

REPORT TO THE CABINET

Date	16 January 2018
Cabinet Member	Councillor Peredur Jenkins
Subject	Savings Overview: Progress report on realising savings schemes
Contact Officer	Dafydd L Edwards, Head of Finance

DECISION SOUGHT

To note the encouraging progress towards realising the 2015/16 – 2017/18 savings schemes.

1. INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

The progress of realising the savings which are in the 2015/16 – 2017/18 Savings Strategy is reported here.

In the Council's Financial Strategy, we had planned for savings of £7,414,751 in 2017/18. Realising the individual schemes is the responsibility of the relevant Cabinet members, and the Cabinet Member for Finance keeps an overview of the whole picture in order to identify any problems with the procedure, or any specific department.

The individual Cabinet Members' performance reports to the meetings on 2nd, 9th and 16th January have already detailed, as necessary, on the individual savings schemes within their own portfolios.

2. 2016/17 (and previous) DEPARTMENTAL SCHEMES

Appendix 1 summarises the achievements of each department against the savings target set for them for the year 2016/17, and updates the position in respect of the schemes that remain to be realised. Of the 144 schemes, 142 have been realised in full or in part, and it is expected that the few schemes that remain will be fully realised shortly. In financial terms (£), this means that 99% of the 2016/17 schemes have by now been realised. It is also pleasing to note that only one scheme from 2015/16 remains un-realised, and a method of realising this scheme soon has been identified.

3. 2017/18 DEPARTMENTAL SCHEMES

Likewise, **Appendix 2** summarises the present forecast in respect of realising the 2017/18 schemes and savings. Of the 122 schemes, 103 have been realised and a further 7 are on track to be realised on time. In financial terms (£), this means that 77% of the financial savings have by now been realised, with a further 3% on track to be realised.

The “slippage” figures include the substantial challenge in realising a number of schemes in the Adults Department and the Children’s Department.

In my previous report to Cabinet on 19 September, there was reference to the proposal by the Head of the Adults Department to submit a report outlining his wish to amalgamate a number of the individual schemes within various headings. This would include an alternative way of recording the financial benefit arising from working in a more efficient manner. By now, I understand that it is proposed that this report will be presented to Cabinet on 13 February 2018 and if the proposal is approved, it is expected that a substantial amount of the savings within the 2017/18 schemes will be realised on time.

The Children’s Cabinet Member’s report, presented to Cabinet on 9 January, refers to the challenge of realising this year’s savings schemes and, possibly, the remainder of the savings from the “Improving Benefits by Transforming Children’s Services” scheme as had been forecasted. It is clear that financing child care is an area of concern to many local authorities, and I encourage the Children’s Cabinet Member to submit the results of the review as referred to in his report as soon as possible, to enable Cabinet to consider the need for the Children’s Department to submit an alternative proposal to realise the relative financial savings.

There is one scheme in the Highways Department that continues to cause concern, and steps are being taken to submit a report for consideration by the Scrutiny Committee, and possibly to support an alternative means of fully realising this saving.

4. CONCLUSION

Generally, I am very satisfied with progress seen recently to realise the savings from the historical schemes that had slipped. Further, the forecast in respect of the remaining 2017/18 schemes is also on the whole very promising. Naturally, it will of course be necessary for the Cabinet Members to continue to monitor the savings schemes and I am aware that this work is progressing. Therefore, I request that the Cabinet notes the encouraging progress towards realising the 2015/16 – 2017/18 savings schemes.

View of the Local Member

Not relevant

Views of the Statutory Officers

Monitoring Officer:

No observations from a propriety perspective.

Head of Finance:

I have collaborated with the Cabinet Member in the preparation of this report and I confirm the content.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – 2016/17 Savings Schemes Overview by department

Appendix 2 – 2017/18 Savings Schemes Overview by department