

# **Appendix B**

## **Business Cases for Alternative Budget Reduction Proposals**

# **Budget reductions**

## BR1 - Section A

Service Area:	Corporate
Budget Reduction Title:	Additional Vacancy Management factor to achieve greater efficiency including limiting the present use of agency staff and consultants

### Budget Reduction Proposal - Detail and Objectives:

In previous years the Administration agreed to apply a vacancy factor at a rate of 1.5% to all mainstream employee budgets based on the assumption that some posts would become vacant or would be held vacant during that financial year due to staff turnover, this option was not taken in 2021/22 and is not proposed for 2022/23.

To assist in reducing the number of agency staff and consultants used across the Council further, the Liberal Democrats propose that a saving for 2022/23 should be applied at a rate of 0.75% to all Council mainstream employee budgets. This 0.75% vacancy management factor would generate a saving of £0.550m.

2020/21 Service Budget and Establishment	£000
Employees	73,301
Other Operational Expenses	0
Income	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>73,301</b>

Current Forecast (under) / overspend	0
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Number of posts (Full time equivalent)	0
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	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Proposed Budget Reduction (£000)	(550)	0	0
Proposed Staffing Reductions (FTE)	0	0	0

Is your proposal a 'one-off' in 2022/23 or is it ongoing?	Ongoing
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## Section B

What impact does the proposal have on the following?

<b>Property</b>
None.
<b>Service Delivery</b>
There is no anticipated impact on service delivery. Service staffing budgets will have to be managed within available resources.
<b>Future expected outcomes</b>
None.
<b>Organisation</b>
There is no anticipated impact on the organisation. Service staffing budgets have to will be managed within available resources.
<b>Workforce</b>
None.
<b>Communities / Service Users</b>
None.
<b>Oldham Cares</b>
There is no anticipated impact on Oldham Cares apart from Council staffing budgets within Adult Social Care carrying and managing the vacancy factor.
<b>Partner Organisations</b>
None.

Who are the key stakeholders?

<b>Staff</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Elected Members</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Residents</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Local business community</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Schools</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Trade Unions</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>External partners (if yes please specify below)</b>	<b>No</b>
N/A	
<b>Other Council departments (if yes please specify below)</b>	<b>No</b>
N/A	
<b>Other (if yes please specify below)</b>	<b>No</b>
N/A	

**Benefits to the organisation/staff/customers including performance improvements**

Potential reduction in the number of interim and agency staff used across the authority which may reduce expenditure.

## Section C

### Key Risks and Mitigations

Risk	Mitigation
Service budgets will overspend in 2022/32 due to non-achievement of the vacancy management target.	There is an expectation that a percentage of posts will be vacant in year through natural turnover of staff, and that services through to directorates will manage recruitment and cover arrangements accordingly.
Individual budget areas with low staff turnover will fail to meet the vacancy target.	Information on the achievement of vacancy management targets will be made available at service and directorate level to allow a wider analysis of progress against targets and allow offsets between over and under achieving service / directorate areas.
N/A	N/A

### Key Development and Delivery Milestones

Milestone	Timeline
Vacancy management targets are calculated, and allocations communicated to service and budget managers.	February 20022
Vacancy management targets are reviewed in line with any organisation change prior to the commencement of the 2022/23 financial year.	February/March 2022
Vacancy management targets are applied to individual budgets prior to the commencement of the 2022/23 financial year.	March 2022
N/A	N/A

## Section D

<b>Consultation required?</b>	<b>No</b>
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	<b>Start</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>
<b>Staff</b>	N/A	N/A
<b>Trade Union</b>	N/A	N/A
<b>Public</b>	N/A	N/A
<b>Service Users</b>	N/A	N/A
<b>Other</b>	N/A	N/A

### Equality Impact Screening

Is there potential for the proposed budget reduction to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following?

