

Service Review Options**- Progress against agreed options – December 2017**

TOTAL SAVINGS IDENTIFIED FROM SERVICE REVIEW OPTIONS

£1,461,870

TOTAL SERVICE REVIEW SAVINGS REFLECTED WITHIN THE MTFP TO DATE

£1,017,840

Economic Development and Town Centre Management			
Option identified	Potential saving identified	Progress to date	Actual savings reflected within MTFP
Cease use of TownCentric - savings generated through termination of lease arrangement and from associated premises costs, plus from no longer requiring cleansing staff and casual staff to cover lone-working periods.	£66,310	COMPLETED - Towncentric was closed on 31 December 2016. £48,150 of (largely) premises-related budgets have already been removed from the 2017/18 MTFP, reflecting the part-year saving of handing back the property on 9 June 2017. The ongoing savings are approximately £58k per annum and are already reflected within the MTFP.	£57,800
Restructure of staffing resource which will result in the deletion of 4.5 posts within the tourism, town centre management and arts & heritage section. The remaining staff will be restructured to form a new town centre team which will be based at the Civic Centre.	£92,010	ON GOING - £79,960 full year savings from 2018/19 onwards already realised within the MTFP, with further savings potentially achieved in future months. No further changes made to the MTFP at this stage until final confirmation/details received, but current workings show a maximum possible saving of around £82k in a full year i.e. lower than initially anticipated. This is due to an expected redeployment into a Market Maintenance Operative post not happening with a new member of staff recruited instead, as well as a smaller reduction to the Arts & Heritage Officer post than originally anticipated.	£79,960
Reduction in available budgets as follows: Tourism & Town Twinning activity • (£3,025) cessation of membership of external tourism bodies - Visit Kent and Tourism South East • (£2,000) in town twinning budget through reduced frequency of activity Economic development activity • (£1,250) withdrawal of sponsorship of Dartford & Gravesham Business Awards • (£4,500) cessation of annual 121 business support via Enterprise First • (£2,000) reduction in economic development activity budget - underspend Town centre management activity • (£6,150) reduction in town centre maintenance budget - underspend • (£18,080) reduction in town centre management budgets - events, flags, In Bloom and Christmas Lights. Activities will continue but potential to scale-down without material effect.	£37,010	COMPLETED - £39,370 already removed from all years of the MTFP. Final total slightly higher than originally anticipated due to incorporating further minor adjustments to supplies & services budgets.	£39,370

Option identified	Potential saving identified	Progress to date	Actual savings reflected within MTFP
<p>The tourism offer will be slimmed down and will be delivered via a desk service at the Market or other visitor points (such as cruise terminal, Cyclopark, large leisure events) 4 days per week (Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday). The Visit Gravesend website and use of social media will continue. There will be a reduction in the range of brochures/leaflets available with a focus on those related to local information. Bookings for boat trips, historic talks and walks etc. will be managed on-line 7/24 and at the information points, although payment will be by card only. National Express bookings would cease. Guided walks will continue. The talks programme will continue though will be hosted from alternative locations. Exhibitions/displays of local visitor interest can be presented within the Market and/or in the Blake Gallery. Retail activity will be reviewed and reduced to a number of popular core lines and sold from the Market. The council will continue to run a mobility scooter service from the Market, which has close proximity to car parking and the town centre together with accessibility to and from the main Market Hall.</p>	£0	COMPLETED - Budgets for 2018/19 onwards have been amended in the MTFP.	-£13,400
<p>Additional income from businesses seeking a commercial/promotional presence within the town centre.</p>	£15,000	COMPLETED - Income budget of £15,000 per annum established within MTFP from 2017/18 onwards. As at the end of November 2017, £7,090 income has been invoiced. There are indications that there has been reduced demand for a presence in the town centre, possibly due to a perception that the road works around the station has had an impact on ease of access into the town. Virgin Media have reduced their presence as they are undertaking works in the town at the moment.	£15,000
<p>Following on from the capital works to renovate the site, new arrangements at the Market have led to an improved budgetary position of around £45k on a full-year basis.</p>	£45,560	COMPLETED - The 2017/18 Budget has already been adjusted by £33k, and future year budgets by around £45k. This accounts for the anticipated "staggered" effect of the Market's growth since redevelopment.	£43,870
<p>Cease the use of gatekeepers to secure pedestrianisation of key town centre routes and replaced with either rising bollards or cameras to enforce the no-entry hours</p>	£37,400	ON GOING - Gatekeeper service ceased at the time of gas works being undertaken in King Street at the end of 2016/17. Alternatives are being explored and the option of removing buses from King Street has been recently been declined by Arriva. Automatic number plate recognition via camera enforcement is being explored. Any technical solution will require expenditure which has yet to be factored into these figures. The King Street gate is currently being covered with a casual service. Budgets relating to the Gatekeeper posts have been removed from the MTFP resulting in annual reductions of around £42k, although in the interim there is some additional expenditure on casual staffing.	£41,630
TOTALS	£293,290		£264,230

