Committee/Meeting:	Date:	Classification:	Report No:	
Cabinet	7 th July 2010	Unrestricted	CAB 015/101	
Report of:		Title:		
Corporate Director – Resources		Budget 2010/11		
Originating officer(s) Chris Naylor, Corporate Director – Resources Alan Finch, Service Head – Finance		Wards Affected: All		

Lead Member	Lead Member, Resources
Community Plan Theme	One Tower Hamlets
Strategic Priority	Work efficiently and effectively as One Council

1. **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The Coalition Government came to power in May with a policy of accelerating the response to the deficit in the public finances. On 23rd May, in-year savings of £6bn were announced, local government's share of which is £1.160bn. Tower Hamlets will receive some £4.125m less in grants than it has budgeted for in 2010/11, in addition to which a further £5m worth of grants which have been received in previous years will not now be allocated.
- 1.2. In order to respond to the announcement, it is necessary for the Council to make plans for in-year savings. This report sets out proposals for achieving the necessary budget reductions.

2. **DECISIONS REQUIRED**

Cabinet is recommended to:-

- 2.1 Agree the package of savings set out in the report for implementation within the current financial year.
- 2.2 Note that £490,000 in savings are subject to the agreement of the Schools Forum.

3. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

The Council is under a duty to set and maintain a balanced budget. The current budget as approved by the Council in March includes provision for £4.1m in grants which, following the Government's announcement, will not now be received. Any delay in implementing proposals to balance the budget would potentially result in a greater impact later in the financial year. Urgent action is therefore necessary to maintain the Council's budget in balance.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

4.1 The proposals in this report have been devised by officers to provide sufficient savings to balance the budget, and to make appropriate provision for the risk of not accomplishing the savings in-year. Whilst other savings options may be available, officers' judgement is that the package presented in this report provides the best opportunity to deliver these objectives.

5. BACKGROUND

- 5.1 The Coalition Government came to power in May with a policy of accelerating the response to the deficit in the public finances. Within three weeks of the General Election, in-year savings of £6.2bn were announced, local government's share of which is £1.160bn. Subsequently, and as reported to Cabinet on 9th June, grant allocations to individual authorities for 2010/11 have been revised. Tower Hamlets will receive some £4.125m less in grants than it has budgeted for in 2010/11, in addition to which a further £5m worth of grants which have been received in previous years will not now be allocated. In order to respond to the announcement, officers have advised that it is necessary for the Council to make plans for in-year savings.
- 5.2. The Chancellor's emergency Budget on 22nd June announced cuts in Government departmental spending (excluding the NHS and Overseas Development) averaging 25% over the four years to the end of 2014/15. Detail about how this will impact local government will not be known until after the Spending Review, which reports in October, and whether the impact on local government is higher than 25% or lower depends upon the priority the new Government places on local government services and a judgement about our capacity for finding new efficiency savings. The Medium Term Financial Plan for the period from 2011/12 onwards indicates a General Fund savings target of about £55m by the end of 2013/14, with £18m needing to be saved each year from 2011/12. The current year's exercise needs to be seen in this context.

6. SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET PROPOSALS 2010/11

- 6.1. In response to the Government's in-year savings announcement, Cabinet mandated officers on the 9th June to:
 - Consider whether efficiency proposals in the pipeline for the financial year 2011/12 could be brought forward into this financial year
 - Carry out detailed work on vacating Anchorage House to allow a decision to be made in the summer, review workforce productivity arrangements with specific reference to the deployment of agency and temporary workers, and the Members scheme.
 - Scrutinise the allocation of grants in-scope for Government reduction and identify opportunities for efficiency savings, in particular that might arise in the back office and those that may become available as a result of un-ring fencing.
- 6.2. Since then officers have worked on this task. In developing these proposals officers have been mindful of Cabinet's express desire to focus on protecting the delivery of frontline services, in particular the primary priority of achieving a safe and secure community for all our residents. There are no savings proposals that relate to this priority area.
- 6.3. Two categories of risk need to be provided for, and would argue for identifying more than £4.125m worth of savings (the level of grant income removed from the budget). These are;
 - The continuing uncertainty in relation to central government funding and the ongoing nature of savings announcements from Government.
 - That while the proposals set out in the report are capable of delivering savings in 2010/11, this is not without risk. In particular, change processes which need to follow the organisational procedure may take time to implement and may not proceed as intended.

