value Implications**

None.

4. **Associated Risks / Opportunities**

4.1 This proposal will reduce capacity of the council to undertake repairs to the highway. There is a risk that this will lead to more accidents and injuries to residents and highway users resulting in an increased risk of insurance claims and compensation. The council's ability to secure external capital funding may be reduced.

5. **Legal Implications**

5.1 It is a legal requirement for the council to maintain the highway in a reasonably safe condition. If the council is less able to do this there is an increased risk that it will be held to have failed to comply with its statutory duty.

5.2 The council has a statutory duty imposed by the Traffic Management Act 2004 to adequately maintain the public highway in order to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and vehicles. Failure to adequately discharge this duty could result in direct intervention from Central Government.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

6.1 Consultation will be undertaken as appropriate.

7. **Equality Implications**

7.1 An initial screening has been undertaken and an equality impact assessment is not needed for this proposal.

PORTFOLIO: Regeneration

Directorate and Service Area: Economy and Environment - Planning, Engineering and Transportation

Option: Increased cost of Parking Permits

Saving Reference: 60

1. Financial Proposal

Net Saving			
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	6,000	6,000	6,000
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	6,000	6,000	6,000
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. Description of the Proposal

2.1 The increased cost of parking permits by £1 per month yields an effective increase in income of £6,000.

3. Implications Associated With Proposal

3.1 Corporate Plan

Implementation of this proposal could have a negligible impact on the following criteria due to a slight increase in the costs to customers and the potential to discourage the use of these facilities:

- Economic development, employment and improving employability
- Improving health, including wellbeing and independence for older people

3.2 Customers

A very small increase in the costs incurred by our customers using these car parks.

3.3 Employees / Staffing

This proposal results in a very small increase in the costs incurred by our staff using these car parks. The revised cost will still be lower than that available to normal day to day pay and display customers.

3.4 **Partners**

The proposed increase in permit costs will be applicable to all parking permits provided to partner agencies.

3.5 **Economic Implications**

This proposal should have a negligible impact on town centre businesses and the wider local economy.

3.6 **Environmental Implications**

None.

3.7 **Health and wellbeing implications**

None.

3.8 **Other Council Services**

None.

3.9 **Procurement / Social Value Implications**

None.

4. **Associated Risks / Opportunities**

- 4.1 There is a small risk that this proposal may encourage users to use alternative private facilities reducing the additional income below target.

5. **Legal Implications**

- 5.1 This proposal will require an amendment to the Off Street Parking Places Order that has to be progressed in accordance with the relevant statutory procedures.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

- 6.1 The council will be required to publish a legal notice indicating the change in parking permit charges applicable to its car parks.

7. **Equality Implications**

- 7.1 An initial equality impact assessment screening has been undertaken and will be further developed following consultation.

PORTFOLIO: Regeneration

Directorate and Service Area: Economy and Environment - Planning, Engineering and Transportation

Option: Increasing Town Centre, Off Street Parking Charges.

Saving Reference: 61

1. Financial Proposal

	Net Saving		
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	15,000	0	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	15,000	0	0
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. Description of the Proposal

- 2.1 There is a need to fully reflect the cost to the council of providing and maintaining its car parks in the charges it applies to its customers. The additional income shown above is based on increasing the cost of town centre off street parking charges by 10p per parking charge band.

3. Implications Associated With Proposal

3.1 Corporate Plan

Implementation of this proposal could have a negligible impact on the following criteria due to a slight increase in the costs to customers and the potential to discourage the use of these facilities:

- Economic development, employment and improving employability
- Improving health, including wellbeing and independence for older people

3.2 Customers

This proposals results in a very small increase in the costs incurred by our customers using these car parks.

3.3 Employees / Staffing

None.

3.4 **Partners**

None.

3.5 **Economic Implications**

Negligible impact on Town Centre businesses should this increase in charge discourage visitors to the town centre.

3.6 **Environmental Implications**

None.

3.7 **Health and wellbeing implications**

None.

3.8 **Other Council Services**

None.

3.9 **Procurement / Social Value Implications**

None.

4. **Associated Risks / Opportunities**

4.1 There is a small risk that this proposal may encourage users to use alternative private facilities reducing the additional income below target.

5. **Legal Implications**

5.1 This proposal will require an amendment to the Off Street Parking Places Order that has to be progressed in accordance with the relevant statutory procedures.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

6.1 The council will be required to publish a legal notice indicating the change in parking charges applicable to its car parks.

7. **Equality Implications**

7.1 An initial screening has been undertaken and an equality impact assessment will be further developed following consultation.