Public Health & Communities			
Option identified	Potential saving identified	Progress to date	Actual savings reflected within MTFP
Undertake a review of booking needs and ascertain the most effective way in which such bookings can be administered. Whilst the Committee Section is adequately equipped to provide administrative support to the Youth Council, discussions are underway to ascertain whether the Youth Team at the Gr@nd could also provide support to the Youth Council.	No Saving	ON GOING - Youth Council - discussions are progressing with The Grand in respect of an SLA for £4k Youth Council funding. This is proposed to focus on renewing connections with regional and national youth councils; confirming representation from schools and other youth organisations; consultation on issues affecting young people to inform council decision making; and, renewed participation of youth council representatives in council committees, activities and the Youth Action Group.	N/A
From 2017/18, the annual budgets for Older and Younger Persons will be reduced to £25,000 each with a corresponding reduction to revenue contributions to capital outlay.	£50,000	COMPLETED - The 2017/18 and all future year budgets have already been adjusted by £50,000 to take account of this change.	£50,000
Reduce individual annual Member Grants for 44 Elected Members of Gravesham Borough Council from £1,000 each to £500 each	£22,000	COMPLETED - The 2017/18 and all future year budgets have already been adjusted by £22,000 to take account of this change.	£22,000
Review of existing community engagement budgets and deletion of the Leaders Community budget which paid for additional events such as the Christmas programme.	£56,600	COMPLETED - The 2017/18 and all future year budgets have already been adjusted by £56,600 to take account of this change.	£56,600
Given that the provision of the annual fireworks display was originally at the request of and funded by Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS) in order to reduce the risk of fires and accidents from home bonfires and displays, seek an annual contribution of £15,000 from that Service to future years' displays. Contact to be made with KFRS and other potential sponsors to discuss and agree proposal.	£15,000	COMPLETED - KFRS have been contacted and they confirm that they would not be able to offer funding sponsorship to any Firework displays across the County. Officers have explored other options regarding this budget and it has been identified that, due to the decision by Kent County Council to remove funding for the Neighbourhood Forums, the council is also able to release this budget (as the council previously match-funded the forums). As such, there is a total saving of £22,000 against the Neighbourhood Forum budget which enables the council to achieve the £15,000 saving and still provide the fireworks event in future years.	£15,000
In liaison with the Cabinet Portfolio Holder, officers be requested to discuss with the Gr@nd service delivery options that will assist the Council's budget position. The main savings in this area have been taken from a vacant Service Manager post which was being retained to ensure that we could meet our public health commitments. This work has been covered by the Director and Assistant Director for the last 2 years and it is felt our commitments are being met with regard to Public Health without the need to draw on this budget.	£50,610	COMPLETED - The Director and Assistant Director (Communities) between them continue to cover the strategic public health work previously delivered by the (vacant) Service Manager post. This is a sustainable arrangement that will be continued, thus allowing the vacant post to be deleted. This action is now completed, realising an annual saving of around £52k.	£51,600
TOTALS	£194,210		£195,200

