

Appendix 2 - Budget Scrutiny Task and Finish Group Recommendations – Responses

Saving titles are as at the dates of the Budget Scrutiny Task & Finish Group sessions and as such some savings titles may have since been refined.

Item	Saving Number	Saving Title	Directorate	Recommendations	Response
1	All	N/A	All	All savings must have clear Delivery Plans, with arrangements to hold budget holders across the organisation at different levels accountable to the delivery of savings and with a Cabinet Member assigned against each saving. Key milestones towards the delivery of the savings should be included, along with risk mitigation, and governance measures including consultation requirements, VR / CR requirements and service impact. Measures for monitoring and reporting to O&S Committees must be put in place.	Agreed. Delivery Plans have been created for each saving proposal. These include details of the Senior Accountable Officer, the Key Milestones and Risk Management Plan.
2	All	N/A	All	The Delivery Plans should also set out clearly where the saving type is identified as efficiency, what systems / processes will be put in place to deliver the efficiencies without reducing the level of services.	Agreed. Delivery Plans have been created for each saving proposal. These include details of the Key Milestones, the Objectives and Deliverables as well as the Dependencies and any potential consequential impacts.
3	All	N/A	All	The Budget report to Cabinet and City Council will identify the savings proposals that will be subject to statutory consultation and assurance is needed that these will comply with legal requirements. This needs	Agreed. Delivery Plans include Timescales and Key Milestones that will indicate whether a public consultation is required. Accompanying the Budget Report

Item	Saving Number	Saving Title	Directorate	Recommendations	Response
				to be reflected in the timescales for delivery of the savings.	will be access to the Equality Impact Assessments that have been produced for applicable savings proposals, these also confirm legal requirements.
4	All	N/A	All	Assurance and legal advice are needed that the budget consultation, including consultation with residents of Birmingham and others, regarding the Council Tax rate will comply with legal requirements and will be both digital and non-digital.	Agreed. The budget consultation was undertaken in December 2023 and January 2024 and was reviewed in advance by Legal Services.
5	All	N/A	All	There should be clear communication on redundancy processes including training for managers to ensure a fair and consistent approach to implementing redundancies.	Agreed. People Services are managing the redundancy process and supporting Directorates and managers.
6	All	N/A	All	There should be clear policy on long term vacant posts – how these are declared and process to decide to retain vacant post / recruit / take as saving.	Agreed. People Services are managing the guidance provided to Directorates on the maintenance of their workforce and succession planning. A workforce strategy is being developed to address this at a whole Council level.
7	All	N/A	All	A review of the Council Corporate Risk register is undertaken following agreement of budget and MTFP at the February meeting of the City Council, with a senior	Agreed. This work has already commenced, and a new lead for Risk Management has been assigned within the Council. This

Item	Saving Number	Saving Title	Directorate	Recommendations	Response
				officer and Cabinet Member assigned to each risk to ensure ownership of these risks.	will include refreshing the Risk Management Strategy.
8	All	N/A	All	An impact assessment of the savings proposals on the community and voluntary sector is undertaken to assess the cumulative impact for communities in Birmingham.	Agreed. Equality Impact Assessments have been produced for applicable savings proposals.
9	All	N/A	All	Each OSC receives a report following the approval of the Budget and MTFP on the implications of the budget and savings on the services within their terms of reference. In future years, an impact assessment of proposals should be reported to scrutiny in advance of the approval of the budget.	Agreed. An OSC work programme is being developed to provide updates on the savings relevant to each Scrutiny committee throughout the 2024/25 financial year.
10	All	N/A	All	Each OSC to receive a report every two months during the 2024/2025 financial year to update the Committee on the delivery of savings and service implications.	Agreed. An OSC work programme is being developed to provide updates on the savings relevant to each Scrutiny committee throughout the 2024/25 financial year to align with updates to Cabinet.
11	All	N/A	All	An Equality Impact Assessment is undertaken on the combined impact of savings on vulnerable groups and those with protected characteristics, and in future years shared with elected members prior to the Budget meeting of the Council.	Agreed. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken on the combined impact of the proposed savings and will be shared as part of the draft budget report to Cabinet and then to City Council.

