

Budget Consultation 2019+

November 2018

Strategic Services



Making a positive difference

 Birmingham
City Council

SAVING PROPOSAL FACTSHEET

SS101A1 19+ Reduction in translation costs at the corporate contact centre

Directorate: Strategic Services

Service: Customer Services

About this service

The corporate contact centre has for a number of years used the services of an external translation company to manage their translation services. When an advisor is currently on a call where the citizen is struggling to communicate in English, there is a process where we dial an interpreter to join the call (this is managed via dial-in codes for each service/language).

Proposed changes

The corporate contact centre has for a number of years used the services of an external translation company to manage their translation services. When an advisor is currently on a call where the citizen is struggling to communicate in English, there is a process where we dial an interpreter to join the call (this is managed via dial-in codes for each service/language). The most popular languages that we have required translation assistance for are as follows: Urdu, Bengali, Somali, Arabic, Romanian, Punjabi, Farsi (Persian), Tigrinya, Polish, Czech

We are proposing to use staff from the Contact Centre – replacing the current external service – for callers struggling to communicate in English. We have staff who can speak the following languages: Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, Bengali, French, Arabic, Portuguese, Polish, Spanish, Romanian, Mirpuri, Dutch, Somali, Swahili, Telugu and Tamil. This would result in a better service for citizens as the translation process can extend the length of the call and using internal translators would provide a more seamless experience.

The amount currently spent on the service and the proposed reduction is shown below.

Total Spend	Income 18/19	Net Spend	Saving in 19/20	Saving in 20/21	Saving in 21/22	Saving in 22/23
£16.239m	(£5.848m)	£10.391m	(£0.040m)	(£0.040m)	(£0.040m)	(£0.040m)

What would this mean?

This will reduce the cost of using a translator and also reduce the average handling time of the call. We will still continue to use the services of the translation company as and when required as there are still some languages that we do not have speakers for. There will also be occasions where a citizen who has difficulty speaking English will not necessarily get through to a native speaker, therefore on these occasions we would also use an external translator.

We will try to reduce the impact by

There will be no impact as we will always be able to either communicate with the citizen directly in their language or access a translator when required.

SAVING PROPOSAL FACTSHEET

SS101B 19+ Channel shift call reduction

Directorate: Strategic Services

Service: Customer Services

About this service

The customer services team delivers the council's corporate contact centre, which is the front door of the council for 19 services and receives 2 million telephone calls and 65,000 emails each year from citizens needing to access council services. The contact centre is highly skilled in delivering an efficient service, with the management structure ensuring staff are adequately trained and coached to deliver a high quality service to our citizens.

Proposed changes

With the implementation of the council's new online account (BRUM), by the end of 2018/19 it will be easier for citizens to transact with us online without the need for a telephone call for most aspects of the following services Parks, Anti Social Behaviour, Highways, Environmental Health, Waste Management, Council Tax, Housing Repairs and Housing Benefits services.

This business case is proposing a radical move to support greater channel shift by introducing a signposting process. We would signpost all citizens to the website, except those identified as vulnerable who call the contact centre.

The amount currently spent on the service and the proposed reduction is shown below.

Total Spend	Income 18/19	Net Spend	Saving in 19/20	Saving in 20/21	Saving in 21/22	Saving in 22/23
£16.239m	(£5.848m)	£10.391m	(£0.510m)	(£0.510m)	(£0.510m)	(£0.510m)

What would this mean?

Through promoting the new online account we would encourage citizens to sign up to enable them to transact online rather than having to speak to the council. It would essentially mean that we could reduce call volumes at the contact centre as more citizens transact online.

For the services that have online functionality we would refer citizens to this channel in the first instance and assist them with any queries they have in accessing their online account. A defined and yet to be agreed vulnerability criteria would then identify those citizens we would provide additional support to who are unable to use online functionality.

We will try to reduce the impact by

We are currently reviewing the creation of a vulnerability criteria and if citizens are classed as vulnerable and unable to transact online we would continue to deal with their calls.

This will include the promotion of online services through multiple channels to increase online take up.

SAVING PROPOSAL FACTSHEET

SS101C2 19+ Cease handling Garden Waste payment calls at corporate contact centre

Directorate: Strategic Services

Service: Customer Services

About this service

The corporate contact centre handles 66,000 calls per annum on behalf of Waste Management Garden Waste. The majority of these calls are citizens calling to renew their garden waste subscriptions. There is already an online solution in place where citizens can renew via the BCC website, currently 76% of renewals are being done via this channel.