PORTFOLIO: Regeneration

Directorate and Service Area: Economy and Environment - Planning, Engineering and Transportation

Option: The Introduction of an additional charge for Vehicle dropped Crossings to cover the costs of preparing quotations.

Saving Reference: 62

1. Financial Proposal

Net Saving			
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	10,000	0	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	10,000	0	0
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. Description of the Proposal

2.1 This proposal relates to the introduction of an initial charge for preparing quotations to provide vehicle dropped crossings and is designed to cover the cost to the council for producing the quotation.

3. Implications Associated With Proposal

3.1 Corporate Plan

Implementation of this proposal could have a negligible impact on the following criteria due to a slight increase in the costs of providing vehicle crossing pints to private premises:

- Economic development, employment and improving employability
- Improving health, including wellbeing and independence for older people

3.2 Customers

Residents and businesses can apply to the council for the installation of a dropped vehicle crossing. This will lead to a slight increase (approximately 10%) in the overall cost but will result in the customer meeting all of the cost.

3.3 Employees / Staffing

None.

3.4 **Partners**

None.

3.5 **Economic Implications**

This proposal covers the cost of a part of a service that is currently un-recovered. This will increase the cost to those customers requesting this service.

3.6 **Environmental Implications**

None.

3.7 **Health and wellbeing implications**

None.

3.8 **Other Council Services**

None.

3.9 **Procurement / Social Value Implications**

None.

4. **Associated Risks / Opportunities**

- 4.1 There is a low risk in achieving this saving as there is potential for people not to pursue the provision of a dropped crossing because of the introduction of a charge.

5. **Legal Implications**

- 5.1 None.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

- 6.1 Consultation will be carried out as appropriate.

7. **Equality Implications**

- 7.1 An initial screening has been undertaken and an equality impact assessment will be further developed following consultation.

PORTFOLIO: Regeneration

Directorate and Service Area: Economy and Environment - Planning, Engineering and Transportation

Option: The Introduction of Street and Roadwork Permit Scheme

Saving Reference: 63

1. Financial Proposal

Net Saving			
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	0	100,000	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	0	100,000	0
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. Description of the Proposal

- 2.1 This proposal relates to the introduction of a permit scheme to control and regulate street and road works whilst offsetting the costs to the council through the application of statutory permit fees.

3. Implications Associated With Proposal

3.1 Corporate Plan

Implementation of this proposal will have a positive impact on the Council's ability to deliver the following priorities for the reasons set out in this paper:

- Economic development, employment and improving employability
- Improving health, including wellbeing and independence for older people

3.2 Customers

The proposal will have a positive impact for all users of the public highway.

3.3 Employees / Staffing

The team delivering this function will need to have additional resources allocated. Income from the cost of permits and potential fines for breaches of requirements are designed to accommodate these costs.

3.4 **Partners**

Everyone has the potential to be adversely affected by increased congestion. The permit scheme is aimed at improving traffic flows and public safety.

3.5 **Economic Implications**

This proposal will incur costs for organisations carrying out work on the Highway, however it is recognised by central government that the effectiveness of the highway has a direct effect on the economic strength of an area. The ability to move goods and people around the transport network is an essential contributor to economic wellbeing.

3.6 **Environmental Implications**

Increased congestion has the potential to increase pollution levels in critical areas. This proposal aims to improve traffic flow.

3.7 **Health and wellbeing implications**

Improved traffic flows will reduce air pollution which has a direct and significant impact on health. The introduction of a permit scheme will improve the safety at roadworks.

3.8 **Other Council Services**

None.

3.9 **Procurement / Social Value Implications**

None.

4. **Associated Risks / Opportunities**

4.1 This is a low risk proposal.

5. **Legal Implications**

5.1 The Traffic Management Act 2004 already gives Local Authorities the powers to introduce permit schemes and all Local Authorities are being encouraged by the Department for Transport to use those powers.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

6.1 As part of introducing a permit scheme within Walsall, widespread consultation will be undertaken, primarily with statutory undertakers as they will be the organisations directly impacted by such a scheme.

7. **Equality Implications**

7.1 An initial screening has been undertaken and an equality impact assessment will be further developed following consultation.

PORTFOLIO: Regeneration

Directorate and Service Area: Economy and Environment - Planning, Engineering and Transportation

Option: Redesign and Reduce the Traffic Management Function

Saving Reference: 64

1. Financial Proposal

	Net Saving		
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	0	75,000	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	0	75,000	0
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. Description of the Proposal

- 2.1 This proposal is to review the traffic management function as part of the introduction of a street and roadwork permit scheme. The proposal would include the loss of 1 staff member and a small reduction in associated works budgets. This saving will reduce the overall capacity to manage planned and unplanned issues impacting on the operation of the public highway.