It is therefore recommended that Cabinet approves the whole package of savings which, if delivered in full, would exceed the current target and which would provide a contingency against other unforeseen announcements and the risk of non-delivery. In the even that the contingency is not required, it would provide a contribution towards subsequent years' savings targets.

- 6.4. This report does not refer to the proposal to Decant Anchorage House which was also an issue raised at the June Cabinet. Officers anticipate bringing this back to Cabinet in the near future.
- 6.5. The detail of the proposed in-year savings are set out in **Appendix A**.

- 6.6 In summary £10,332,000 of in-year savings have been identified. Of these £8.7million are on-going savings and £1.6m are one off.
- 6.7. £490,000 of these ongoing savings relate to a proposal to transfer funding for some Area Based Grant funded activities to be funded from Dedicated Schools Grant. Rather than discontinuing services which need to be reviewed in the light of Government cuts to Area Based Grant directed by the Department for Education, it is clearly right that schools should have the opportunity to buy these services back from the authority. In practical terms, this means that £490,000 worth of savings are subject to the agreement of the Schools Forum.

7. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

7.1 An urgent response is required to the Government's in-year savings target if the Council's budget is to remain in balance. The impact of the proposed savings in 2010/11 and 2011/12 is set out in the table below.

	2010/11 £million	2011/12 (full year) £million
Loss of government grant	4.125	4.125
One-off savings Ongoing savings	-1.622 -8.710	-10.000(*)
	-10.332	-10.000

- (*) Estimated figure- to be confirmed
- 7.2. The proposals detailed at **Appendix A** may be summarised as follows;

Summary of Proposals 2010/11	One –off Savings £000s	Ongoing Savings £000s
Back office consolidation: strategy, policy and partnership teams	0.372	1.180
Programme delivery	1.250	0.905
Joint working with schools		0.615
Back office rationalisation in service Directorates		2.110

Agency staff and workforce productivity		3.450
		0.450
	1.622	8.710

7.3 Accepting all of the proposals in this report could exceed the target. However as set out in the report, risk factors would suggest that a contingency should be allowed for. In the event that the contingency is not required it would contribute to later years' savings targets.

8 <u>CONCURRENT REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE</u> (LEGAL SERVICES)

- 8.1 The Council is required by section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs. The Council's chief finance officer has established financial procedures to ensure the Council's proper financial administration. These include procedures for budgetary control. It is consistent with these arrangements for Members to receive information about the revenue budget as set out in the report and to take decisions necessary to keep the Council within budget.
- 8.2 The proposals set out in Appendix A appear capable of being carried out in accordance with the Council's statutory functions. It will be for officers to ensure that any particular action is carried out lawfully and to take advice as required from Legal Services. To the extent that there are any implications for staffing, the Council's HR policies must be followed.

9. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

9.1 The proposals in this report have due regard to equalities and diversity policy and avoid impacting priority front line services for Tower Hamlets communities.

10. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

10.1 There are no direct implications in this report.

11. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The main risks associated with these individual proposals are set out in detail in the papers. The risk to the authority of not taking action to retain a balanced budget, aside from being in technical breach of legislation, are that more drastic action may be necessary at a later stage to maintain the financial integrity of the authority, which would be more likely to impact services.

12. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no direct implications in this report

13. <u>EFFICIENCY STATEMENT</u>

13.1 The measures in this report seek where possible to reduce costs without affecting outcomes for Tower Hamlets communities, and as such will promote value for money and efficiency in the Borough.

14. APPENDICES

Appendix A: Supplementary Savings Proposals 2010/11

Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)
List of "Background Papers" used in the preparation of this report

Brief description of "background papers" Name and telephone number of holder and address where open to inspection.

