

**Somerset Council MTFP 2024/25 - 2028/29
Savings Proposal**



Title of savings proposal	Revs & Bens Staffing Costs Saving
Reference Number	RCS010

Executive Directorate	Resources
Service Directorate	Finance & Procurement
Service	Revenues & Benefits

Lead member	Cllr Liz Leyshon - Resources and Performance
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Cost centre name	
Cost centre code	

Overview of proposal

Description of savings proposal (alt+return for new line)

This option models the impact of a 15% reduction in staffing costs within the Revs & Bens service. The figures used are based on current year (2023/24) spend. In practice, however, it is not realistic to expect to be able to reduce the resourcing within the service by any significant amount until we have consolidated the four separate IT systems to a single platform. In addition, a decision is required on our approach or otherwise to ending the CAPITA contract for the former Mendip area.

What will the saving achieve? (alt+return for new line)

The current total staffing cost within the service is £3.6m. A 15% reduction in cost will deliver a saving of £546k. The approximate average cost per post within the service is £34k so this would require a reduction of circa 16 FTE. In reality we are unlikely to complete system consolidation & the consequent full service restructure until some point during the 2025/26 financial year. Therefore, only partial savings are shown below as being deliverable during that year.

Type of saving	LGR Saving - Staffing
Which of the 17 key areas does the saving cover?	
Is this saving once-off or ongoing?	Ongoing
Does this impact on either the Council's priorities or another service?	Yes
Are there any policy change requirements? If yes, please provide further information below.	Yes
Implementing staffing reductions may require us to amend some of our local discretionary policies in relation to Revs & Bens to make them more efficient to administer.	

Benefits of the proposal

Tangible Benefits - savings/income £ (pro-rata for part year)	Intangible benefits (e.g. cost avoidance)
2023/24 (in-year)	0
2024/25	0
2025/26	270000

Delivering the proposal

Describe the high level milestones for delivery, including timescales and target delivery date for the saving.

As stated above, the full service restructure that will be required to enable these savings can only realistically be delivered once the four current IT systems have been consolidated to a single platform. The timetable & milestones are therefore driven by the system consolidation exercise and the key dates & milestones for this have yet to be agreed.

Additionally, the restructure should take into account & provide for activities within Revs & Bens which are not currently adequately resourced (e.g. recovery & enforcement, property inspection etc.). Not resourcing these areas adequately costs the council significant amounts of money through lost revenue.

Who are the key people/services involved/required (internal and external).
Revenues & Benefits Customer Services IT Housing DWP DLUCH Valuation Agency Enforcement Agents
What activity is needed to achieve the saving?
Consolidation of the four separate Revs & Bens IT platforms followed by a full service restructure.
What are the financial resources required?
Potentially significant financial resources will be required to implement the IT system consolidation, which is a key precursor to the restructure. This project has not been costed as yet.
Are there any limitations or constraints?
IT system consolidation is required to enable this. We need to decide the approach we're taking to ending the CAPITA contract within the former Mendip area. Any restructure will need to be conducted in accordance with employment law & local policy.
What is the anticipated impact on service delivery to residents or business?
The intention is to deliver staff reductions through efficiencies & in such a way as to minimise any impact on customers & businesses. However, detailed work will be required to understand any impact as part of the system consolidation project, any exit from the CAPITA contract & as part of any detailed restructure proposal.

Please note that an equalities impact assessment is required for all proposals.

Other implications	
Impact	Number or description
Staffing impact (#s)	Circa 130 people as the restructure will potentially affect all roles.
Redundancy or vacancy?	Mixture of both
Legal impact	Any restructure needs to be implemented in accordance with employment law.
Insurance or other impact	None identified.
Equalities impact	We are aiming to deliver the efficiencies & restructure in such a way that minimises the impact on customers. Full EIAs will be required to support detailed proposals for system consolidation, exit from the CAPITA contract & the restructure as they are developed.

Please ensure that you have consulted HR and your Finance Business Partner regarding any staffing savings.

Risks	
What is the risk status of the proposal?	Medium
What are the risks associated with this proposal?	
The key risk relates to making too great a cut in staffing & having a consequent detrimental impact on our ability to maintain service delivery. This could expose the council to reputational damage, significant loss of income and / or legal challenge & associated costs.	
Are there mitigations or actions that if implemented can reduce those risks?	
Linking the service restructure to an IT system consolidation and improvement programme so we deliver processing efficiencies to enable staffing reductions.	