<b>Disabled people</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Particular Ethnic Groups</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Men or Women (including impacts due to pregnancy / maternity)</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>People who are married or in a civil partnership</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>People of particular sexual orientation</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>People who are proposing to undergo, undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>People on low incomes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>People in particular age groups</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Groups with particular faiths and beliefs</b>	<b>No</b>

<b>EIA required? (choose YES if any of the above impacts are YES)</b>	<b>No</b>
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## Section E

<b>Finance comments</b>
This proposal is to introduce a 0.75% Vacancy Factor across mainstream salary budgets within the organisation. Application of any Vacancy Factor carries risks of non-delivery and service overspend as detailed in Section C of this pro-forma and the higher the applied Vacancy Factor, the higher the associated risk to financial and service performance. The previous vacancy management factor applied by the Administration was 1.5% in 2019/20. The delivery of this budget proposal would require careful monitoring and management across the organisation.

<b>Signed RO</b>	02/02/2022
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<b>Signed Finance</b>	03/02/2022
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## BR1 - Section A

Service Area:	Corporate
Budget Reduction Title:	Reduction in mileage budgets to reflect changes in work practices

### Budget Reduction Proposal - Detail and Objectives:

The Liberal Democrats propose to reduce mileage budgets by £0.050m and a pro rata basis across the Council, excluding adult social care and children's social care cost centres.

Mileage can currently be claimed for work related travel except for travel from Oldham town centre to the following destinations (unless there are mitigating circumstances):

- Manchester City Centre
- Failsworth District Centre
- Royton District Centre
- Rochdale Town Centre
- Ashton Town Centre

Line managers must agree beforehand that using a personal vehicle is the most appropriate way to travel to a destination.

The Liberal Democrats propose that due to the increase in Council employees working from home and the increase of Teams based meetings, the requirement to travel on council business using a personal vehicle has reduced.

2022/23 Service Budget and Establishment	£000
Employees	N/A
Other Operational Expenses	188
Income	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>188</b>

Current Forecast (under) / overspend	(124)
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Number of posts (Full time equivalent)	N/A
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	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Proposed Budget Reduction (£000)	(50)	0	0
Proposed Staffing Reductions (FTE)	0	0	0

Is your proposal a 'one-off' in 2022/23 or is it ongoing?	Ongoing
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## Section B

What impact does the proposal have on the following?

<b>Property</b>
None.
<b>Service Delivery</b>
Council staff may have to consider alternate forms of transport if required to travel for work requirements.
<b>Future expected outcomes</b>
Budgets would be amended to reflect the decreasing demand for mileage claims.
<b>Organisation</b>
None.
<b>Workforce</b>
There is the potential that the workforce would evaluate whether travel is necessary or whether meetings could take place via Microsoft Teams.
<b>Communities / Service Users</b>
None.
<b>Oldham Cares</b>
None.
<b>Partner Organisations</b>
None.

Who are the key stakeholders?

<b>Staff</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Elected Members</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Residents</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Local business community</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Schools</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Trade Unions</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>External partners (if yes please specify below)</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>N/A</b>	
<b>Other Council departments (if yes please specify below)</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>All Council departments</b>	
<b>Other (if yes please specify below)</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>N/A</b>	

**Benefits to the organisation/staff/customers including performance improvements**

Budgets would be reduced to reflect the decrease in mileage claims.

## Section C

### Key Risks and Mitigations

Risk	Mitigation
Staff continue to claim mileage for non-essential travel.	Adequate communication to all staff detailing the new policy along with regular budget monitoring to ensure any potential areas of overspend can be identified early and raised with budget holders.
Essential travel is restricted due to lack of travel budgets.	Budgets where essential travel is assumed to be regular requirement is excluded from the budget reductions, for example Adults and Children's social care.
N/A	N/A

### Key Development and Delivery Milestones

Milestone	Timeline
Proposal presented to the Policy Overview Scrutiny Committee.	8 February 2022
Review of Cost Centres which should be excluded from the budget reduction proposal.	February – March 2022
The budget reduction is implemented.	April 2022.



## Section D

Consultation required?	<b>No</b>
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	Start	Conclusion
Staff	N/A	N/A
Trade Union	N/A	N/A
Public	N/A	N/A
Service Users	N/A	N/A
Other	N/A	N/A

### Equality Impact Screening

Is there potential for the proposed budget reduction to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following?