Item	Saving Number	Saving Title	Directorate	Recommendations	Response
12	All	N/A	All	In the budget presented to Council, there should be details of the use of short-term grant funding (e.g., Public Health, CAZ and UKSPF) to reduce the budget gap to inform Elected Members of whether a 'cliff edge' scenario is an issue in 2 or 3 years.	Agreed. The Delivery Plans for savings proposals that utilise short-term grant funding will include a Risk Management Plan, of which short-term grant funding has been included as a risk.
13	All	N/A	All	A review of contracts and contract management is undertaken to ensure that the council achieves best value from contracts and that contracts are renegotiated where necessary, particularly where several contracts are held across different services / directorates with the same provider. This work needs to ensure a complete, transparent and accurate contract register is produced, including details relating to when re-procurements need to commence and with contract start and end dates. As required by the Local Government Transparency Code, the relevant information should be published.	Agreed. As part of the savings proposals all Directorates have been looking at their contracts to identify savings. There is also a cross-cutting savings proposal for procurement contract savings.
14	All	N/A	All	A multitude of income generation opportunities should be explored, e.g., dropped kerbs, lane rental, commercial events, Shelforce, debt collection, hotel tax, increase use of direct debits – if residents are already using Direct Debits for some	Agreed. As part of the savings proposals all Directorates have been looking at their income opportunities to identify savings and where appropriate these have been included.

Item	Saving Number	Saving Title	Directorate	Recommendations	Response
				services they are more likely to take up for other services.	Opportunities are also being looked at for 2025/26.
15	106	Service Re-design and Restructure	Place, Prosperity & Sustainability	As Members were concerned about the level of risk given the scale of the savings to be delivered, the delivery plan for this saving should not only set out a timetable for the restructure of the directorate but also the impact on services of this restructure. Also, assurances are needed that there will be capability and capacity following the restructure to deliver asset sales in the timescales required.	Agreed. This has been included in the Delivery Plan within the Risk Management Plan section.
16	107	Reduction in Central Administrative Buildings (CAB) Premises	Place, Prosperity & Sustainability	The Savings Risk identified is high. Consideration should be given to maximising the use of the Council House and the Council House Extension as a location for staff. The implementation of these savings should consider Savings Proposal 193: Transformation of NAIS and Community Libraries which, if implemented, will reduce the number of community libraries.	Agreed. A cross-Council view on capital assets is being considered as part of this process.
17	107	Reduction in Central Administrative Buildings (CAB) Premises	Place, Prosperity & Sustainability	Where services vacate a building prior to sale, the financial implications of ensuring safety and security of the building must be considered.	Agreed. These costs have been flagged in the Delivery Plan.
18	107	Reduction in Central Administrative	Place, Prosperity & Sustainability	Where a leased building is sold, the loss of income because of the asset sale must be reflected in the budget.	Agreed. This has been reflected as a loss of income in the proposed budget for 2024/25.

Item	Saving Number	Saving Title	Directorate	Recommendations	Response
		Buildings (CAB) Premises			
19	107	Reduction in Central Administrative Buildings (CAB) Premises	Place, Prosperity & Sustainability	Elected Members should be informed of / consulted on sale of assets within their ward prior to public announcement.	Agreed. The Director of Place, Prosperity & Sustainability will ensure this recommendation is implemented.
20	109	Income Generation	Place, Prosperity & Sustainability	The Savings Risk is high. Additional income could be generated by charging developers for advice before the pre-application process.	Noted. This saving has been detailed in to two Delivery Plans, Increased Planning Fee Income, and Commercial Rent Reviews to provide additional detail and address the risks involved.
21	214	Corporate Landlord Operational Property Savings	Place, Prosperity & Sustainability	Consideration should be given to bringing forward some of these savings into 2024/25.	Noted. This will be considered as part of the Delivery Plan.
22	126	Review of Care Centre Model	Adult Social Care	There should be clear criteria to determine which Care Centres will be closed including the weighting given to service user needs and property value / condition.	Agreed. This will be included in the review and consultation with regards to the four Care Centres as per the Delivery Plan.
23	130	Review of the Day Centre Model	Adult Social Care	It should be clear whether these decisions will be based on value / condition of property or service user needs and how the criteria will be balanced.	Noted. This will be included in the review and consultation with regards to the Day Centres as per the Delivery Plan.
24	193	Transformation of NAIS and Community Libraries	Adult Social Care	As there is a concern that the closure of library buildings will limit the future opportunity to relocate services to library buildings, the Delivery Risk identified for this saving is low and does not reflect the	Agreed. The Delivery Plan sets out how these risks can be mitigated.