3. Implications Associated With Proposal

3.1 **Corporate Plan**

Implementation of this proposal will have a minimal detrimental impact on the council's ability to deliver the following priorities for the reasons set out in this paper:

- Economic development, employment and improving employability
- Improving health, including wellbeing and independence for older people

3.2 **Customers**

Reduced traffic management could lead to increased congestion and disruption to motorists, increasing journey times across our network. Less management and maintenance will mean that pedestrians and road users are placed at greater risk of injury and damage.

3.3 **Employees / Staffing**

The proposal will involve the reduction in the team by one full time post.

3.4 **Partners**

Everyone has the potential to be adversely affected by increased congestion.

3.5 **Economic Implications**

It is recognised by central government that the effectiveness of the highway has a direct effect on the economic strength of an area. The ability to move goods and people around the transport network is an essential contributor to economic wellbeing.

3.6 **Environmental Implications**

Increased congestion has the potential to increase pollution levels in critical areas.

3.7 **Health and wellbeing implications**

A reduced condition of highway and footways across the borough will place all users at greater risk of personal injury.

3.8 **Other Council Services**

The council will have a reduced capacity to respond to enquiries from councillors, MPs and members of the public in relation to traffic regulation and management issues. Other transport dependent services could be adversely affected by increased congestion.

3.9 **Procurement / Social Value Implications**

None.

4. **Associated Risks / Opportunities**

4.1 The council will reduce its ability to meet the standards required to deliver effectively its network management duties, with a potential for increased probability of risk & insurance claims and traffic delays as the numbers of road traffic collisions could increase.

4.2 However, the introduction of a street and roadworks permit scheme may mitigate some of the negative impacts of this proposal in relation to the management and control of utility activities and their potential to cause disruption.

5. **Legal Implications**

5.1 It is an explicit duty of the Network Management Act 2004 to manage the safe and efficient flow of traffic throughout the council's Highway network. It is also a legal requirement for the council to maintain the highway in a reasonably safe condition. If the council is less able to do this there is an increased risk that it will be considered to have failed to comply with its statutory duty.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

6.1 Direct consultation with the impacted staff will be undertaken in accordance with council policy.

7. **Equality Implications**

7.1 An initial screening has been undertaken and an equality impact assessment is not needed for this proposal.

PORTFOLIO: Regeneration

Directorate and Service Area: Economy and Environment - Planning, Engineering and Transportation

Option: Reduction in the reactive Highway Maintenance Budget

Saving Reference: 65

1. **Financial Proposal**

	Net Saving		
	2017 / 2018 £	2018 / 2019 £	2019 / 2020 £
Estimated Saving	50,000	0	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	50,000	0	0
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. **Description of the Proposal**

2.1 This savings proposal reduces the reactive highway maintenance budget by £50,000, leaving a total annual budget of £834,000. This money is used to pay for reactive and emergency repairs to the highway including damage to guardrail, potholes and tripping hazards on footways.

3. **Implications Associated With Proposal**

3.1 **Corporate Plan**

Implementation of this proposal will have a minimal detrimental impact on the council's ability to deliver the following priorities for the reasons set out in this paper:

- Economic development, employment and improving employability
- Improving health, including wellbeing and independence for older people

3.2 **Customers**

Maintaining the highway in a reasonably safe condition is an explicit statutory function placed on the council under the Highways Act 1980. Less maintenance will mean that pedestrians and road users are placed at greater risk of injury and damage.

3.3 **Employees / Staffing**

With less works orders placed with our term contractor Tarmac there may be a need to reduce staff that have been TUPE transferred from the council to the contractor at the start of the contract in 2009.

3.4 **Partners**

This will mean that there are fewer works orders placed with our term contractor Tarmac

3.5 **Economic Implications**

It is recognised by central government that the condition of the highway has a direct effect on the economic strength of an area. The ability to move goods and people around the transport network is an essential contributor to economic wellbeing.

3.6 **Environmental Implications**

None.

3.7 **Health and wellbeing implications**

A reduced condition of highway and footways across the borough may place users at greater risk of personal injury.

3.8 **Other Council Services**

None.

3.9 **Procurement / Social Value Implications**

None.

4. **Associated Risks / Opportunities**

4.1 The highway maintenance team and the term contractor Tarmac have been proactive in pioneering innovative technologies and techniques in order to deliver efficiencies and mitigate the impact of this saving.