Disabled people	<b>No</b>
Particular Ethnic Groups	<b>No</b>
Men or Women (including impacts due to pregnancy / maternity)	<b>No</b>
People who are married or in a civil partnership	<b>No</b>
People of particular sexual orientation	<b>No</b>
People who are proposing to undergo, undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	<b>No</b>
People on low incomes	<b>No</b>
People in particular age groups	<b>No</b>
Groups with particular faiths and beliefs	<b>No</b>

EIA required? (choose YES if any of the above impacts are YES)	<b>No</b>
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## Section E

Finance comments
This proposal would result in a budget reduction of £0.050m across mileage budgets, excluding social care and grant funded cost centres. Budget monitoring during 2022/23 will highlight if there are any challenges to the delivery of the proposal.

Signed RO	01/02/2022
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Signed Finance	02/02/2022
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## BR1 - Section A

Service Area:	Human Resources and Organisational Development
Budget Reduction Title:	Review of car allowances as previously promised to reduce the amount paid as a lump sum to staff doing zero or minimal mileage

### Budget Reduction Proposal - Detail and Objectives:

An Essential Car Allowance of £500 is paid to staff members who are employed in positions which are designated as requiring a car as essential to completing the duties of the post. The money is paid over 12 months at £41.66 a month.

For the period April 2021 to December 2021 (a period involving extensive home working) the Council had 701 staff members employed in roles that paid the Essential Car Allowance.

Analysis of the data shows that in the period April 2021 to December 2021, 380 (54%) of those individuals in roles with the Essential Car Allowance have recorded/claimed zero miles. For the same period 62 (9%) recorded/claimed for 1 to 100 miles and 259 (37%) recorded/claimed for 101 and above miles.

It should be noted that anecdotal evidence suggests that officers do not always claim mileage travelled, particularly where the value is low.

The Liberal Democrats have proposed generating circa £0.050m saving by reducing the number of posts that attract an essential car user payment. A saving of £0.050m would equate to removal of allowance from circa 100 employees. Due to consultation requirements, only a part year reduction of £0.037m would be generated in 2022/23 with an additional saving of £0.013m in 2023/24.

There is a local agreement with Trades Unions regarding the assessment of entitlement and application of the Car Allowance Scheme. The scheme comprises a series of factors, including mileage, and allocates points per factor. Consultation with Trades Unions and Individuals would need to take place before staff terms and conditions could be amended.

2020/21 Service Budget and Establishment	£000
Employees	0
Other Operational Expenses	351
Income	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>351</b>

Current Forecast (under) / overspend	11
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Number of posts (Full time equivalent)	0
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	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
Proposed Budget Reduction (£000)	(37)	(13)	-
Proposed Staffing Reductions (FTE)	-	-	-

Is your proposal a 'one-off' in 2022/23 or is it ongoing?	Ongoing
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## Section B

What impact does the proposal have on the following?

<b>Property</b>
As Essential user status bestows free parking on Council property, budget is provided to the Property Team. Removal of Essential user status would lead to a reduction in the Property Team budget.
<b>Service Delivery</b>
Employees may refuse to use their own vehicles to complete their duties which may result in service delay, especially in the areas of social care. The removal of allowances in certain areas could have a detrimental impact on recruitment and retention, for example Social Workers where recruitment is already difficult.
<b>Future expected outcomes</b>
Potential to increase travel costs associated with other methods e.g. taxi, public transport.
<b>Organisation</b>
None.
<b>Workforce</b>
Certain individuals will have Car Allowance removed. Car parking costs would also increase for those individuals who are reclassified from Essential Users. The contractual change may not be accepted by the individual resulting in their dismissal and re-engagement.
<b>Communities / Service Users</b>
Potential for delays in receiving support in certain areas, e.g. social care.
<b>Oldham Cares</b>
None.
<b>Partner Organisations</b>
The alignment of practice within Team Oldham organisation should be considered as part of the exercise.

Who are the key stakeholders?