Item	Saving Number	Saving Title	Directorate	Recommendations	Response
				challenges of judicial review and / or trade union action that may emerge.	
25	89 & 90	Services for Young People and Commissioning of Early Help Contracts	Children & Families	There is a risk of judicial review and / or trade union action which could delay delivery. There needs to be an assessment of the costs to the Council of any such delay.	Agreed. This is being considered as part of ongoing Trade Union discussions, and statutory consultations required.
26	89 & 90	Services for Young People and Commissioning of Early Help Contracts	Children & Families	Assurance is required that savings proposals on Services for Young People and Commissioning of Early Help Contracts have taken full account of the Council's statutory duty under Section 68b of the Education & Skills Act 2008; Section 507b of the Education Act 1996; duties under the Crime and Disorder Reduction Act, Serious Youth Violence Duty; Equality Act 2010; Human Rights Act 1998, and Children's Act 2000, and in full cognisance of its safeguarding responsibilities and duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.	Agreed. This has been considered as part of our legal obligations in terms of this saving.
27	89	Services for Young People	Children & Families	Assurance is required that the loss in income from Youth Centres and including that generated by the youth service and through external funding has been considered.	Agreed. This has been reflected as a loss of income in the proposed budget for 2024/25.
28	89 & 90	Services for Young People and Commissioning of Early Help Contracts	Children & Families	A full stakeholder assessment is required given the significant implications to statutory partners including police, youth justice and NHS (especially mental health	Agreed. Stakeholders are being carefully considered in communications and engagement

Item	Saving Number	Saving Title	Directorate	Recommendations	Response
				services), education sector and the voluntary sector.	strategies for specific savings and the overarching savings process.
29	89	Services for Young People	Children & Families	Assurances are needed that these savings proposals align with broader policy goals, and strategies and priorities for children and young people, both locally and nationally, regarding youth services and knife crime prevention.	Agreed. As part of a revisit of the original proposal, there is now £1m available to help address the issues of youth violence and knife crime.
30	89	Services for Young People	Children & Families	Assurances are required that other funding options have been explored for youth services particularly from Public Health.	Agreed. No funding for this is currently available from Public Health but the saving as originally put forward has been reduced by £1m in the final form.
31	89 & 90	Services for Young People and Commissioning of Early Help Contracts	Children & Families	Assurances are required that the impact of cutting these services on the demand for other statutory provision has been assessed within the Directorate and BCT – given Savings Proposals 185: Reduction of BCT contract and Savings Proposal 219: Children’s Services efficiencies.	Noted. Work is being delivered closely between the City Council and BCT to consider the impact of savings.
32	89 & 90	Services for Young People and Commissioning of Early Help Contracts	Children & Families	Full and proper consultation must be undertaken given that Savings Proposals 89 and 90 will likely disproportionately impact young people from global majority communities, those from low-income families and those who are already excluded – i.e., disabled and marginalised children and young people.	Agreed. This will be completed as part of the consultation for these savings.