Proposed changes

It is proposed that from January 2020 that where citizens do not meet the vulnerability criteria, we only allow for the renewal of garden waste collections online, which will be supported by the introduction of automated renewals in the Brum Accounts. We would advise citizens about this change when we communicate with them about their renewal and also have messaging on our telephone lines. In January as part of the new Brum account functionality Citizens can also set this up as a recurring annual payment from their card

The amount currently spent on the service and the proposed reduction is shown below.

Total Spend	Income 18/19	Net Spend	Saving in 19/20	Saving in 20/21	Saving in 21/22	Saving in 22/23
£16.239m	(£5.848m)	£10.391m	(£0.040m)	(£0.040m)	(£0.040m)	(£0.040m)

Note: Total spend has been adjusted to take into account below the line items

What would this mean?

Although the contact centre has additional resource in place to deal with high call volumes during the renewal period, due to early bird incentives there can be high wait times. Therefore citizens will be able to quickly and securely renew online and this will also save the citizen time.

We are currently reviewing the creation of a vulnerability criteria and if citizens are classed as vulnerable and unable to transact online, we would continue to deal with their calls.

We will try to reduce the impact by

We are currently reviewing the creation of a vulnerability criteria and if citizens are classed as vulnerable and unable to transact online we would continue to deal with their calls.

This will include the promotion of online services through multiple channels to increase online take up.

SAVING PROPOSAL FACTSHEET

SS103A 19+ Commissioning & Procurement Staff Reductions

Directorate: Strategic Services

Service: Commissioning & Procurement Services

About this service

CPS provide leadership in Commissioning, Procurement, Contract Management and Commercialism enabling the commissioning of services to deliver outcomes and Council Policies in an innovative, commercially viable, financially beneficial and socially responsible ways. CPS owns the Council's Commissioning Strategy.

In particular, the Strategy & Development team focusses on improving the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of Birmingham citizens through: applying the Birmingham Business Charter, Birmingham Living Wage and Social Value Policies to contracts with suppliers; promoting collaboration and innovation; developing best practice through coordination regionally and nationally. Systems and Performance team lead on ensuring city-wide compliance to procurement policies and procedures, and performance monitoring.

Proposed changes

Deletion of 2 posts

The amount currently spent on the service and the proposed reduction is shown below.

Total Spend 18/19	Income 18/19	Net Spend 18/19	Saving in 19/20	Saving in 20/21	Saving in 21/22	Saving in 22/23
£2.876m	(£2.037m)	£0.838m	(£0.135m)	(£0.135m)	(£0.135m)	(£0.135m)

Note: Total spend has been adjusted to take into account below the line items.

What would this mean?

Deleting the posts will mean there is significantly less capacity in areas such as:

- To generate external income through project/development work: eg CEPPI, Cities grow, other projects and respond promptly to member or external requirements to adopt and develop policies.
- To deliver benefits to citizens including implementing best practices such as tackling Modern Slavery and Serious & Organised Crime through procurement.
- To innovate, develop cross-council capabilities and collaborate with partners.
- To engage in regional or national work to influence development of initiatives including innovation work with LGA, innovation in procurement and contributing to the National Social Value Portal.

- To contribute on procurement and commissioning aspects of council policies such as Clean Air zone.
- To provide support to the local supply market and develop local suppliers which enables improved awareness of local opportunities and potential for local economic growth.
- To manage procurement related systems developments and ensure a consistent implementation;
- To ensure compliance to Council contracts, policies and procedures risk of directorates non-compliance and increased inefficiencies, cost increases and duplication of effort;
- To manage business planning, performance monitoring/reporting, audit and budget management.
- Less capacity to promote collaboration within the region to achieve benefits through efficiency savings and demand aggregation and income generation
- Proactive work with local businesses will be substantially reduced such as Finditinbirmingham events to promote new tender launches and developing supply chain capabilities
- To engage external funders, local anchor institutions and 3rd sector in developing partnership working and securing funding.
- To drive strategy and policy developments for the council such as Social Value, Living Wage and BBC4SR

We will try to reduce the impact by

Disengaging from national collaboration work to reduce demand. However this would reduce the profile of the city and its approach to procurement and social value which is currently seen as high (as evidenced through invitations to present to Select Committees and contribution to national taskforces)

Improved training programme with directorates.