<b>Staff</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Elected Members</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Residents</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Local business community</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Schools</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Trade Unions</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>External partners (if yes please specify below)</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>N/A</b>	
<b>Other Council departments (if yes please specify below)</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>People and Place - Property</b>	
<b>Other (if yes please specify below)</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>N/A</b>	

**Benefits to the organisation/staff/customers including performance improvements**

Achievement of a budget reduction.

**Section C****Key Risks and Mitigations**

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
The allowance may be taken from users who travel a significant number of miles but have not claimed recompense in the past.	Communicate to claimants the requirement to claim mileage on a regular basis. This would develop an accurate baseline on which to conduct the exercise. The claiming of mileage previously unclaimed will come at an initial cost.
Where allowance is removed there may be an increase in costs associated with other modes of transport, e.g. taxis, public transport.	None.
There is a requirement to undertake appropriate consultation and seek agreement from Trades Unions.	Excellent working relationships with Trades Unions should facilitate and appropriate agreement. In the event agreement is not possible, individual consultation will be required and dismissal and re-engagement processes invoked at last resort.
Services areas where the allowance is paid may be experiencing recruitment and retention difficulties as a result of the proposal. Areas such as Children's Social Work already experience significant difficulties in recruiting and this may exacerbate the issue.	The revised scheme must account for critical areas.
The savings are indicative at this point and have not been modelled on the final scheme (as this is presently not finalised). The full savings may therefore not be realised.	The revised scheme / removal of the allowance will account for the required savings and seek to deliver.
The organisation and services have not yet developed the post-Covid operating model which may further increase remote working and reliance on car travel to visit service users.	Proposals should be developed in synergy with targeted working styles.

**Key Development and Delivery Milestones**

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Proposal presented to the Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee.	8 February 2022
Communicate to all staff the requirement to claim mileage in a timely manner.	April – May 2022

Finalise new scheme / allowances (or removal of)	June – September 2022
Consult with affected employees and Trade Unions	October – December 2022
Implement new scheme	January 2023

## Section D

Consultation required?	Yes
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	Start	Conclusion
Staff	October 2022	December 2022
Trade Union	October 2022	December 2022
Public	N/A	N/A
Service Users	N/A	N/A
Other	N/A	N/A

### Equality Impact Screening

Is there potential for the proposed budget reduction to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following?

Disabled people	N/A
Particular Ethnic Groups	N/A
Men or Women (including impacts due to pregnancy / maternity)	N/A
People who are married or in a civil partnership	N/A
People of particular sexual orientation	N/A
People who are proposing to undergo, undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N/A
People on low incomes	N/A
People in particular age groups	N/A
Groups with particular faiths and beliefs	N/A

EIA required? (choose YES if any of the above impacts are YES)	N/A
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## Section E

### Finance comments

The reduction in the number of essential users for car allowances by 100 employees could generate a saving of £0.050m (phased over 2022/23 and 2023/24). The achievement of this budget reduction will be reliant on successful negotiation with Trades Unions and the management of any consequences such as additional alternative travel arrangements.

**Signed RO**

01/02/2022

**Signed Finance**

03/02/2022

## BR1 - Section A

Service Area:	People Services
Budget Reduction Title:	Reduction in the General Training Budget agreed in 2018/19 to be made permanent

### Budget Reduction Proposal - Detail and Objectives:

The general training budget for 2021/22 is £0.372m.

The Liberal Democrats propose to make a permanent reduction of £0.100m from 2022/23 by utilising the apprenticeship levy wherever possible, this is in addition to the Administration proposal to make a £0.050m reduction. The combined effect would be to reduce the general training budget to £0.222m annually.

From 2017/18, all employers with an annual pay bill of more than £3.000m are required to pay an apprenticeship levy. The levy is payable at 0.5% of the total pay bill. Oldham Council pays this levy to HMRC who hold the monies in a digital fund. These monies are available for 2 years from the date of payment with any unspent funds being retained by HMRC.

The apprenticeship levy pays for apprenticeship training and assessment for apprentices that work at least 50% of the time in England, and only up to the funding band maximum for that apprenticeship. There are several approved providers and courses which can be assessed through this levy.