None N/A

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET PROPOSALS 2010/11

Proposal 1

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FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

	Saving £000s			
_	One-off	Ongoing		
General Fund	372	1,180		

1. Outline/ details of saving proposal, including indications of stage of development, and work and timescales needed to finalise proposal:

In recent years the Council has consistently invested in its core corporate strategy, policy, and performance arrangements and also in a management infrastructure to support partnership working.

This investment has been particularly important as public sector investment in Tower Hamlets has risen. The strength of our strategic function has enabled the right judgements to be made about investment, performance and the delivery of improved outcomes. As a consequence Tower Hamlets has been nationally recognised as a leading light in terms of local government performance management and for providing Value for Money. The Council is also lauded for its partnership working arrangements.

As public sector resources in Tower Hamlets begin to fall, however, consideration has been given to how this function can be rationalised not only so that it can make it's own contribution to the Council's savings effort but more importantly so that its attention can be focused on the core priorities of the Council.

As a first step, during 2009/10, key elements of the Council's partnership team were brought under the single line management of the corporate strategy, policy and performance function. Building on this, during 2010/11 it is proposed to rationalise these teams to deliver both one off savings and an on-going saving to the Council's revenue budget. These savings will arise from:

- Rationalising headcount with a particular focus in 2010/11 on removing vacant posts from the Council's establishment – including the currently vacant Assistant Chief Executive position;
- Reducing the workload of the corporate team as a result of the Government's announced abolition of Comprehensive Area Assessment and other aspect of the national performance management regime;

 Re-profiling work across the wider team so that there is less reliance on external third parties to deliver specific projects.

Together these initiatives will deliver one off savings of £372,000 and on-going savings of £1,180,000 during 2010/11.

This proposal is part of a suite of savings initiatives that the Council is developing to deliver back office savings in the coming three years. Building on this initial consolidation, the next step will be to consider opportunities to rationalise policy, strategy and performance activity within directorates.

Figures in £000s	Gra	ints	Genera	al Fund	TO	ΓAL
	One off reduction	Ongoing revenue savings	One off reduction	Ongoing revenue savings	One off reduction	Ongoing revenue savings
1.1. 09/10 Partnership underspend carried into 2010/11	345				345	
1.2 10/11 Partnership staff savings				320		320
1.3 10/11 Partnership supplies and services savings				152		152
1.4 10/11 Partnership potential underspend		400				400
1.5 Working Neighbourhoods Fund evaluation – scale down		163				163
1.6 Implementation of the 3 rd Sector Strategy	27				27	
1.7 Deletion of the vacant Assistant Chief Executive Post				145		145
TOTAL	372	563	-	617	372	1,180

2. Service implications of saving:

The proposals are solely concerned with activities undertaken in the back-office and no impact on front-line services is envisaged
3. Actions required to achieve saving:
Detailed proposals will be worked up and taken through a change management process.
Anticipated date for full implementation:
Phased during 2010/11 -2011/12
Implementation Risks/ Issues including management/ mitigation issues
Subject to the change management process. Costs of implementation will be met from within existing resources.
4. Potential implications for staff, contractors, partners, assets and other Directorates:
Initial headcount reduction will focus on vacant posts and agency staff
5. Efficiency/ value for money. How will this proposal contribute towards greater efficiency/ better value for money and how will the efficiency improvement be measured?

Γ

The new Government has indicated a policy of scaling back the performance measurement and inspection regime affecting local government. As such these proposals mirror the direction of travel for this area of public policy

Proposal 2

	Delivery of agreed programme outcomes at lower
TITLE OF SAVING OPTION:	than anticipated cost

FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

-	Sav	ring £000s
	One-off	Ongoing
General Fund	1250	905

1. Outline/ details of saving proposal, including indications of stage of development, and work and timescales needed to finalise proposal:

Throughout the course of any given year the Council carefully scrutinises the delivery of projects to ensure that they are delivering to time and budget and to ensure that they are having the positive impact envisaged when the project was instigated.

A key focus of this effort is on driving out efficiencies and, when necessary, terminating projects that are failing to deliver. In recent years this regular process has enabled the Council, to reinvest during the course of a year either because money has been freed up from projects that have delivered at a lower than anticipated cost or because money has been clawed back from projects that are not delivering as planned.