5. **Legal Implications**

5.1 It is a legal requirement for the council to maintain the highway in a reasonably safe condition. If the council is less able to do this there is an increased risk that it will be held to have failed to comply with its statutory duty.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

6.1 Consultation will be carried out as appropriate.

7. **Equality Implications**

7.1 An initial screening has been undertaken and an equality impact assessment is not needed for this proposal.

PORTFOLIO: Regeneration

Directorate and Service Area: Economy and Environment – Regeneration and Development

Option: Merge the Strategic Planning Team with those of other Councils.

Saving Reference: 66

1. Financial Proposal

	Net Saving		
	2017 / 2018 £	2018 / 2019 £	2019 / 2020 £
Estimated Saving	0	100,000	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	0	100,000	0
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. Description of the Proposal

- 1.1 The proposal is to merge at least two neighbouring council strategic planning (policy) teams by 1 April 2018 to streamline services, reduce costs and provide a more co-ordinated approach to policy matters e.g. the Joint Core Strategy.

3. Implications Associated With Proposal

3.1 Corporate Plan

There is no impact on the delivery of the council's priorities set out in the Corporate Plan.

3.2 Customers

A Joint Core Strategy needs to be produced but there is unlikely to be any direct impact on our customers by taking a more joined up approach.

3.3 Employees / Staffing

Fewer staff may be required in a merged team which may result in redundancies in Walsall or partner authorities but this is yet to be determined.

3.4 Partners

The proposal would involve closing working with other West Midlands local authorities.

3.5 **Economic Implications**

The proposal should result in a more co-ordinated approach to policy making across the West Midlands which will be beneficial for the economy, regeneration and, business sector.

3.6 **Environmental Implications**

A more co-ordinated, consistent approach to policy making across the West Midlands (including environmental policies) should have a beneficial effect on the environment.

3.7 **Health and wellbeing implications**

A more co-ordinated, consistent approach to policy making should have a beneficial effect on health and well being and reinforce the objectives of the Marmot review.

3.8 **Other Council Services**

Other council services will still have access to the services of the team even if staff are no longer based in Walsall.

3.9 **Procurement / Social Value Implications**

There are no implications arising from this proposal.

4. **Associated Risks / Opportunities**

- 4.1 There is a risk that if agreement cannot be reached with other local authorities then the saving may not be achieved. Officers will work closely with their colleagues in other local authorities to ensure an agreement can be reached.

5. **Legal Implications**

- 5.1 A formal legal agreement may be required between participating local authorities if a merger can be agreed

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

- 6.1 Consultation with other West Midlands authorities will be undertaken.

7. **Equality Implications**

- 7.1 A full equality impact assessment will be carried out.

PORTFOLIO: Regeneration

Directorate and Service Area: Economy and Environment – Regeneration and Development

Option: Stop Cleansing after Markets / Collecting and Disposing of Market Traders Waste

Saving Reference: 68

1. Financial Proposal

	Net Saving		
	2017 / 2018 £	2018 / 2019 £	2019 / 2020 £
Estimated Saving	175,000	0	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	175,000	0	0
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. Description of the Proposal

- 2.1 Clean & Green currently undertake the cleansing of Walsall, Bloxwich and Willenhall markets on behalf of the Markets Service for a cost of £175,000 a year. This includes the removal of market trader's waste e.g. packaging and leftover produce as well as removal of litter in an around the markets area and occasional cleaning of the waste containers. The cost includes staff, transport and waste disposal charges. The savings proposal is to cease this service.
- 2.2 From 1 April 2017, market traders would be responsible for the removal of their own waste unless they paid for a trade waste service.

3. Implications Associated With Proposal

3.1 **Corporate Plan**

Safe, Resilient and Prospering Communities: This proposal may lead to an increase in litter which could affect community pride.

3.2 **Customers**

This is not a statutory function. Market traders may incur cost in removing their waste themselves whether through a trade waste agreement or by some other means. An alternative would be for the service to continue but traders asked to contribute to the costs. This has been ruled out because the income raised would not cover the cost of the service.

3.3 **Employees / Staffing**

Two members of staff are employed to provide this service on an agency basis.

3.4 **Partners**

There are no partners involved in providing this service.

3.5 **Economic Implications**

If the cost of making alternative arrangements is too high for market traders they may decide to cease trading or trade in another area. A smaller market may have a negative impact on other town and district centre businesses.