SAVING PROPOSAL FACTSHEET

SS104 Reduction in spend on communications

Directorate: Strategic Services

Service: Communications

About this service

The Corporate Communications team is the external and internal communications function delivering the press, PR, design, marketing, social media/digital and internal communications activity for the council.

Proposed changes

That the marketing budget is reduced by £150k to £100k, with any marketing/print/advertising etc requirements (as outlined above) paid for by the service area that requires the support.

Implementation of a new communications structure that will create a communications function to support the council with delivery on priorities.

Total Spend	Income 18/19	Net Spend	Saving in 19/20	Saving in 20/21	Saving in 21/22	Saving in 22/23
£1.613m	(£0.019m)	£1.594	(£0.250m)	(£0.250m)	(£0.250m)	(£0.250m)

Note: Total spend has been adjusted to take into account below the lie items

What would this mean?

The smaller team and budget would be focused on delivery strategic communications campaigns aligned to the corporate priorities, and any additional activity would need to be funded by service areas. The team will also need to incorporate support for 2022 into the reduced budget.

We will try to reduce the impact by

Strategic audience based communications will make sure that activity will have maximum impact

SAVING PROPOSAL FACTSHEET

SS105 19+ Customer Services Team Redesign

Directorate: Strategic Services

Service: Customer Services

About this service

The customer services team delivers the council's corporate contact centre, which is the front door of the council for 19 services and receives 2 million telephone calls and 65,000 emails each year from citizens needing to access council services. The contact centre is highly skilled in delivering an efficient service, with the management structure ensuring staff are adequately trained and coached to deliver a high quality service to our citizens.

Proposed changes

With the implementation of the council's new online account (BRUM), by the end of 2018/19 it will be easier for citizens to transact with us online without the need for a telephone call. This will therefore see a reduction in operational roles.

A number of support roles within customer services have also been reviewed and it has been identified that reductions can be achieved without compromising the services delivered by the customer services team.

The amount currently spent on the service and the proposed reduction is shown below.

Total Spend	Income 18/19	Net Spend	Saving in 19/20	Saving in 20/21	Saving in 21/22	Saving in 22/23
£1.132m	0	£1.132m	(£0.218m)	(£0.218m)	(£0.218m)	(£0.218m)

Note: Total spend has been adjusted to take into account below the line items

What would this mean?

This would mean a reduction in roles at Gr6, Gr5, Gr4 and Gr3

We will try to reduce the impact by

This redesign will have no impact to service delivery

SAVING PROPOSAL FACTSHEET

SS106 19+ Reduce Local Welfare Provision funding

Directorate: Strategic Services

Service: Revenues and Benefits

About this service

From April 2013, Central Government passed responsibility for Local Welfare Provision to councils. The Government specifically identified the funding in its grant settlement to councils for the two years up to 31st March 2015. The provision has since been funded through the General Fund and subject to a number of cuts. The Council undertook a consultation on the proposal to reduce the available funding in February 2018. This was part of the 2018/19 budget/savings exercise and as a result, the fund was reduced by £500,000. This reduced the funding available in 2018/19 to £783k.

Proposed changes

It is proposed that the Local Welfare Provision for 'white goods' and furniture is reduced. The proposal will leave the crisis element for food and utilities at its current level. The Service has managed the previous reduction by working with voluntary suppliers of 'white goods' and furniture to supply goods in the first instance and will continue to signpost to those organisations. White goods from voluntary suppliers are all subject to a charge and some also charge a reduced amount for furniture.

The amount currently spent on the service and the proposed reduction is shown below.

Total Spend 18/19	Income 18/19	Net Spend 18/19	Saving in 19/20	Saving in 20/21	Saving in 21/22	Saving in 22/23
£0.783m	0	£0.783m	(£0.304m)	(£0.460m)	(£0.460m)	(£0.460m)

Note: Total spend has been adjusted to take into account below the line items

What would this mean?

The cut would place a greater reliance on the voluntary sector for the provision of white goods and furniture. This would cause difficulties for people who are having to be housed and have no assets to move into new accommodation. This could have particular impacts on certain groups, such as people leaving institutions (e.g., care or prison) or women fleeing domestic violence. The crisis element of the fund would be retained for emergency provision of food and assistance with utilities (gas and electricity).

We will try to reduce the impact by

A good network of contacts has been established for the provision of white goods and furniture. Continuing to work with the voluntary sector to provide assistance for people in need. This will help individual cases and provide people with information to signpost to alternative areas/agencies for support.