The proposed reduction would require all future training requirements, which cannot be funded via the apprenticeship levy, to be reviewed to ensure that best value is being secured. Priority would be provided to statutory and mandatory training. Any additional training and development would be assessed on the basis of value provided to the organisation, managing any identified risks to the Council in terms of building capability across all service areas.

2020/21 Service Budget and Establishment	£000
Employees	N/A
Other Operational Expenses	372
Income	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>372</b>

Current Forecast (under) / overspend	0
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Number of posts (Full time equivalent)	N/A
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	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Proposed Budget Reduction (£000)	(100)	0	0
Proposed Staffing Reductions (FTE)	0	0	0

Is your proposal a 'one-off' in 2022/23 or is it ongoing?	Ongoing
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## Section B

What impact does the proposal have on the following?

<b>Property</b>
None.
<b>Service Delivery</b>
Any reduction in the budget would impact on front-line service delivery. The type of training funded by the training budget only covers statutory and mandatory training, such as First Aid training, manual handling, HGV training etc. This would undermine services ability to have suitably trained staff to deliver front-line services, as well as potentially compromising services ability to demonstrate compliance for registration such as CQC, Ofsted etc. In some service areas, this would also make it difficult to recruit to roles where we provide the on-the job training, as we would be unlikely to be able to attract already qualified candidates due to significant market pressures e.g. HGV licence holders.
<b>Future expected outcomes</b>
The proposal would significantly detriment the ability to deliver core services and impact on our legislative and statutory requirements to suitably train and skill our workforce.
<b>Organisation</b>
The proposal would significantly detriment the ability to deliver core services and impact on our legislative and statutory requirements to suitably train and skill our workforce.
<b>Workforce</b>
Reduced investment in the development of employees will have an impact on both individuals and the wider organisation. The reduction in development activity may increase levels of employee turnover and reduce the ability to attract new talent, especially in hard to fill roles and those where the Council needs to grow new skillsets.
<b>Communities / Service Users</b>
The proposal would impact on staff within service provision and therefore would impact on communities and service users. Where possible, the Council always aims to use local suppliers of training and a further reduction in budget spend could therefore impact on local businesses.
<b>Oldham Cares</b>
The investment in workforce is being treated as a system wide issue and so the Council's approach is likely to have a knock-on impact and affect the investment and commitment that our partners in the Oldham Cares space feel they need to make.
<b>Partner Organisations</b>
Similar issues to those mentioned under the Oldham Cares paragraph.

Who are the key stakeholders?

<b>Staff</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Elected Members</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Residents</b>	<b>Yes, in part</b>
<b>Local business community</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Schools</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Trade Unions</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>External partners (if yes please specify below)</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Any training providers the Council currently use</b>	
<b>Other Council departments (if yes please specify below)</b>	<b>Yes</b>



All	
Other (if yes please specify below)	No
N/A	
<b>Benefits to the organisation/staff/customers including performance improvements</b>	
A £0.100m budget reduction and the achievement of improved value by driving down supplier costs and/or demand. A greater focus on internal training delivery and self-directed learning will also be adopted.	

## Section C

### Key Risks and Mitigations

Risk	Mitigation
General training provision will reduce, limiting the statutory and mandatory development of employees.	Training would have to be prioritised based on greatest need/greatest impact to service provision/compliance requirements. Services would be required to support training funding.
Early years settings development training (to assist with Ofsted requirements) would be impacted.	Any future training requirements would have to be funded direct from Children's Budgets.

### Key Development and Delivery Milestones

Milestone	Timeline
Proposal presented to Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee.	8 February 2022
Implementation.	1 April 2022
N/A	N/A
N/A	N/A

## Section D

Consultation required?	No
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	Start	Conclusion
Staff	N/A	N/A
Trade Union	N/A	N/A
Public	N/A	N/A
Service Users	N/A	N/A
Other	N/A	N/A

### Equality Impact Screening

Is there potential for the proposed budget reduction to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following?