Parking & Amenities			
Option identified	Potential saving identified	Progress to date	Actual savings reflected within MTFP
Car Parking Fees - increase parking fees whilst still remaining cheaper than most other councils in Kent.	£157,000	COMPLETED - The new fee structure across all pay and display car parks was introduced on 03 April 2017, and budgets have been adjusted for all years within the MTFP.	£157,000
Resident Parking - Residents' Parking fees in Gravesham are significantly lower than elsewhere in Kent. Even with the fee increases, annual fees in Gravesham will remain cheaper than Residents' Parking fees currently charged by most other councils in Kent.	£18,000	COMPLETED - The increase to residential parking permits and visitors permits was introduced on 03 April 2017, and budgets have been adjusted for all years within the MTFP.	£18,000
Controlled Parking Zones - It is recognised that some aspects of the existing Controlled Parking Zones (CPZ's) are in need of being updated. The review of CPZ's is a significant piece of work. It is anticipated that converting the existing £15 fee for a five-year permit to an annual permit would generate an additional £9,000pa (£9k in year 1, £18k in year 2 and so on until reaching £45k pa at year 5).	£9,000	ON GOING - This work was unable to commence until a consolidated traffic regulation order was in place. The consolidated order took longer to complete than anticipated but went live on 30 October 2017. Some background work on the CPZ review has already started and residents will be contacted in January 2018 to inform of the review of the CPZ's and the change in permit validity.	-
Public Toilets - Consideration of alternative ways of providing the service at a reduced cost taking account of advantages / disadvantages of proposed changes. Development of a community toilet scheme with local businesses to replace the proposed closures where appropriate.	£76,000	COMPLETED - The Community Toilet Scheme went live in July 2017 which allowed for the closures of Perry Street, Clive Road and Parrock Street. The toilets located in Meopham and Cobham, whilst still open, will be managed by the parish in the future. Legal are currently dealing with each parishes' solicitor to end the current lease. A full year saving of £54,770 in 2018/19 has now been reflected within the MTFP. If the sites already closed/closing are either sold or demolished, further savings of around £7k could be realised i.e. NNDR costs, but no changes will be made to the MTFP until confirmation is received.	£54,770
TOTALS	£260,000		£229,770

Revenues & Benefits			
Option identified	Potential saving identified	Progress to date	Actual savings reflected within MTFP
<p>A firm commitment to the delivery of a fully shared service for the Revenues and Benefits service, in line with Cabinet's original authority to explore this option provided in 2015.</p> <p>A shared service would operate between two Councils (with work currently underway between Gravesham and Tonbridge & Malling Council) that would see the delivery of a fully shared service for Revenues & Benefits, with this combined service operating from a single location (with a hub at the alternative location to provide customer access). Indicative launch date of 1 July 2018 to allow for amalgamation of IT systems, TUPE transfer of staff to single employer, and linkages to MyAccount solution to be developed.</p>	<p>Savings related to this element of the service review will not be counted as part of the service review process as they have already been included in the Shared Services savings target within the Medium Term Financial Strategy</p>	<p>ON GOING - Following discussions with relevant Councillors, the decision has been taken to cease the proposed shared service at this time. This decision has been reached due to the imminent roll-out of Universal Credit within the two local authority areas, the need to consider the inter-relationships between the Revenues & Benefits service and other services delivered by the Council, and the identification of some significant technical challenges associated with delivering a combined service whilst maintaining services to the public</p>	-
<p>The introduction of a comprehensive customer access platform (a MyAccount solution) to deliver a paperless solution to many functions delivered by the Revenues and Benefits team, and therefore generate the maximum efficiency savings in relation to printing, postage and processing of paper documents, together with facilitating the delivery of a fully shared service.</p>	£60,000	<p>ON GOING - A site visit to Cambridge has been undertaken and a further demo will be undertaken this week. The approach is to still purchase the same solution as T&M to help get a better price.</p>	-
<p>A fundamental review of the payment methods used by the council will be undertaken (to tie-in with the termination of the Co-operative Bank contract for the use of PayPoint which ends on 31 March 2018).</p>	£37,000	<p>ON GOING - Work to redesign Bank Reconciliation arrangements following implementation of the new Cash Management System for the Council have resulted in a reduced resourcing requirement for this task. This has enabled an ongoing staff saving of 0.5FTE to be realised from 2018/19. The Method of Payment Review has been concluded and the following workstreams are underway:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BillPayment service secured with 'go live' scheduled for 1 March 2018, in line with annual council tax billing. Reduced transactional charges secured for transactions made using both Paypoint outlets and Post Office. • The Adelante project continues, albeit implementation of the tablet kiosks in the Gateway Area is delayed from end of November until January 2018. • Work has commenced to analyse payments taken through the existing Kiosk Machines in the Gateway and a plan is being prepared to migrate these payments to other methods. • Work has commenced to consider the options for the direct debit offering by the council. • There continues to be a drive to reduce cheque payments to the council. 	£14,110
TOTALS	£97,000		£14,110

