

Efficiency Savings Programme

2021/22
Quarter 3 Report



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Executive Summary

This is the 2021/22 Quarter 3 Progress Report summarising the delivery status of the Efficiency Savings Programme for the full year to 31 March 2022.

The overall savings requirement for 2021/22, agreed by Council in February 2021 is £4.537m. This is made up of £1.792m for the impact of prior year business cases on 2021/22 and £3.066m of business cases within Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding and Commissioning and Asset Management, that were previously achieved by management actions that require permanent delivery in 2021/22. There were no new business cases in 2021/22.

The delivery of some of the savings proposals in 2021/22 have been significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic especially within Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding and Commissioning & Asset Management. All savings are forecasted to be fully achieved, however, when the impact of Covid-19 is taken into account.

This report shows the outcome of both the project work and the realisation of associated savings, broken down by the six key outcomes: Ready for School; Ready for Work and Life; Cared for, Safeguarded & Healthy; Great Place to Live, Work and Visit; Fit for Purpose Organisation; and Managing Resources.

The Q3 financial position at the end of January is set out in the table below. All projected shortfalls in savings achieved, are forecasted to be met through support from Covid-19 grants, given the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the ability to achieve the savings outright.

| Service | 2021/22 Target | Delivery | In Year Management Actions | Yet to be Achieved |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| | £m | £m | £m | £m |
| HECS | 3.843 | 1.800 | 0.830 | 1.213 |
| Commissioning & Asset Management | 0.264 | 0.093 | 0.000 | 0.171 |
| Environment Housing & Leisure | 0.430 | 0.430 | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| TOTAL | 4.537 | 2.323 | 0.830 | 1.384 |

- £2.323m has been delivered against the overall target via project activities outlined in associated business cases;
- A further £0.830m was achieved as the direct result of management actions during the course of the financial year;
- £1.384m of the overall target is yet to be achieved.

As part of the Authority's programme management arrangements, all business cases and projects within the Efficiency Savings Programme are monitored on a regular basis. Each project is given a RAG rating for project delivery and savings delivery. The definitions and numbers of projects falling into those categories are shown in the table below.

| Work Delivery | | | Savings Delivery | | | £m |
|-----------------------------|--|---|------------------|--|---|--------------|
| Blue | All milestones complete | 4 | Blue | Full saving realised and coded in the General Ledger | 0 | 0.000 |
| Green | All milestones are forecasted to be met within timescales; no concerns about delivery of future milestones | 6 | Green | Full saving forecasted to be realised but not yet coded in the General Ledger. | 9 | 2.306 |
| Amber | Some milestones delayed and/or minor concern about delivering some future milestones | 2 | Amber | Projected shortfall in savings up to a value of £0.050m. | 2 | 0.035 |
| Red | Milestones significantly delayed and/or major concern about delivering future milestones | 6 | Red | Projected shortfall in savings in excess of £0.050m | 7 | 2.179 |
| Total Savings Target | | | | | | 4.537 |

Ready for School

Continue to Redesign 0-19 Services (2021/22 target: £0.025m)

Starting with ante-natal services this proposal aims to continue our work to target our services at need and to manage demand for more specialist services. Critical to delivery will be the Healthy Child Programme and the work to increase the richness and consistency of the Early Help offer. This approach links to Government Policy and best practice through concentrating on prevention and developing more schools to deliver Early Years, which, in turn, saves money and avoids cost.

| | |
|--|----------------|
| Savings from Full Year Effect of 2019/20 Saving | £0.025m |
|--|----------------|

A. Selling Capacity at Riverdale (£0.025m)

Savings Delivery Status

| | |
|-----|-------|
| RAG | Amber |
|-----|-------|

The full savings target of £0.025m is met only through Covid-19 grant income, and not via the original intention of generating income from selling capacity, however, there is evidence that the use of this internal provision, as opposed to the use of externally commissioned care, is significantly more cost-effective and is, therefore, avoiding significantly increased costs.

Work Delivery Status

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| RAG | Amber |
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The demand for and sufficiency of placements for children in care will continue to be closely monitored and managed. There has not been any internal capacity in 2021/22 as a result of caring for children in North Tyneside homes, including Riverdale. This is more cost-effective than commissioning external placements, where this is appropriate, but the position will continue to be closely monitored and, where there is internal capacity, this may be sold via regional commissioning arrangements.

Ready for Work and Life

Delivering Whole System Support to Children with Additional Needs (2021/22 target: £0.300m)

Changes in legislation and national policy regarding children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) have placed significant additional demands on local authorities. These changes also place an additional emphasis on the role of “local areas” to meet the needs of children with additional needs, including the full range of partners involved.