3.6 **Environmental Implications**

Litter may increase if market traders don't dispose of their waste properly which would have a negative impact on the environment.

3.7 **Health and wellbeing implications**

The proposal will have no impact on health and wellbeing.

3.8 **Other Council Services**

Clean and Green will be affected by this proposal as they provide the waste and cleansing service on behalf of the Markets Service. They also have responsibility for general litter collection across the borough.

3.9 **Procurement / Social Value Implications**

There are no implications arising from this proposal.

4. **Associated Risks / Opportunities**

- There is a risk that this proposal could increase the amount of litter and even fly tipping in and around the market areas. Market Service staff will need to ensure this doesn't happen and try to identify any offenders.
- There is a risk that if traders incur additional expense in removing their own waste they may decide to trade elsewhere or not at all. This will have an impact on the income of the Markets Service and may have a detrimental effect of the viability of the town and district centres. There is little the Markets Service can do about this as regular traders only need to give short notice period to quit and by their nature, casual traders no notice at all.

5. **Legal Implications**

- 5.1 There is no legal requirement for the council to remove market trader's waste. There are no legal consequences for the council arising from the proposal.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

- 6.1 Consultation will be undertaken as appropriate.

7. **Equality Implications**

- 7.1 A full equality impact assessment is being carried out.

PORTFOLIO: Regeneration

Directorate and Service Area: Economy and Environment - Regeneration & Development

Option: Increase District Centre Market Fees

Saving Reference: 69

1. Financial Proposal

Net Saving			
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	35,000	0	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	35,000	0	0
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. Description of the Proposal

- 2.1 To increase fees in the district centre markets (Bloxwich and Willenhall) by £5 a stall. This is expected to increase income to the Council by £35,000 a year. Fees have been frozen since 2005.

3. Implications Associated With Proposal

3.1 Corporate Plan

A Robust, Flourishing Economy: This proposal may have a negative impact if traders go out of business due to the increase in fees.

3.2 Customers

This proposal may have a negative impact on traders if they can no longer afford to trade because of an increase in fees. This could make the markets and therefore the district centres less attractive to shoppers and may have a knock on effect on the viability of other district centre businesses.

3.3 Employees / Staffing

None.

3.4 Partners

There are no partners affected by this proposal.

3.5 **Economic Implications**

If market traders feel the increase is unaffordable they may decide to cease trading or trade in another area. A smaller market may have a negative impact on other town and district centre businesses.

3.6 **Environmental Implications**

None.

3.7 **Health and wellbeing implications**

The proposal will have no impact on health and wellbeing.

3.8 **Other Council Services**

There are no implications on other council services.

3.9 **Procurement / Social Value Implications**

There are no implications arising from this proposal.

4. **Associated Risks / Opportunities**

- There is a risk that if traders feel the increase is unaffordable they may decide to trade elsewhere or not at all. This will have an impact on the income of the Markets Service and may have a detrimental effect of the viability of the town and district centres. There is little the Markets Service can do about this as regular traders only need to give short notice period to quit and by their nature, casual traders no notice at all.
- There is a risk that the full £35,000 saving may not be achieved if a large number of district centre market traders decide not to trade in our markets or reduce the number of stalls they hire. The proposed saving allows for a small element of this.

5. **Legal Implications**

- 5.1 There is no legal duty and obligation on the council concerning delivery of this proposal and no legal consequences for the council arising from the proposal.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

- 6.1 Consultation will be undertaken as appropriate.

7. **Equality Implications**

- 7.1 A full equality impact assessment will be carried out.

PORTFOLIO: Regeneration

Directorate and Service Area: Economy and Environment - Regeneration & Development

Option: Cessation of Landscape Service

Saving Reference: 70

1. Financial Proposal

Net Saving			
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	40,000	0	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	40,000	0	0
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. Description of the Proposal

- 2.1 This proposal involves cessation of the landscape service as there is insufficient design work to sustain the service. The council will no longer have an in-house landscape design and project management service and will be unable to provide professional advice on landscapes matters.

3. Implications Associated With Proposal

3.1 **Corporate Plan**

There is no impact on the delivery of the council's priorities set out in the Corporate Plan.

3.2 **Customers**

This is not a statutory function and will have little direct impact on our customers.

3.3 **Employees / Staffing**

There will be an impact on one employee. The council's procedures would be followed.

3.4 **Partners**

There are no partners involved in providing this service.

3.5 **Economic Implications**

None.

3.6 **Environmental Implications**

Without the advice of a professional landscape architect on the landscape elements of planning applications, less than satisfactory landscaping may be provided on new developments leading to a poorer quality environment. However, advice can be provided from private landscape architects.