Regulatory Services			
Option identified	Potential saving identified	Progress to date	Actual savings reflected within MTFP
Make contact with other councils in Kent who share a boundary with Gravesham to discuss opportunities for a shared service. Shared boundary is required for logistical purposes due to the local inspection/site visit based nature of this service. Due to current shared services already in place or being pursued with Medway Council in other service areas, Medway will be approached in the first instance.	£88,000	ON GOING - A series of meetings have been held with Medway Council and Tonbridge and Malling BC to explore a 2 way or 3 way shared Environmental Health service. Officers have shared and analysed comprehensive Environmental Health Service information including premises, risk and workload profiles and current staffing arrangements and ways of working. Officers have also undertaken some preliminary sharing of financial details. Staff engagement sessions were held on 30 November 2017 to bring all EH staff from the potential partners together to get their views ,ideas and input at an early stage. HR staff and Union Representatives have been kept informed and engaged. Learning visits have been made to two other shared environmental health service arrangements already operating in Kent. TMBC have now decided that they will not be progressing further with a shared service at this time and have withdrawn from the process. Gravesham and Medway are still committed to exploring further the shared service option. Next steps would be development of costings and project plan, with input from HR, Finance, Legal and IT as well as the Environmental Health leads.	-
For all locally set licensing fees, review fee structures such that full cost recovery is achieved.	£14,900	COMPLETED - All locally set licensing fees and charges within Regulatory Services were subject to comprehensive review as part of the fee setting process for 2017/18. The revised fees, set to full cost recovery, are now published and implemented, resulting in a positive effect across all years of the MTFP of £17,000. During the first months of 2017/18 we have seen no downturn in applications and renewals, and therefore if trends continue throughout the full year, the full additional income will be realised.	£17,000
Proposals have been received from both Medway and Dartford Councils for a shared resource which will reduce the cost of the CCTV service.	£64,000	On GOING - The sharing of a CCTV control desk has been agreed and put in place with Medway through the CCTV Partnership. A 2017-18 in-year saving of £44,340 has been realised, with annual savings thereafter incorporated into the MTFP of £59,340. Other budget lines are still being reviewed - there may be further minor savings to be realised once this has concluded, and therefore no further change has been made to the MTFP as yet.	£59,340
TOTALS	£166,900		£76,340