Rising demand has created significant pressures for all local authorities and their partners and reinforced the need for a whole-system response. The Authority will build resilience in the universal offer to prepare young people with additional needs for adult life by developing an integrated approach across education, health and care services.

| | |
|---|----------------|
| Savings carried forward from 2020/21 | £0.200m |
| Savings from Full Year Effect of 2021/22 Business Case | £0.100m |

Children’s Health Funding (£0.300m)

As part of a wider strategy, this budget proposal is particularly concerned with ensuring needs are appropriately funded by the relevant agency, in line with statutory responsibilities and policy. The Service will ensure that there is a clear policy for funding decisions and a consistently applied process for ensuring funding is appropriate and that the source of funding is in line with the agreed policy. This will ensure that the Authority maximises the levels of Continuing Care funding received from the CCG where health needs have been clearly identified and are being met by packages of care commissioned by the Authority.

Savings Delivery Status

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| RAG | Green |
|-----|-------|

£0.297m of the target has been achieved, and the remaining £0.003m is still to be achieved. The proposal’s original target was for the saving to be reflected in the general ledger by the end of Quarter 1, however this has not been achieved but the saving will be met by year end.

Work Delivery Status

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| RAG | Green |
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The Service has worked on ensuring there is a clear policy for funding decisions in place and a consistently applied process for ensuring funding is appropriate and the source of funding is in line with the agreed policy. This work will ensure the Authority can maximise the levels of Continuing Care funding it receives from the CCG or the wider NHS where health needs have been clearly identified and are being met by packages of care commissioned by the Authority.

Cared for, Safeguarded & Healthy

Responding to Rising Complex Needs (2021/22 target: £0.850m)

Whilst there will be a continuing clear focus on preventing health and social needs from occurring and escalating, the need for formal care and support will continue. Complexity of need is increasing and the cost of providing services is rising exponentially. From a public health perspective, the Service will continue to focus on the principal preventable causes of ill health – tobacco, obesity, alcohol misuse and poor mental health (including social isolation). The Service will seek to reduce costs by ensuring that the Authority secures the appropriate contributions from our partners in accordance with the legislative framework, balancing the need to mitigate against the rising costs of care whilst still ensuring that people are ‘cared for and safeguarded’. The Service will carry out a review of all current funding to voluntary organisations not currently on a commissioned framework. This will provide an opportunity to review the total spend holistically and ensure any work complements and is not duplicated by the work to create new community hubs. Over the past five years the number of people supported in extra care and independent supported living schemes has continued to rise in the Borough and the Authority knows that using this approach can delay and prevent the use of more costly residential care and that our residents prefer to be supported in their own homes. This journey will continue with increased provision of specialist housing in the Borough, which is affordable now and in the longer term.

Savings from Full Year Effect of 2018/19 Saving

£0.350m

A. Responding to Rising Complex Needs (£0.250m)

Savings Delivery Status

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| RAG | Green |
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The entire savings target has been achieved. New processes and governance were implemented during 2018/19 that helped secure additional CHC and S117 funding in both 2018/19 and 2019/20 and the Service is continuing to work to ensure that additional funding is still possible due to the impact of Covid-19.

During the initial Covid-19 period, CHC assessments were stayed. In addition, from 19 March to 31 August, where people needed a new or higher package of care to prevent admission to hospital or to facilitate a faster discharge, this was allocated to the Covid-19 funding and not from base budget. This cohort of people are known as being in scheme 1. Government issued a letter on 31 July 2020 indicating the requirement to resume CHC assessments from 1 September 2020. The detailed guidance around this was not issued until 21 August 2020. This guidance identified that people in scheme 1 needed to be assessed and transferred onto either social care or CHC funding streams as soon as practicable. This work was completed and North Tyneside was the only regional local authority at that point to have completed the work.

People needing a new or higher package of care to prevent admission to hospital or to facilitate a faster discharge from 1 September 2020 were classed as being in schedule 2 and these people had their package allocated to Covid funding for up to 6 weeks. The Authority and the CCG committed to fully assessing and agreeing ongoing funding within that 6-week window.

In addition to this work, consideration needed to be given to people who received Fast Track CHC funding that are still alive 12 weeks after that agreement who also need a full assessment as well as review of ongoing CHC and shared care cases and identifying people whose needs have deteriorated as part of the progression of the disease.

Therefore, whilst there are still risks, the Service has a robust and clear plan in place that has been working and as the country transitions out of the pandemic the Service is confident to report the achieved status at the end of quarter 2.