3.7 **Health and wellbeing implications**

The proposal will have no impact on health and wellbeing.

3.8 **Other Council Services**

The council will no longer be able to provide an in house landscape design and project management service. This is currently provided to a number of council services on a fee basis. Where this service is required, the council will be required to purchase this from elsewhere, potentially at a higher cost.

The development management service will no longer have internal access to professional landscape advice in respect of planning applications. The development management service will need to use their own judgement and expertise or buy in external advice for more complex applications.

3.9 **Procurement / Social Value Implications**

There are no implications arising from this proposal.

4. **Associated Risks / Opportunities**

- There is a risk that buying in professional landscape advice may be more expensive than the in house service which charges fees at a discounted rate. External advice will only be sought if the project budget allows for this.
- There is a risk that without professional landscape input into the planning application process, less than satisfactory landscaping will be provided on new developments leading to a poorer quality environment. The development management service will need to build up their own expertise in landscape matters.

5. **Legal Implications**

5.1 There are no legal consequences for the council arising from the proposal.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

6.1 Consultation will be undertaken if appropriate.

.

7. **Equality Implications**

7.1 A full equality impact assessment is not required.

PORTFOLIO: Social Care

Directorate and Service Area: Change and Governance - Money, Home, Job

Option: Combined Welfare Rights service, Housing Advice & Crisis Support

Saving Reference: 74

1. Financial Proposal

	Net Saving		
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	200,000	0	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	200,000	0	0
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. Description of the Proposal

- 2.1 It is proposed that funding to support Welfare Rights provision to local residents is reduced. A restructure of housing advice, crisis support and welfare and debt advice services would be undertaken. Analysis has revealed that a significant volume of the demand for housing advice, crisis support and from homeless households includes those with financial issues (where debt advice and related support can be key to helping them achieve a sustainable future). The services will therefore be merged to deliver £200,000 of savings.
- 2.2 The service is non-statutory (with the exception of the statutory duties owed towards homeless households currently carried out by the Housing Support Team). The statutory obligations towards homeless households are contained within the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002). Under this legislation the council is required to offer advice and assistance to all household's that are homeless or at risk of homelessness and provide alternative accommodation to vulnerable households deemed to owe the full statutory duty under the legislation.

3. Implications Associated With Proposal

3.1 Corporate Plan

The front-line services that are being impacted by the proposal contribute towards delivering the following corporate priorities:

- Lifelong health, wealth and happiness
- Safe, resilient and prospering communities
- Sustainable change and improvement for all

- Our communities are engaged and sustainable.

Reducing the investment in these services could impact upon the wealth and happiness of local people. The Housing Support Service directly contributed towards meeting the council's corporate priorities by preventing 2,914 households from becoming homeless (by either supporting them to remain in their own homes or moving into alternative accommodation in 2015/16). The Council's Welfare Rights Service also assisted by helping households to gain additional income via benefits of £8,718,270.35 (over 10 months) with the average benefit gain per client being £3,205.25 per year. A further £2,442,169.40 of debt was managed by the team on behalf of clients (545 cases).

Reduced investment in these services could make the community less sustainable. Academic research reports that when households are in significant poverty or under financial pressure, there is an increased chance of civil unrest, and less community cohesion (as different groups compete for limited resources).

3.2 Customers

The proposal predominately impacts on non-statutory services, with the exception of the statutory duties owed towards homeless households, which are contained within the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002). Under this legislation the council is required to offer advice and assistance to all homeless households and provide accommodation to vulnerable households owed the full statutory duty. The council will prioritise the remaining internal investment in Welfare Rights towards supporting vulnerable households at risk of homelessness and other residents who without support are likely to end up in further crisis (thus placing increased demand on statutory social care services).

In developing the proposal, consideration was given to commissioning out all welfare rights provision. It was felt that having internal provision assisted other professionals from social care, partnerships, and housing, to directly access welfare support for their vulnerable clients. It was recognised that efficiencies could be gained by professionals working more collaboratively and recording notes on the same software systems.

3.3 Employees / Staffing

Should the proposal be taken forward, 7 posts will be subject to the council's redundancy policy.

3.4 Partners

A reduction in house capacity will push service users to other partners.

3.5 Economic Implications

Reducing welfare advice provision may impact on the frequency of benefits claimed by local people. Households may have less money to spend in local shops and businesses.

3.6 Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications.

