

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To approve the General Fund - Revised MTFP for 2016/17 as shown in Table 8 at paragraph 5.8 which includes the proposed savings targets and associated detail as shown in Table 7 and Table 7.1 at paragraph 5.7 of this report.
- 2.2 To approve the proposed Capital Programme and Funding totalling £23.7 million for 2016/17 to 2018/19 as set out in Tables 14 and 15 of this report.
- 2.3 To approve the Treasury Management and Investment Strategy as set out in Section 10 of this report.
- 2.4 To note the Section 151 Officer's Assurance Statement as set out in Section 11 of this report.

- 5.5 Whilst the Council will explore opportunities to identify and secure additional income with which to support services, it is clear that there is also the opportunity to balance its budget through the strict management of expenditure levels and securing efficiencies.
- 5.6 Services need to continue to drive through efficiencies and continually review their working practices and operations to try and make them as efficient as possible.
- 5.7 Savings Targets are proposed to bridge some of the funding gap as outlined in Table 7 and detailed in Table 7.1.

Table 7 – Proposed Savings Targets

Proposed Savings Targets	2016/17 £'000	2017/18 £'000	2018/19 £'000
Additional Income Generation Target	438	663	673
Efficiencies Target	514	618	618
Re-prioritisation of Services Target	154	219	219
Total Savings Target	1,106	1,500	1,510
Less: Allowance for a decrease in the recharge to the HRA	(100)	(140)	(140)
Grand Total	1,006	1,360	1,370

Table 7.1 - Proposed Savings - Detail

Proposed Savings	2016/17 £'000	2017/18 £'000	2018/19 £'000
Additional Income			
Council Tax Increase	159	159	159
Income from the Public Sector Hub	82	272	272
Rent Reviews / New Leases	40	70	80
Crossrail Compensation	35	0	0
Income from Shops transferred from the HRA	30	30	30
Planning - Residential Pre-application Fees	25	50	50
Increased Demand for Brown Bins	20	20	20
Sale of Services	20	20	20
Community Alarm Charges	17	17	17
Planning - Review charges around Pre-application Fees for Commercial Properties	10	25	25
Total - Additional Income	438	663	673

Proposed Savings	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Efficiencies			
No Inflationary Pay Increase	95	95	95
Vacancy Factor	65	65	65
Legal Services Efficiency Savings	50	50	50
Capitalisation of Project Staff	50	50	50
Shared Services	50	100	100
Senior Managers' Target Savings	40	40	40
Restructure of Housing Service	39	39	39
Review of the Community Halls Management Fees	32	32	32
Review of Support Services	25	44	44
Procurement Review	25	25	25
Introduce Joint Working Between Car Parks & CCTV	20	40	40
Review of Financial Services	15	30	30
Freeze Member Allowances & Reduce the Number of Committees by One	8	8	8
Total - Efficiencies	514	618	618
Re-prioritisation of Services			
Review of Economic Development	50	100	100
Reduction in Parish Grants	34	34	34
Discontinue the Community Safety Commissioning Plan	30	30	30
Collection Only of Green Waste Bags - No Delivery and One Token Provided	25	30	30
Removal of Ward Budgets	25	25	25
Growth			
Renaissance Group Grant	(10)	0	0
Total - Re-prioritisation of Services	154	219	219
Decrease in Re-charge to the HRA	(100)	(140)	(140)
Grand Total	1,006	1,360	1,370

Ordinary Council meeting 2 March 2016 – Proposed amendments from the Labour Group

Amendment 1 - Business Rates

The Brentwood Business Challenge

To establish the Brentwood Local Business Challenge, a locally determined Business Rates scheme, at a cost of £20,000 that will create a reduction of £50,000 in Business Rates for the successful geographic area to increase business confidence and encourage development. The scheme will focus on small, retail businesses.

Total reductions in Business Rates: £50,000

Brentwood Borough Council costs: £20,000

Further detail

Brentwood Borough Council launches the Brentwood Local Business Challenge that will set aside a fund of up to £50,000 for local small and medium businesses within set criteria as below, within the successful geographic area. This will be a competitive tender/pitch process for closely geographically located businesses in numbers no greater than 50 businesses, similar to the 'Clusters' within the Renaissance Group, to compete for their area to receive a Business Rates discount from the Council. If successful the area will not be permitted to tender for any future Local Business Challenge for two years.