Work Delivery Status

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| RAG | Complete |
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Significant work has been undertaken. The Service identified 6 experienced staff to work as Champions. These staff, along with the case worker have a pre-meet with the Assistant Director to discuss each individual's needs and to agree the narrative around the Authority's position at the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) in relation to where a person's needs are more than incidental and ancillary to social care. Two other managers are supporting with this work. The Champion then represents the Authority at the MDT. This ensures that the Authority's position is clearly articulated and hopefully helps to build a trusted relationship with the nurse assessors. There is evidence that this has been a successful strategy. The Service had to pull this together at short notice and the hard work of the teams is noticeable and to be commended. The teams themselves are articulating the benefit of this way of work, although it is time consuming. In addition, amendments have been made to the documentation to succinctly evidence areas of need that sit outside the Care Act domains and therefore are ineligible for social care. This not only helps evidence the Authority's position for the CCG, it helps ensure that the Authority remains Care Act compliant and does not exceed the remit of the Care Act. Work is now being extended to clients who's care needs are funded jointly by the Authority and the CCG.

B. Disability and Mental Health (£0.100m)

Savings Delivery Status

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| RAG | Green |
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The entire £0.100m savings target has been achieved.

Work Delivery Status

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| RAG | Complete |
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Both the Charlton Court and Bonchester sites were opened for clients in July 2019. This completes the work the Service set out to achieve this proposal.

C. Learning Disability (£0.500m)**Savings Delivery Status**

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| RAG | Red |
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This is the continuation of a budget proposal agreed and implemented during 2018/19. This target relates to the development of in-house or Local Authority Trading Company delivery model for complex non-residential packages, plus on-going work re: partnerships and governance, which was anticipated to deliver further savings by March 2022. At the end of the period, £0.146m of the target has been achieved, with the remaining £0.354m still to be met.

Work Delivery Status

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| RAG | Red |
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Whilst an in-house trading company model has not been established, the Service has delivered this saving in previous years by achieving additional CCG income. A review of all current funding to voluntary organisations, not currently on a commissioned framework has taken place to provide an opportunity to review expenditure holistically and ensure the work complements and is not duplicated by the work on the community hubs.

A Focus on the Social Care Customer Experience (2021/22 target: £0.550m)

Health and Social Care is a complex set of systems often governed by distinct pieces of legislature and delivered by multiple services, even within a single organisation such as the Authority. In 2017 the Service reviewed the adult social care customer journey and ensured that our customers had a named worker, based in a local team, who would remain with that person throughout their social care journey. This has proved successful and is enabling better quality customer relationships to develop, as well reducing costly, duplicate processes from occurring. The Service aims to go further and whilst there are limited direct cost savings at this stage, it is clear that getting the right person to do the right thing correctly first time means that the Service is able to direct resources more effectively and mitigate against the increasing demand for good quality advice and information. This proposal will:

- *Continue with the highly successful case management modernisation programme, to ensure that social care payments and processing are accurate, clear and efficient; and,*
- *Make best use of the new 'My Care' portal in the initial screening and contact service gateway to support NHS and other wellbeing professional to self-serve or make online referrals; this will create more time for resident calls. The new community hubs will provide close, comfortable locations for customers to meet with social work teams and reduce the number of costly home-based visits workers currently undertake.*

| | |
|--|----------------|
| Savings carried forward from 2020/21 | £0.450m |
| Savings from full year effect of 2019/20/21 savings | £0.100m |

A. Social Care Customer Experience – Assistive Technology (£0.500m)

Savings Delivery Status

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| RAG | Red |
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At the end of the period, £0.120m of the £0.500m savings target has been achieved with the remaining £0.380m outstanding. Whilst the strategy over recent years has been successful in reducing admissions to residential and nursing care, and supporting more people to live at home, the costs associated with home care have increased significantly. During 2017/18, officers worked to reduce the number of home care packages that involved two carers visiting a home, through an increased use of equipment, adaptation and technology. The Service plans to take this work further by investing in cutting-edge, modern technology which can help people do more for themselves, maintaining their independence and wellbeing. The associated financial benefit will be a reduction in the number of home care hours commissioned.

Work Delivery Status

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| RAG | Amber |
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Digital Champions have been identified and a project plan has been established and implemented to cover both the operational and strategic working groups, and further work is underway to explore alternative options for achieving this saving permanently.

A Support Through Technology Strategy has been launched. This focuses on technology being at the heart of the assessment process. The use of devices to meet identified needs is being tested. Officers are looking at ways to work with volunteers through VODA to support with shopping activity, both actual and internet shopping. Officers are also working on a pilot to introduce virtual support to individuals through existing domiciliary care providers. The next step is to incorporate this into Liquid Logic in order to capture the use of technology and track all savings.