3.7 Health and wellbeing implications

The proposal will impact on services that directly support the council to deliver the following Marmot principles:

- Give every child the best start in life
- Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives
- Create fair employment and good work for all
- Ensure a healthy standard of living for all
- Create and develop healthy and sustainable communities
- Strengthen the role and impact of ill-health prevention

It is hoped that retaining some front-line welfare assistance will provide the safeguards needed to protect the most vulnerable clients. Increasing the information available to clients via the website and offering other self-help tools, more able customers will be able to increase their capabilities and have greater control over their own finances.

3.8 Other Council Services

The services impacted by the proposals currently receive a large number of referrals from Adult Social Care and Early Help. The proposal seeks to retain a smaller in-house Welfare Advice Service to support the most vulnerable residents. It is hoped that by competitively tendering some welfare advice, providers will be encouraged to deliver greater efficiencies, and deliver more for less. Initial consultation with internal stakeholders has taken place. Further consultation will be required with key operational professionals to identify the specific roles that should be retained internally and develop a specification for the commissioning process.

3.9 Procurement / Social Value Implications

None.

4. **Associated Risks / Opportunities**

Opportunities

- Delivers savings for the council;
- Merging of housing, crisis support and welfare advice will reduce duplication in effort and improve efficiency;
- Customers capable of helping themselves will have access to 'self-help' tools, building their capability and giving them greater control over their finances.

Risks

- Residents may fail to claim all the benefits they are entitled to;
- Residents will have less money to spend in local shops and businesses;
- More customers may approach the Council at risk of homelessness (due to failure to claim benefits / inability to access help with debts);
- Waiting lists for welfare advice / debts could go up;

Mitigation

- Remaining internal resources will be focused towards providing assistance to the most vulnerable customers;
- Information on the website and Self-help tools will be developed to encourage more able customers to resolve their own problems;

5. **Legal Implications**

5.1 None.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

6.1 The following consultation is planned. Public and partner agency consultation will be undertaken via face to face consultation, telephone surveys, focus groups with key professionals and targeted survey / correspondence.

7. **Equality Implications**

7.1 A full equality impact assessment will be carried out.

PORTFOLIO: Social Care

Directorate and Service Area: Change and Governance - Money, Home, Job

Option: Closure of Banking Hall in Civic Centre

Saving Reference: 75

1. Financial Proposal

Net Saving			
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	100,000	0	0
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	100,000	0	0
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. Description of the Proposal

- 2.1 This proposal is to consider closure of the banking hall in the civic centre, which is a non-statutory service. This would be delivered by the giving of notice to all internal and external stakeholders who currently use the facilities to make payments or collect cash. Public / partner consultation will be required. A minimum of six months notice for third party contractual purposes will be needed. Internal stakeholders using the service will need to promote alternative arrangements for collecting funds from customers (such as direct debits, bank transfers, card payments via telephones, Paypoint or Payzone in shops).
- 2.2 Public / partner consultation could have an impact on the closure date if ceasing the service was the intended outcome. Due to third party contractual arrangements a minimum six months notice period to be given before ceasing the service. It is therefore anticipated that the Banking Hall would close in October 2017 (although a phased approach could be taken where the number of staff or opening times are reduced). It may be possible to reduce this timescale subject to negotiation with WATMOS.

3. Implications Associated With Proposal

3.1 Corporate Plan

Sustainable Change and Improvement for all: there is a potential loss of income for the council if suitable alternative payment options are not put in place by all internal stakeholders and promoted.

3.2 Customers

There is a potential for vulnerable customers currently using the face to face service to become more marginalised and / or fall into debt if suitable alternative payment options are not put in place.

3.3 Employees / Staffing

Four full time equivalent employees would be impacted.

3.4 Partners

The Banking Hall currently takes payments on behalf of WATMOS (Registered Housing Provider). There is a potential for there to be a reduction in rental income if a suitable alternative payment option is not put in place.

3.5 Economic Implications

There is a potential loss in income to the Council if alternative payment options are not promoted / put in place.

3.6 Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications.

3.7 Health and wellbeing implications

The closure of the banking hall will reduce cost to the council, which will enable more money to be directed towards funding activities that directly meet the Marmot objectives.

3.8 Other Council Services

The following internal partners will also be impacted and will need to make alternative arrangements for taking cash payments: adult social care, registrars, clean and green, and parking enforcement.

There is a potential for one-off costs for internal stakeholders who need to inform customers and make alternative arrangements for taking payments (this will be more fully explored during the formal consultation process).

3.9 Procurement / Social Value Implications

None.

