Strategic Workstreams

1.1   Acknowledging the need for a strategic approach to the development of budget options, the following 8 strategic workstreams provide the basis for :-

- *Workstream 1 - Organisational Review* – in line with the emerging new Corporate Plan, which is due to be published in draft later this year, there is a need to consider the robustness of the Council's existing target operating model (and with it the organisational structure, governance and processes) to determine how best to deliver key policies. This will initially be informed by a diagnostic exercise to review current ways of working, identifies how staff spend their time and where opportunities for efficiencies may be available and what structures are most appropriate to achieve the Council's objectives;

- *Workstream 2 - Asset Review* – recognising that the impact of Covid-19 has meant the Council has adopted a form of hybrid working, supported by a significant investment in technology that supports different ways of working, combined with a need to review the Council's asset base in the context of priorities for service delivery, it is proposed to undertake an Asset Review.

  Phase 1 of the Asset Review will focus on the following assets (and follows on from the completion of Phase 1 of the Accommodation Strategy):-

  o *The 'Tower'* – following the completion of Phase 1 of the Accommodation Strategy, this property is largely vacant; the next step requires the building to be completely vacated thereby reducing the operating costs as much as possible (to include taking the building out of the rating system). In parallel with this, work to repurpose the building needs to be accelerated;

  o *Duke Street* – the proposal here is to consider how best to use the building in the context of the Council's accommodation needs;

  o *Davyfield Depot* – given potential interest in part of the Daisyfield Depot site for redevelopment combined with the impact of hybrid working, there is an opportunity to consider the reconfiguration of the Depot which could result in a capital receipt for the Council, the provision of land for business expansion and reduce the operating costs of the Depot;

  o *One Cathedral Quarter* – again, acknowledging the attractiveness of this building to the commercial sector, the proposal here is to consider how best to use the building as part of the broader approach to accommodation needs.

  Phase 2 of the Asset Review is subject to the completion of the updated Asset Management Plan which, as well as Accommodation, will consider the sufficiency of the Council's broader operational assets. This may highlight opportunities for further rationalisation of Council assets. It is expected that the first draft of the updated Plan will be produced in December 2022.

- *Workstream 3 - Alternative Models of Service Delivery* – the Council has a good track record of considering alternative models for service delivery in a range of functions. The proposal here is to consider whether alternative models of service delivery for frontline services such as Waste Collection, Grounds Maintenance, Highways Maintenance, Building Cleaning and Building Maintenance might be possible whilst at the same time being provided at lower cost. Likewise, there are different operating models for Leisure, Culture and Arts Services and the proposal here would be to evaluate the options for future delivery with a focus on cost reductions/income generation;

- *Workstream 4 - Review of the Childrens Services Operating Model* – subject to the Organisational Review work identified above and acknowledging both the recent outcome of the Ofsted Inspection of Childrens Services and the extent to which additional investment has been made in the service, it is proposed to review the current operating model to ensure that the service is 'fit for the future' whilst at the same time considering what scope for budget efficiencies and reductions is possible;

- *Workstream 5 - Review of Adult Social Care Operating Model* – again, subject to the Organisational Review work identified above and with the recent appointment of a new Executive Director for Adult Services and Prevention, there is an opportunity to undertake a root and branch review of the Adult Social Care Operating Model. Indeed, with the significant reforms of Adult Social Care to be implemented over the next 18 months, how the Service is delivered requires reviewing so that it is positioned to deal with the changes;

- *Workstream 7 - Review of Back-Office Efficiency* – the Council has already conducted efficiency reviews of back-office functions. However, opportunities may arise following the Organisational Review (Workstream 1 above) to undertake further efficiency reviews of the Council's back-office functions. Areas of consideration may include, for example the Council's procurement/commissioning functions, Finance (including Revenue and Benefits), Business Support, property and asset management. Consideration of this matter needs to be cognisant of the work on the Accommodation Strategy which may present opportunities to co-locate services to achieve better collaboration and co-ordination of service delivery as a consequence;

- *Workstream 8 – Procurement (reduction in Contract and Third Party Spend)* – beyond the strategic review of alternative delivery models (Workstream 3 above), driving value from the Council's procurement of goods and services must be key part of the Council's approach to managing the budget deficit. As a benchmark, with any new tender for goods/services funded from the Council's Revenue Account, *a reduction of 10% in the contract value should be sought*, whether that is from better pricing, value engineering or changes in contract specification. By way of illustration, in the context of an anticipated procurement pipeline of c£12m in 2022/23, such an approach could deliver savings in excess of £1m.

1.2 Underpinning these strategic reviews will need to be a reinvigorated transformative approach to service delivery that will seek to use *data and insight* to better inform decision making and *service re-design (or transformation)* that will exploit new technologies such as automation and (eventually) artificial intelligence. Both of these matters, along with a more disciplined approach to 'Digital First' for the delivery of services, are central to the Council's agreed Digital Strategy and need to be integral to the strategic reviews above.

1.3   Similarly, a number of these workstreams are likely to require a review and refresh of the Council's ***Human Resources Strategy*** and related policies and procedures, not least around the approach to hybrid working, co-location of staff and related terms and conditions. That said, fundamentally, to achieve the savings above, there will need to be a reduction in staff numbers and this will need to be managed effectively. It should be noted that this work is in addition to the current programme of activity around Organisational Development.