As a result of the in-year cuts announced by Government, officers have used this approach to carefully scrutinise the allocation of grants in the latter part of 2009/10 and those budgeted in 2010/11. Unlike previous years, where freed up monies would be reinvested in other priorities, this proposal is recommends that the identified money is clawed back to help fund the budget shortfall.

Figures in £000s	Gra	ınts	Genera	al Fund	TO ⁻	ΓAL
	One off reduction	Ongoing revenue savings	One off reduction	Ongoing revenue savings	One off reduction	Ongoing revenue savings
2.1 Unallocated Working Neighbourhoods Fund earmarked for Connexions Service	800				800	
2.2 Unallocated grants from Cohesion Fund		200				200
2.3 Underspend due to organisations failing to				45		45

match grant						
2.4 WNF- Making Work Pay/ Homelessness- project contract ended due to poor performance		300				300
2.5 Unspent element of Council Tax rebate			200		200	
2.6 Positive Activities for Young People – uncommitted amount		100				100
2.7 Uncommitted Area Based Grant payments to schemes	250				250	
2.8 Youth Opportunities Fund – uncommitted amount		260				260
TOTAL	1,050	860	200	45	1,250	905

2. Service implications of saving:

The proposal is concerned with applying unallocated grants to enable existing services to continue.

This savings largely concerns applying grants received in previous years but unallocated to services in order to offset the Government's announced reductions in grants for 2010/11. For ongoing savings the proposal involves reprioritising the use of available grants so as to protect valued front-line service provision. In addition an amount of £45,000 from the Corporate Match Funding budget can be offered up representing cases where the intended recipient organisation has failed to achieve matched funding.

3. Potential implications for staff, contractors, partners, assets and other Directorates:

As this largely concerns grants that had not been allocated to services hitherto, there are no additional impacts that had already been anticipated and planned for.

4. Other risk factors which could prevent this saving being achieved following implementation

The Government is continuing to announce grant reductions and further cuts may require the authority to revisit its strategy.

5. Efficiency/ value for money. How will this proposal contribute towards greater efficiency/ better value for money and how will the efficiency improvement be measured?

In the context of reducing Government grants, the priority is to ensure that available funding is applied to fund those interventions which provide greatest value to the community.

Proposal 3

TITLE OF SAVING OPTION: Joint working with schools

FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

-	Sav	ving £000s			
-	One-off Ongoing				
General Fund	0	615			

1. Outline/ details of saving proposal, including indications of stage of development, and work and timescales needed to finalise proposal:

Tower Hamlets has a strong track record of working with service delivery partners to ensure better services at reduced cost. This proposal builds on that success, this time with a particular focus on joint working with schools.

Historically the Council has provided a number of services to schools funded by area based grant. As this grant has now been subject to the in-year reduction by central government, the Children's Schools and Families directorate will now enter into a dialogue with schools about which services they wish to continue with and fund from Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), currently protected from the current round of public sector cuts.

This proposal will contribute an on-going £615,000 to the 2010/11 in year savings effort either as a result of schools utilising DSG to fund activity or by choosing to de-commission those service which they consider to be of less value to their particular school and pupil cohort.

Figures in £000s	Grants		General Fund		TOTAL	
	One off reduction	Ongoing revenue savings	One off reduction	Ongoing revenue savings	One off reduction	Ongoing revenue savings
3.1 Transferring funding for some school related Area Based Grant activities to Dedicated Schools Grant funding		490				490
3.2 Make Professional Development Centre self financing				125		125
TOTAL	0	490	0	125	0	615