Planning & Regeneration Services			
Option identified	Potential saving identified	Progress to date	Actual savings reflected within MTFP
Business Process Re-engineering (Development Management)	No saving identified at this stage	Majority of information needed for PAS Review sent in September. Staffing information still outstanding from GBC	-
Explore the opportunity for implementing a shared service for the Development Management technical function	£10,000	Initial discussions with Medway have focused on improving the existing situation and enhanced resilience.	-
Introduction of a more corporate approach to GIS/LLPG - deletion of post from establishment.	£31,500	COMPLETED - This vacant post will deliver a full saving in year for 2017/18, and has been deleted thereafter within the MTFP ensuring that the saving is on-going.	£31,500
Review and increase in the charges for pre-applications advice	£8,000	Financial Services have been advised that for their work on fees and charges for 2018-19, they should assume the current pre-application advice fees. Staff are currently monitoring the time that different pre-apps take and once we have had time to collate this information, we can consider the extent to which the pre-app fees need to be amended to enable the costs of this non-statutory, but important, service to be full recovered.	-
Reduce the annual contributions to the Planning Policy reserve. The Planning Policy reserve was established in 2011-12 with an annual contribution of £100,000 and officers are asked to detail if the full level of contribution is required.	£50,000	COMPLETED - As highlighted in the Provisional Budget Outturn Report 2016/17 for Cabinet, in 2016/2017 a £100,000 contribution was put into the Planning Policy Reserve - see http://democracy.gravesham.gov.uk/documents/s35228/CabinetFA%20-%20Budget%20Monitoring%20Report%20-%20Outturn%2016-17.pdf This has resulted in a closing balance in the reserve at 31/03/2017 of £328,000. It is proposed that for 2017/2018 a further £100,000 contribution is made. From 2018/2019, the contribution into the Planning Policy Reserve will be reduced to £50,000 per year. This will be kept under review to ensure reserves are maintained at a level sufficient to deliver the approved programme of work.	£50,000
Review of the Regeneration & Major Projects Team - The Service Manager (Major Regeneration Projects) has a fixed-term contract until October 2019 and this post will not be filled at that point, thereby realising an in-year saving in 2019-20 of circa £19,400 and on-going savings from 2020/21. A further review of the team and the key projects underway will also be undertaken as this stage.	£46,500	COMPLETED - The contract for this post is fixed-term and will automatically cease in October 2019, delivering a partial in-year saving for 2019/20 and the full saving thereafter. The MTFP has been adjusted to reflect a full-year saving in 2020/21 of £49,540.	£49,540
TOTALS	£146,000		£131,040

Customer & Theatre Services			
Option identified	Potential saving identified	Progress to date	Actual savings reflected within MTFP
Move more internal services into the contact centre. It is anticipated that this will enable the council to reduce the establishment by 2 FTE as digital contacts increase and call volumes decline, and will also allow for greater efficiencies in the delivery of the service in the interim	£49,920	A total of 23 vacant hours (annual budget of £16,000) within Customer Services has been ring-fenced to count towards this savings target. Further work has been undertaken to identify which services are receiving high volume calls which could potentially be transferred to the contact centre. Consideration is having to be given to the number of service areas where 'other factors' are at play which could affect the ability to achieve savings from those areas, for example, where discussions are taking place for potential shared services.	-
Introduction of an intelligent IVR telephone system to support the work of the department.	No saving identified at this stage	Visits have made to telephony providers to understand how their IVR systems could better support the council with handling telephone contacts and reducing the resource required to route calls appropriately or react to changing situations, such as peak contacts during summonse and reminder periods. Any new system will be considered in conjunction with a corporate telephone solution which the IT Department have scheduled for the next financial year.	-
Determine the strategic direction of The Woodville moving into the future.	No saving identified at this stage	COMPLETED - Strategy was presented to Cabinet as part of the Service Review papers and set out the strategic direction of the Woodville.	N/A
Look to restructure and reduced the current offer from The Woodville.	£41,000	The team have been involved in reviewing the priorities for The Woodville and the appropriate structure to support the business moving forward. A draft structure has been developed, which will be presented to Management Team for agreement. The structure will return £5k saving to be offset against this target. The monthly governance group have reviewed income and expenditure lines and are confident that the savings identified will be returned.	-
Explore the opportunity to bring the box office function in-house.	£20,000	Calculations to date confirm that the identified savings will be achieved when the box office system returns inhouse. Meetings with suppliers and key internal departments (IT and Digital teams) will be scheduled for the new financial year to plan the procurement and implementation of the new system.	-
TOTALS	£110,920		£0