Disabled people	No
Particular Ethnic Groups	No
Men or Women (including impacts due to pregnancy / maternity)	No
People who are married or in a civil partnership	No
People of particular sexual orientation	No
People who are proposing to undergo, undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	No
People on low incomes	No
People in particular age groups	No
Groups with particular faiths and beliefs	No

EIA required? (choose YES if any of the above impacts are YES)	No
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## Section E

Finance comments
This implementation of this proposal would create an ongoing saving of £0.100m from the central training budget from 2022/23 (cumulative £0.150m including the Administration's proposal). However, the prioritisation of statutory and mandatory training through the Development Academy may encourage services to source additional training requirements from service budgets with the potential of creating pressures in these areas. The forecast outturn for 2021/22 is a balanced position although it is possible that at the year-end there may be some under spending, possibly as a result of a shift in demand and delivery methods as a result of COVID-19

Signed RO	02/02/2022
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Signed Finance	02/02/2022
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**Additional information (if required)**

It should be noted that the Apprentice Levy cannot be used to fund general training. As a result, there can be no offsetting of general training budget by Apprentice Levy funds.

Currently the training budget is used to fund mandatory and statutory training for services only.

## BR1 - Section A

<b>Service Area:</b>	<b>Communications and Research</b>
<b>Budget Reduction Title:</b>	<b>Reconsideration of Council priorities with regards to the Communications and Research service</b>

### Budget Reduction Proposal - Detail and Objectives:

The Communication team's role is to ensure that information and key messaging about Council services, decisions and campaigns are equally accessible to all of the borough's residents, our staff and our partners. Oldham Council has a centralised Communications and Research team with staff delivering digital, design internal communications, media relations, marketing and social media content creation with business partner support to each directorate.

As more information moves online and residents become increasingly technologically advanced the need to produce hard copy publications reduces. As such the Liberal Democrats propose to reduce the service budget for the Communications and Research team by £0.250m in 2022/23.

This reduction would be met by generating £0.245m through ceasing the publication of '@Oldham Council, Working for You' and deleting/ disestablishing 5.18 FTE posts.

Alongside the above reductions, it is proposed to generate revenue of circa £0.005m through income generation activities across the full range of Council media channels

<b>2021/22 Service Budget and Establishment</b>	<b>£000</b>
Employees	946
Other Operational Expenses	75
Income	(4)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,017</b>

<b>Current Forecast (under) / overspend</b>	<b>(167)</b>
<b>Number of posts (Full time equivalent)</b>	<b>19.50</b>

	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>
<b>Proposed Budget Reduction (£000)</b>	<b>(0.250)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Proposed Staffing Reductions (FTE)</b>	<b>(5.18)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

<b>Is your proposal a 'one-off' in 2022/23 or is it ongoing?</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
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## Section B

What impact does the proposal have on the following?

<b>Property</b>
None.
<b>Service Delivery</b>
In 2019/20 the Communications and Research service was restructured, to deliver a saving of £250,000 in 2019/20 and a further £250,000 in 2020/21. Adding additional savings to the Communications budget so soon after significant cost-cutting measures have been taken would potentially destabilise the service's ability to deliver effective communications to the people of Oldham.
<b>Future expected outcomes</b>
<p>Reducing the number of staff by 5.18 would mean that the Communications service would have to focus only on essential elements of the service, which are chiefly reactive communications such as responding to media enquiries.</p> <p>This would mean the team would be unable to proactively engage with residents and communities via social and digital media; produce videos, undertake as much research and public engagement, or put out press releases with positive news stories about the council's work.</p> <p>This could then lead to a knock-on reputational risk due to a reduction in positive, proactive, communications teamed with far less direct engagement with residents and communities.</p> <p>The aim of launching the Oldham Council: Working for You council newspaper was primarily to provide essential information, such as contact numbers and guidance on help and support available to households, to those without access to the Internet.</p> <p>Ceasing the publication of Oldham Council: Working for You could therefore lead to people who do not have access to our website or social media channels being unable to access the information they need, and struggling to get in touch with Council departments.</p>
<b>Organisation</b>
Significant reduction in staff communications would lead to the organisation as a whole being less informed and less able to be effective ambassadors who understand our values and behaviours, plus our aims and objectives for the borough. This would also make leadership more difficult.
<b>Workforce</b>
The workforce has recently undergone a major review and some staff are newly appointed. Removing almost a third of the staffing in the service would create increased pressure on staff that remain, as well as removing technical specialisms.
<b>Communities / Service Users</b>
<p>Reduced communications activity – including social media – would leave residents less well informed about what the Council provides, including benefit and housing advice, as well as risking crucial public health messages not reaching our communities.</p> <p>Adding advertising to the website would also have a detrimental effect on the customer experience. At present, the Communications team focuses on trying to simplify web content and create interfaces that are designed to assist the resident in their tasks.</p> <p>Selling advertising space would undermine that effort, decrease usability and make it more difficult for service users – particularly our most vulnerable residents – to complete tasks online.</p>