This is permitted by the use of the locally determined Business Rate scheme, under powers found in the Localism Act 2011. Brentwood is only liable for £20,000 of this fund, with the remainder covered by other tiers of Government.

This fund will be proportionally distributed to applicable businesses and within maximum reliefs as outlined below.

To qualify for this relief, the premises must be a property (retail unit, office or warehouse) which is:

1. Within the designated area, and
2. has a rateable value between £6,000 and £50,000, and
3. is not among the type of retailer which the council believes should not qualify for the relief, and
4. relief will be offered for a maximum of 12 months for applications received between 1 July 2016 to 31 March 2017.
5. The scheme will be available to small and medium sized enterprises (definition of SME - employ up to 250 people and have a turnover of up to £40m) only.
6. The maximum amount of relief will be 50% of the net liability after all mandatory or discretionary reliefs have been applied to account.
7. Occupiers must take out/have a minimum 12 month lease and if the business moves out the council reserves the right to request repayment of any local business rate relief granted.

Types of occupied property which can qualify for relief

1. Properties being used for the sale of goods to visiting members of the public, eg:
 - a. Shops (such as florists, bakers, butchers, grocers, greengrocers, chemists, supermarkets, newsagents)
 - b. Charity shops
 - c. Opticians
 - d. Post offices
 - e. Furnishing shops/display rooms (such as carpet shops)
 - f. Car showrooms
 - g. Second hand car lots
 - h. Markets
 - i. Petrol stations
 - j. Garden centres
 - k. Craft Shops
 - l. Art galleries

2. Properties being used for the provision of certain services to visiting members of the public, eg:
- m. Hair & beauty services (such as hair dressers, nail bars, tanning shops etc)
 - n. Shoe repairs/key cutting
 - o. Travel agents
 - p. Estate / letting agencies
 - q. Dry cleaners
 - r. Launderettes
 - s. PC/TV/domestic appliance repair
 - t. Funeral directors
 - u. Photo processing
 - v. DVD/video rentals
 - w. Tool hire
 - x. Car hire

3. Medical services

- y. Vets
- z. Dentists
- aa. Doctors
- bb. Osteopaths
- cc. Chiropractors

This list is not definitive, and other businesses who are of a similar type to those listed above may also qualify for the local business rate relief.

Properties which do not qualify for relief:

- a. Accountants
- b. Solicitors
- c. Insurance brokers
- d. Employment agencies
- e. Tutors
- f. Restaurants
- g. Sandwich shops
- h. Coffee shops
- i. Pubs
- j. Wine bars
- k. Takeaways
- l. Banks
- m. Building societies
- n. Cash points
- o. Bureau de change
- p. Payday lenders
- q. Betting shops
- r. Pawnbrokers
- s. Properties that may bring the scheme / area into disrepute

Any large businesses will be excluded as they are not classified as an SME.

Relief cannot be awarded if it will breach the State Aid. Whilst the DCLG suggests that councils should get a signed declaration from the ratepayer that any award would not breach State Aid, it is for the council to ensure that the rules are not broken and the signed declaration would not exclude the council from the consequences of breaching the rules. The DCLG will not reimburse the council for any award of relief that breaches State Aid de minimus figure of €200,000 over a three year period.

Amendment 2 - Support for Brentwood Business Groups and local business led development

Re-home current economic development functions with the local business community, including the removal of the Economic Development Committee with functions moved to other committees. Investment in the development of a new Economic Strategy for Brentwood and tendering of up to a £30,000 grant to local Business Groups to provide an Economic Development service with Town Centre Management functions assigned to members of the Licensing Team. Freezing investment into the Business Directory and gifting the current list to Renaissance Group, Brentwood Chamber of Commerce and other business groups as appropriate.

Total reductions: £129,760
Cost of Grant: £30,000
Cost of Economic Strategy: £10,000
Total Savings: £89,760

Amendment 3 - Efficient use of Special Responsibility Allowances

To require as part of job role the Leader and Deputy Leader to Chair a Council Committee
Total Saving: £2,500

Amendment 4 - Town Hall Hospitality Services

Given increasing staffing levels coming into the Town Hall, to tender to local businesses bringing in a coffee van style operation or similar for a set period in the day.
Total Income: £3,000