2. Service implications of saving:

There will be no implications providing schools consider the services on offer to be of sufficient value.
3. Actions required to achieve saving:
Continuing dialogue with schools and subsequent agreement with LBTH Schools Forum
Anticipated date for full implementation:
October 2010
Implementation Risks/ Issues including management/ mitigation issues
The final Dedicated Schools Grant, based on January 2010 pupil numbers, translates int additional grant, as DSG is currently fully committed (the LA anticipates Department for Education confirmation in the next few weeks)
The LBTH Schools Forum does not continue supporting the additional breach of the Central Expenditure Limit in 2010/11 (ie the Authority may only retain funding centrally u to a maximum level unless Schools Forum give their express permission to do so, which they have so far always provided).
4. Potential implications for staff, contractors, partners, assets and other Directorates:
None, if School Forum agrees
5. Other risk factors which could prevent this saving being achieved following implementation

None, if School Forum agrees

6. Efficiency/ value for money. How will this proposal contribute towards greater efficiency/ better value for money and how will the efficiency improvement be measured?

This proposal will improve the transparency of school funding, ensuring all funding to support the schools budget is allocated from the Dedicated School Grant. The services currently funded through Area Based Grant complement work schools are already doing to improve behaviour and raise attainment.

Proposal 4:

	Back Office Rationalisation in Service Delivery
TITLE OF SAVING OPTION:	Directorates

FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

-	Sav	Saving £000s					
-	One-off	Ongoing					
General Fund		2,110					

1. Outline/ details of saving proposal, including indications of stage of development, and work and timescales needed to finalise proposal:

A key focus of the Council's efficiency agenda is the delivery of back office savings within directorates. This 'in-year proposal is the first call on a much wider programme of savings in the pipeline for the three years 2011/12 to 2013/14. In essence it is the summation of a range of efficiency activities some which are being spearheaded in particular directorates on a pilot basis before roll out to the council as whole. Accordingly this proposal includes:

- A tougher approach to the procurement of care packages so that management overheads and the profit margins of third party suppliers are squeezed (Adults Health and Well Being);
- ➤ A rationalisation of admin functions (Resources)
- The consolidation of Health and Safety arrangements (CLC)
- A reduction in communications and marketing spend (Children's Schools and Families)

This proposal will deliver on-going savings of £2,110,000 during 2010/11

Figures in £000s	Grants		General Fund		TOTAL	
	One off reduction	Ongoing revenue savings	One off reduction	Ongoing revenue savings	One off reduction	Ongoing revenue savings
4.1 AHWB Directorate - Care Funding Calculator use to reduce costs while improving outcomes for service users (£400,000); Reablement programme - intensive support following eg leaving hospital resulting in reduced long-term costs (£300,000); Closing voids at homeless hostel (£200,000); Electronic homecare monitoring				1,810		1,810

(£160,000); Use of single agency for homecare agency staff (£400,000); Reduced use of agency staff (£250,000); Reduced residential placements (£100,000)			
4.2 CSF Directorate - reduce building budgets for central maintenance (£50k), reduce services' communications budget by better planning and control. Realise early the cross departmental R2P savings.		200	200
4.3 Resources Directorate- admin restructuring		75	75
4.4. CLC Directorate – Health & Safety review service integration		25	25
TOTAL		2,110	2,110

2. Service implications of saving:

The measures have been chosen specifically to avoid reductions in priority front-line services.

3.	Actions required to achieve saving:
	proposals involve a number of measures affecting a number of different services and be project managed within the Directorates concerned.

Proposal 5:

A squeeze on agency staff expenditure and wider TITLE OF SAVING OPTION: workforce productivity gains

FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

-	-	Saving £000s					
		One-off	Ongoing				
General Fund		3,450					

1. Outline/ details of saving proposal, including indications of stage of development, and work and timescales needed to finalise proposal:

In recent years the Council has worked hard to improve its workforce management arrangements with the intention of improving productivity. For example, during 2009/10 the Council delivered a significant reduction in the volume of Agency staff that it employed

The Council has also focused on improving its core Human Resource processes through its HR Improvement Programme. This programme is focused, amongst other things, on helping the Council to become more agile in its staff management arrangements.

These developments enable the Council to adopt a much more challenging and sophisticated approach to the management of agency staff, its temporary workforce and its permanent workforce, with the intention of delivering significant financial savings. This proposal has a number of elements:

- Improved performance management: in particular ensuring all opportunities for redeployment are exhausted before the Council incurs the cost of redundancy
- > **Better vacancy management:** ensuring that agency and temporary staff are only engaged to cover vacant posts when it is absolutely necessary
- Sickness management ensuring that backfilling, acting up and the engagement of agency cover for staff sickness only occurs when it is absolutely necessary, and review the appropriateness of allowances.