Direct Services Organisation (DSO)			
Option identified	Potential saving identified	Progress to date	Actual savings reflected within MTFP
Introduce a recycling service for trade waste customers	£10,000	Current customers are being transferred onto the trade waste recycling service when possible. So far we have 20 customers on the paper and cardboard recycling service. An income of £5,000 has been included in the 2018/19 budget.	£5,000
Implement a combination of software to help manage services across the depot including waste management, grounds maintenance and Cemeteries.	No saving identified at this stage	A PID document is currently being drafted and the procurement options being reviewed. It is anticipated the full procurement process will start in early 2018.	-
Increasing the green waste service through service enhancements and, linked to this, introduction of compostable sacks for green waste.	No saving identified at this stage	COMPLETED - The enhanced garden waste service was introduced in March 2017. The number of subscriptions has continued to grow throughout 2017 with both the new options (140ltr bin and paper sacks) being very popular. Service is expected to continue to grow throughout 2018.	£45,000
Introducing a charging policy for developers to enable the council to recoup the cost of wheeled bins in new developments.	£6,400	A waste and recycling requirements for new residential developments document is currently being drafted and will include a formal charging policy for developers. The council already charges for the supply of bins to blocks of flats with increasing numbers being purchased via the council. An income budget of £2,000 has been included in the 2018/19 budget.	£2,000
Introduce a premium house/garden clearance service.	No saving identified at this stage	Trailing by undertaking work to remove rubbish from council owned voids to establish the viability of the service This will only become viable when new software is in place to control administration.	-
Introduce a wheeled bin cleaning service across the borough	No saving identified at this stage	Initial costings to identify the cost of equipment, staff and level of charges to customers are being established. Marketing and promotions to be discussed with communications team. This will only become viable when new software is in place to control administration.	-
Cease the current external clinical waste collection contract and deliver the service in-house	£25,000	This will only become viable when new software is in place to control administration.	-
Introduce a charging policy for the standard searches that are currently undertaken free of charge (Cemeteries)	£2,000	Currently reviewing charges levied by other Local Authorities	-
Handing back of Highways verge maintenance to KCC	£20,150	COMPLETED - Following a review of the horticultural service, one vacant post has been deleted from the establishment for 2018/19. The MTFP has been updated from 2018/19 onwards to reflect this change.	£20,150
Delivering Team Green in-house and realising a saving/increased output.	£40,000	COMPLETED - It has been agreed that 2017/18 will be the final year of the Team Green project so the £40,000 saving will be realised for 2018/19 and thereafter within the MTFP.	£40,000
Implementing an annual budget for maintenance of closed church yards.	-£5,000	COMPLETED - Annual budget for the maintenance of closed church yards included in the MTFP for 2017-18 onwards.	-£5,000
Commercialisation of the depot	£30,000	Research is being completed as a precursor to the preparation of a business case.	-

Option identified	Potential saving identified	Progress to date	Actual savings reflected within MTFP
Explore alternative uses for the former Apollo building, which is currently being used for storage.	£35,000	There has been interest from a couple of companies looking at renting the space. The building which is currently being used for storage needs to be cleared to provide a rentable space to make it an attractive proposition for potential leases.	-
Explore the improved use of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) in order to make better use of the resources available.	£30,000	The mapping of council assets such as litter and dog bins has started and will continue through the winter period. This will allow for the emptying of bins to effectively managed and allow easier reporting and identification by management and the public if there is an issue with a bin.	-
TOTALS	£193,550		£107,150