Item	Saving Number	Saving Title	Directorate	Recommendations	Response
33	89 & 90	Services for Young People and Commissioning of Early Help Contracts	Children & Families	Equality Impact Assessments must be undertaken given that the savings proposals will be likely to disproportionately impact children and families who are already disadvantaged.	Agreed. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken where appropriate.
34	93	Children's Travel Contracts	Children & Families	An assurance is required that the re-procurement of these contracts will be completed in time to deliver savings from April 2024 and that there is provider capacity to deliver the service, and whether the anticipated contract price takes into account past increases in fuel costs and inflation. Furthermore, the Delivery Risk of 4 is low.	Agreed. Re-procurement is already underway and therefore on track to deliver the required savings. Provider capacity is included as a risk on the Delivery Plan with a mitigation strategy.
35	146, 147, 148, 149 & 150	Children & Young People Travel Service	Children & Families	There is a risk of judicial review or trade union action which could delay delivery of savings. There must be full and proper consultation with parents and service users before implementation of change and an assessment of the costs to the Council of any such delay.	Agreed. Risks and mitigations have been included in the relevant Delivery Plans.
36	150	Review of Non-Statutory Transport Packages	Children & Families	Consideration must be given to the disruption that will be experienced by some 16–18-year-old young people for 2 years, some of whom may have SEND needs.	Agreed. This is considered in the impacts of this saving proposals included in the Delivery Plan.

Item	Saving Number	Saving Title	Directorate	Recommendations	Response
37	14	School Crossing Patrols (Non-Statutory service)	City Operations	Delivered through CAZ Funding for 3 years. Assurance is required that this service will meet the requirements of the CAZ funding and that a memorandum of understanding / grant agreement confirm the outcomes required, monitoring arrangements and exit strategy.	Agreed. Birmingham CAZ team has confirmed this is a suitable use of funding.
38	15	Local Engineering (Non-Statutory Service)	City Operations	The new delivery model must retain the function currently provided by the Local Engineer role to liaise with Elected Members to respond to ward issues.	Agreed. Elected Members can utilise normal contact routes with Directorates for support with ward issues.
39	16	Dropped kerbs	City Operations	Contrary to the view from Highways, the Task & Finish Group was of the view that additional income could be generated through enforcement of illegal dropped kerbs and damage to pavements because of house renovations / building work. Also, enforcement on these issues would reduce the risk of insurance claims against the Council. Further consideration of these matters would be welcomed.	Noted. This will be considered as part of the proposed transformation of City Operations.
40	16	Dropped kerbs	City Operations	Consideration should be given to income generation from Lane Rental as part of the Streetworks Permitting Scheme following the one-year review.	Agreed. Lane rental is something that the City Council is considering, and a feasibility study will be undertaken.
41	19	Reduction in PFI Management Budget	City Operations	Further consideration may need to be given to this proposal following the outcome of the Council's Judicial Review challenge.	Agreed. This will follow the outcome of the Judicial Review.

Item	Saving Number	Saving Title	Directorate	Recommendations	Response
42	49	Amend Community Safety Team	City Operations	Concerns from partners should be included in the Council's Risk Register.	Agreed. This is included within the risks in the Delivery Plan.
43	52	Increase Leisure Fees by 5%	City Operations	Consideration should be given to the cumulative impact of increased costs for residents, added to with the Cross Cutting Savings Proposal 228: Fees and Charges – further Savings which propose a minimum increase in fees of 10%. An increase in charges above 5% may prevent people from using the service, which may have implications for health and wellbeing, or choosing to use services beyond Birmingham.	Agreed. Savings proposal 228 is a proposal that impacts 2025/26, and this will be considered in future budgets.
44	56	Reduction of grant to The Active Wellbeing Society (TAWS)	City Operations	Consideration should be given to the capacity of TAWS to deliver on a reduced grant and their ability to take on facilities that BCC can no longer afford to operate.	Agreed. This will form part of the consultation with TAWS.
45	61	Cultural Organisation Grant Reductions	City Operations	The implications of grant cuts to BMusic and the long-term viability of Symphony Hall and Town Hall should be considered by the Group Company Governance committee.	Agreed. This will form part of the consultation with BMusic.
46	62	Cease Funding for Cultural Projects	City Operations	Consideration should be given to seeking sponsorship from the private sector.	Agreed. Organisations can explore private funding for cultural events.
47	64, 67, 69 & 168	Various	City Operations	Following the extensive reductions in services focussed on neighbourhood / ward support, remaining neighbourhood / ward funding within directorates should be	Agreed. The Director of City Operations will ensure Members are kept informed on funding to address Ward priorities.