Together these proposals will deliver an on-going saving of £3.45 million during 2010/11.

Figures in £000s	Grants		General Fund		TOTAL	
	One off reduction	Ongoing revenue savings	One off reduction	Ongoing revenue savings	One off reduction	Ongoing revenue savings
5.1. Improved performance				600		600

management						
5.2 Vacancy management				2,050		2,050
5.3 Sickness management / allowances etc.				800		800
TOTAL	0	0	0	3,450	0	3,450

2. Service implications of saving:

Management arrangements will be introduced to ensure that the proposals do not unintended consequences for front-line services. For example, all vacancies will be subject to review by a panel of senior officers and those vacancies thought to be vital to maintaining services will be allowed to be filled. The estimated savings from this approach have been calculated on this assumption.

3. Actions required to achieve saving:

All proposals will be discussed with the Trade Unions. Detailed arrangements for vacancy management will be worked up and implemented together with advice for managers on performance management and sickness management. All processes will be overseen by a panel of senior officers to ensure that the impact on services is minimised.

Anticipated date for full implementation:

Immediately

Implementation Risks/ Issues including management/ mitigation issues

Estimates are forecasts based on previous years' experience in relation to vacancy and sickness levels. Some measures are subject to the change management procedure.

4. Potential implications for staff, contractors, partners, assets and other Directorates:

The objective is to minimise the impact on the jobs of Council's employees, and service users, although some staff may find themselves asked to work flexibly to cover for the absence of colleagues. It is anticipated that the authority will have a lower call on its vendor management contract for the supply of agency staff as a result of this contract.

5. Other risk factors which could prevent this saving being achieved following implementation

6. Efficiency/ value for money. How will this proposal contribute towards greater efficiency/ better value for money and how will the efficiency improvement be measured?

The Council's workforce represents around 40% of its cost base. Efficient management of the workforce is an important element in responding to the efficiency agenda and delivering savings for local services without impacting unduly on residents.

Proposal 6:

Reduction in Third Party spend on the Council's TITLE OF SAVING OPTION: management development programme

FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

_	-	Sav	ring £000s
		One-off	Ongoing
General Fund			450

1. Outline/ details of saving proposal, including indications of stage of development, and work and timescales needed to finalise proposal:

In recent years the Council has increasingly focused its attention and ambition on delivering a workforce that reflects the Community it serves. It has done this by running positive action schemes in professional services (such as finance and social care) by recruiting local graduates and apprentices and by running focused leadership and development programmes.

Detailed work during 2009/10 revealed that the Council was exceeding its targets in all areas except principally with regard to the representation of BME staff in the top 5% of earners. Although progress was steadily improving in this area – it was not fast enough. To address this issue the Council embarked upon a re-appraisal of it strategic approach to the progression of BME staff into senior positions. In summary this analysis argued that the Council should move away from a reliance on externally provided and accredited leadership development courses, and instead focus on medium to long term coaching and mentoring, talent spotting and work based learning opportunities. To facilitate this, the Council introduced a vacancy assurance process for senior jobs to ensure that opportunities for talented internal staff were maximised.

The lion's share of the Council's management development expenditure has been funded by the grants that have now been cut. Consequently this proposal seeks to protect those development opportunities that have proven to work – for example the apprentice and graduate programme and the social worker scheme, while at the same time reducing the use of external accredited training, in line with the recommendation of the workforce to reflect the community strategy.

This proposal will deliver an on-going saving of £450,000 per annum.

Figures in £000s	Gra	ints	Genera	al Fund	TO	TAL
	One off reduction	Ongoing revenue savings	One off reduction	Ongoing revenue savings	One off reduction	Ongoing revenue savings

6. 1 Reduce third sector expenditure on		450		0	
management development programme					
TOTAL	0	450	0	0	0