<b>Oldham Cares</b>
Significant reduction in communications advice to core council activities would occur - such as promoting economic regeneration or supporting the transformation of health and social care. This provides real risks for the council to deliver on its outcomes.
<b>Partner Organisations</b>
Reduced partner communications would leave partners unclear of the role of the Council on key partnership projects.

### Who are the key stakeholders?

<b>Staff</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Elected Members</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Residents</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Local business community</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Schools</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Trade Unions</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>External partners (if yes please specify below)</b>	<b>Yes</b>
All i.e. Oldham Cares	
<b>Other Council departments (if yes please specify below)</b>	<b>Yes</b>
All	
<b>Other (if yes please specify below)</b>	<b>No</b>
N/A	
<b>Benefits to the organisation/staff/customers including performance improvements</b>	
A budget reduction of £0.250m for 2022/23.	

## Section C

### Key Risks and Mitigations

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
The Communications and Research team will be unable to meet demand.	Priorities would have to be reviewed and activity reduced simply to support statutory services.
Proactive communications would be vastly reduced.	A tightly defined and agreed set of core priorities would have to be agreed across the organisation with an acceptance that many existing communications activities would cease.

A reduction in communication opportunities could lead to some areas delivering their own messaging.	Utilise other avenues for communication within the organisation or partners.
Inappropriate advertisements appearing on the Council website through automatic advertising placement.	Increased officer time would need to be spent managing this aspect of the website, to ensure no adverts appear on the site that are controversial or inappropriate. The cost of this may outweigh revenue brought in by the advertising.

### Key Development and Delivery Milestones

Milestone	Timeline
Proposal presented to Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee.	8 February 2022
Staff and Trades Union consultations.	February /March 2022
Implementation of proposal.	From April 2022
N/A	N/A

### Section D

<b>Consultation required?</b>	<b>Yes</b>
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	<b>Start</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>
<b>Staff</b>	February 2022	March 2022
<b>Trade Union</b>	February 2022	March 2022
<b>Public</b>	N/A	N/A
<b>Service Users</b>	N/A	N/A
<b>Other</b>	N/A	N/A

### **Equality Impact Screening**

**Is there potential for the proposed budget reduction to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following?**

<b>Disabled people</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Particular Ethnic Groups</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Men or Women (including impacts due to pregnancy / maternity)</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>People who are married or in a civil partnership</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>People of particular sexual orientation</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>People who are proposing to undergo, undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>People on low incomes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>People in particular age groups</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Groups with particular faiths and beliefs</b>	<b>No</b>

<b>EIA required? (choose YES if any of the above impacts are YES)</b>	<b>No</b>
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## **Section E**

<b>Finance comments</b>
This option would result in a reduction of 5.18 posts within the Communications and Research service and the cessation of the Oldham Council Working For You publication, which would generate a saving of £0.245m in a full financial year. There is also an additional proposal to generate additional income estimated at £0.005m per annum and therefore the total budget reduction would be £0.250m. The proposal may incur redundancy costs which would be funded centrally.

<b>Signed RO</b>	01/02/2022
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<b>Signed Finance</b>	02/02/2022
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