Item	Saving Number	Saving Title	Directorate	Recommendations	Response
				identified to Elected Members to ensure that the funding available is addressing ward priorities.	
48	70	Changes to Business Improvement District Service (BIDs)	City Operations	There should be ongoing engagement with partners to understand the implications of savings proposals for BIDs both in the City Centre and smaller BIDs beyond the City Centre, to ensure their viability going forward and that the city retains the added value benefits that BIDs provide. Consideration should also be given to the implications for the development of new BIDs.	Agreed. Engagement with BIDs is ongoing as part of the savings proposal.
49	70	Changes to Business Improvement District Service (BIDs)	City Operations	The Council should again explore the implementation of a hotel tax for the City Centre in partnership with the BIDs.	Agreed. This will be considered for future budgets.
50	163	Increase Public Health Funding of Wellbeing Leisure Centres	City Operations	Members should be kept informed of changes in services in their wards.	Agreed. The Director of City Operations will ensure Members are kept informed.
51	169	Cease Sport Development Function	City Operations	Consideration should be given to longer-term opportunities to introduce community facilities and upgrades.	Agreed. This will inform the Councils asset strategy.
52	26	Additional Garden Waste Income and Fee Increase	City Operations	Residents who currently use Direct Debits to pay council tax and who use the additional garden waste service should be offered the option to pay by Direct Debit.	Agreed. This will be considered for future years.

Item	Saving Number	Saving Title	Directorate	Recommendations	Response
53	29	Move to fortnightly residual waste (non-recyclable) collections and amend early starts	City Operations	Consideration should be given to bringing forward some savings to 2024/25 and whether there are additional savings that can be identified as part of the Waste Transformation Programme during 2025/26.	Noted. As part of planning for delivery in 2025/26 consideration will be given as to whether any savings can be brought forward.
54	29	Move to fortnightly residual waste (non-recyclable) collections and amend early starts	City Operations	As part of the re-design of waste services, greater use of the current vehicle fleet should be explored in the scheduling of collections – e.g., 2 rounds a day. The re-design should also consider service standards and compensation for missed garden waste collections. Currently compensation is paid if collections are missed on 3 consecutive weeks, but not 3 missed collections across the Spring – Winter period.	Noted. These will be investigated as part of the re-design.
55	30	Cease Bank Holiday collection	City Operations	Consideration should be given to the implications when fortnightly collections are introduced which could result possibly in a month between residual waste collections.	This saving has now been removed.
56	31	Introduce charging for car parking in parks	City Operations	Consideration should be given to other measure that may be required, e.g., introducing double yellow lines in road near parks and the implications this would have on costs and timescales.	Agreed. Traffic Regulation Orders for traffic restrictions on roads surrounding the parks will also be introduced and funded through the income generated.
57	24	Pest control – new charge for domestic rat treatments	City Operations	Consideration should be given to enabling households to share the cost of rat treatments.	Noted. This is to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Item	Saving Number	Saving Title	Directorate	Recommendations	Response
58	48	Review income from registration of Marriages	City Operations	Consideration should be given to income generation through merchandise sales within the Registrars Service.	Agreed. The service already sells crested certificates and presentation folders and will continue to explore further opportunities.
59	103	Voice Automation within Contact Centre Services	Council Management - Digital	The introduction of digitalisation / voice automation should be a priority but not through forced channel shift, with opportunities identified in other directorates to increase savings.	Agreed. This forms part of a key cross-cutting savings proposal.
60	175	5G Small Cells and LoRoWAN	Council Management - Digital	The income from this proposal should be benchmarked against other authorities and work taken forward with the West Midlands Combined Authority to maximise income from 5G.	Agreed. This research informs this saving.
61	175	5G Small Cells and LoRoWAN	Council Management - Digital	Assurance is needed that the income includes any costs of testing the structural integrity of the lamp posts.	Agreed. This has been considered in the delivery approach.
62	215	Business Improvement & Support Consolidation	Council Management - Digital	Consideration should be given to bringing some of these savings forward to 2024/25 and ensuring the workload for staff is deliverable.	Agreed. Saving Proposal #105 in 2024/25 is already included in plans to re-design the business support function.
63	220	HRA Review and joined up locality working between Housing and City Operations	City Housing	Consideration should be given to identifying further savings through efficiencies resulting from joined up working between Housing, Highways and Transport that would take out current duplication in service delivery. Members noted the risk rating of 10 which	Agreed. This work forms part of the 2025/26 savings proposal.