4. **Associated Risks / Opportunities**

4.1 **Opportunities**

Reviewing existing payment options across the whole council may deliver greater consistency between departments and provide a better service to all customers.

4.2 **Risks**

Potential for loss of income to the council if suitable alternative payment options are not put in place. This risk will be mitigated by:

- Carrying out robust consultation with all stakeholders;
- Promoting the closure of the banking hall to ensure all customers are fully informed of the alternatives in place. It is proposed to undertake a range of low cost marketing approaches to advise residents of the shift in terms of payment for example with annual council tax billing and letters that are scheduled annually for other purposes for example, but not limited to, correspondence with residents enquiring about Disabled Facility Grants, Housing Benefits and Free School Meals.

5. **Legal Implications**

5.1 None.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

6.1 In regard to considering future options there are legitimate reasons to fully explore closing the Banking Hall in light of the significant financial constraints the council is facing. The following information has been made available for consideration:

- Costs associated with running the Banking Hall
- Falling use of the banking hall (as Walsall Housing Group no longer use the facility, and increasing customers move towards alternative electronic payment routes)
- Results from consultation previously undertaken with staff and other stakeholders

6.2 Consultation with internal and external partners, and staff consultation is planned, via: direct written correspondence with all external partners, workshops with staff, and face to face customer consultation at the Banking Hall reception / within the Civic Centre.

7. **Equality Implications**

7.1 An equality impact assessment will be carried out.

PORTFOLIO: Social Care

Directorate and Service Area: Change and Governance, Money Home Job

Option: Reduction in Grant to the Citizens Advice Bureau

Saving Reference: 76

1. Financial Proposal

Net Saving			
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
	£	£	£
Estimated Saving	132,458	45,966	66,191
Revenue Investment	0	0	0
Net Saving	132,458	45,966	66,191
Capital investment	0	0	0

2. Description of the Proposal

- 2.1 The proposal is to reduce the funding to the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB). The CAB provides a valuable service to support the population of Walsall delivering a variety of services ranging from welfare advice to employment law advice. This proposal reduces the contribution from the council in 2016/17 (by £75,000 from Public Health and by £57,458 from Money, Home, Job). From 2018/19 the service will be commissioned rather than grant funded and an efficiency saving will be built into the contract of any future supplier, of £45,966 in 2018/19 and £66,191 in 2019/20. The focus on any re-design will be on providing help and advice on-line and building more resilient residents and communities.
- 2.2 There are no property, capital or revenue investments required in the short term although it should be noted that CAB benefit from property support from the council. This service is non-statutory.

3. Implications Associated With Proposal

3.1 Corporate Plan

The variety of services provided by the CAB has an impact on the corporate priorities, Safe, Resilient and Prospering Communities and Lifelong Health, Wealth and Happiness. The reduction in funding if it cannot be replaced or efficiencies made will lead to a reduction in help to the residents of Walsall.

3.2 Customers

This is a non-statutory function. This proposal alongside a proposed cut in welfare support and advice provided by the council will have an impact on residents of Walsall. Residents and communities will need to become more self-reliant in order to ensure they gain appropriate support and advice through different channels.

3.3 **Employees / Staffing**

There is no impact on the council workforce.

3.4 **Partners**

CAB are trusted partners in delivery of support and advice to the residents of Walsall. The challenge, driven by the current financial position of the council is that alternative sources of funding or efficiencies in service delivery need to be found to offset the reduction in funding.

3.5 **Economic Implications**

There will be an implication on the economy of the borough as a reduction in income driven by a lack of benefit maximisation will result in reduced spending within the borough.

3.6 **Environmental Implications**

There are no environmental implications.

3.7 **Health and wellbeing implications**

The impact of this proposal, if accepted, will be on the health and wellbeing of some of the most vulnerable people in Walsall, as potentially more people will find themselves unable to climb out of debt or find themselves unable to find timely sources of advice and guidance.

3.8 **Other Council Services**

There are no implications.

3.9 **Procurement / Social Value Implications**

There are no implications.

4. **Associated Risks / Opportunities**

4.1 The reduction of available help will have a direct impact on benefits maximisation of the most vulnerable people of Walsall unless people become more resilient or funding cannot be replaced.

5. **Legal Implications**

5.1 There are no implications.

6. **Consultation and Customer feedback**

6.1 The CAB in 2015/16 had nearly 40,000 contacts dealing with nearly 50,000 issues. The council will seek to consult with service users and the CAB directly. The council will consult with other service providers who deliver similar help to the residents of Walsall.

7. **Equality Implications**

7.1 A full equality impact assessment is being carried out.