Item	Saving Number	Saving Title	Directorate	Recommendations	Response
				should be reduced as a result of effective working across the Corporate Leadership Team.	
64	226	HRA Investments and Valuations Team – Municipal Shops	City Housing	The suggested review was not considered as far-reaching as it could be, as numerous municipal shop precincts have a mixture of tenures and should be considered as opportunities for asset sale and redevelopment.	Agreed. Scope of proposed saving to be reviewed during 2024/25.
65	145	Legal Services – Scrutiny, Regulatory, Executive and Council arrangements	Council Management – Legal and Governance	The number of O & S Committees will be reduced from 8 to 7 with an ensuing SRA saving. Regulatory, Executive and Council arrangements and saving proposals will need to be formulated in the Cabinet response to these recommendations.	Agreed. This is being considered by Legal Services.
66	All	N/A	Cross Cutting	The Task and Finish Group was disappointed that work had not started earlier in the year when the budget gap was identified to develop proposals that would deliver greater cross cutting savings. A target should be set of £2m cross cutting savings to be delivered across 2024/25 and £5m (aggregate) across 2025/26 – figures arrived at following consultation appropriate officers.	Agreed. The budget process for the 2025/26 budget will commence immediately following the approval of the 2024/25 budget.
67	All	N/A	Cross Cutting	The Organisational Redesign work to reshape the Council’s services around citizens within available resources should	Agreed. This work will form part of the savings proposals for 2025/26. Acknowledging the fact

Item	Saving Number	Saving Title	Directorate	Recommendations	Response
				include the development of a workforce that is flexible and roles that can respond to current pressures. Members were concerned that the savings proposals across the Council that will reduce the workforce before this re-design work is undertaken may result in key skills being lost from the organisation.	that savings delivered in the 2024/25 financial year will have a bearing on the workforce prior to the whole Council Organisation Redesign work. However, savings must be delivered during the 2024/25 financial year, and Directors are mindful of the need to retain a workforce that will deliver the Council's statutory services and provide a basis from which organisational redesign can be achieved.
68	All	N/A	Cross Cutting	The Organisational Redesign should review the duplication of services / teams across and within directorates and rationalise these based business need where this will result in savings.	Agreed. This work will form part of the savings proposals for 2025/26. Recognising the foundational work that is required to achieve this saving, including assessments of duplication and potential consolidation opportunities, preparatory work is being completed during the 2024/25 financial year to assess the scale of the opportunity.

Item	Saving Number	Saving Title	Directorate	Recommendations	Response
69	All	N/A	Public Health	Assurance is needed that an analysis of the savings funded through the Public Health Ring Fenced Grant are a public health priority for the City and meet the priorities of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and / or the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.	Agreed. This has been assessed by the Director of Public Health in consultation with Office for Health Improvement and Disparities.
70	All	N/A	Public Health	The Memorandums of Understanding that are agreed for the use of the Ring-Fenced Public Health Grant for savings set out clear outcomes and robust arrangements must be in place to monitor and report these to ensure that evidence of outcomes is reported to OHID, to ensure the risk of funding having to be re-paid is reduced.	Agreed. This has been assessed by the Director of Public Health in consultation with Office for Health Improvement and Disparities.
71	All	N/A	Public Health	The risk of being required to repay the Ring-Fenced Public Health Grant used for savings must be included in the Council's Risk Register and a senior officer and Cabinet Member assigned to each risk.	Agreed. The Council's Risk Register will reflect this.