Covid-19 has given rise to new ways of working and a greater reliance on remote technology. This has given a new range of options to further invest in assistive technology to help achieve this saving in the long term.

B. Social Care Customer Experience – Provider Payments (£0.050m)

Savings Delivery Status

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| RAG | Green |
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The whole of this savings target has been met on a permanent basis.

Work Delivery Status

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| RAG | Green |
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In 2018, HECS implemented a new case management system for children’s and adult social care. Alongside this a new payment system called ContrOcc was implemented. The Service continues the development of this system to ensure that all payments, invoices and charges are made via this system. Linked to this is an opportunity to streamline and reduce the amount of staff time currently involved in these processes.

Whilst some of the implementation plan had been completed, several aspects have been delayed due to Covid-19, in particular, the installation of the provider portal which will enable payments on actuals not commissioned services. The plan was to reduce the staffing establishment to meet this saving target.

The risk was if the staff complement was reduced prior to that there will not be enough staff to implement the changes required. This work was put on hold while payments and uplifts to providers were processed as part of the early Covid-19 response but is now on track to allow the saving to be achieved.

Leading Sector-Led Improvement (2021/22 target: £0.300m)

North Tyneside has developed a national reputation for the quality of its children’s services, including receiving Partners in Practice status from the Department for Education and the opportunity to deliver sector-led improvement (SLI) to other authorities in the country. This work will develop a long-term offer for SLI as well as exploring opportunities for North Tyneside to provide ad hoc and bespoke support to authorities that seek it. This will bring additional income.

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| Savings from Full Year Effect of 2019/20/21 Saving | £0.200m |
| Savings carried forward from 2020/21 | £0.100m |

Savings Delivery Status

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| RAG | Green |
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The total income target has been achieved via income from the Department for Education for delivery of the Partners in Practice programme.

Work Delivery Status

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| RAG | Green |
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North Tyneside Council continues to work with a number of local authorities through the Partners in Practice programme to share advice, guidance and expertise, and provide practical improvement support. This has continued to be delivered through remote methods during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Delivering our Accommodation Strategy for Social Care (2021/22 target: £0.780m)

Early work on the Cabinet's Affordable Homes Programme has demonstrated the Authority's ability to deliver specialist housing which supports independent living and reduces costs. This proposal aims to continue to shape the Authority's housing growth plans to include specialist housing products and services for children and adults with additional needs, Looked After Children and older people. The Authority has had significant success with recent developments at Mitford Gardens and Elm House, which have also proved better value for money than external options, and the joint team with commissioning, housing and social care expertise that was created for this work will continue to explore opportunities to develop a range of other internal accommodation services in line with the strategy in order to save costs on existing pilot work to deliver at scale. Specifically, the accommodation strategy for children in care and care leavers is focused on keeping children and young people connected to their communities, maintaining relationships with families and support networks, and promoting independent living with specialist housing in the Borough, which is affordable now and in the longer term.

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|---|----------------|
| Savings from Full Year Effect of 2018/19/20 Saving | £0.520m |
| Savings carried forward from 2020/21 | £0.260m |

Keeping our Children in Care within the borough (£0.780m)

Savings Delivery Status

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| RAG | Red |
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Processes to review 'high cost' placements are helping keep costs as low as possible whilst ensuring the safety of children in care, the impact of our Keeping Families Connected service evidences significant cost avoidance, and the Fostering Strategy is contributing to reduced spend on external foster placements as we increase the use of internal placements. Despite this progress, in the context of wider financial pressures relating to children in care placements, £0.520m of the full savings target has been met in-year but £0.260m remains outstanding.

Work Delivery Status

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| RAG | Red |
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The rate of children in care in North Tyneside remains the lowest in the region, with North Tyneside the only local authority in the region to reduce its rate during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, where regionally and nationally there have significant increases in the number of children entering care. Alongside this, processes to monitor and develop plans for those children in 'high cost' placements continue to demonstrate impact in reducing spend on placements whilst keeping children safe and close to home.

The new Fostering Strategy, agreed in 2019, is continuing to have a positive impact, despite the challenging circumstances of Covid-19, with continued recruitment of new carers and reduced use of external foster placements, with reduced spend as a result.

Great Place to Live, Work and Visit

Profit from Property Development (2021/22 target: £0.020m)

This business case involves two separate items: firstly, the increase in the charges made by the Authority to the Trading Companies in respect of Technical and Project Management Services by 2.5% above annual inflation, and secondly, interest income from loans made by the Authority to Aurora Properties (Sales) Limited in line with the latest approved Investment Plan to enable the construction of properties for outright market sale.

Savings from New 2021/22 Projects

£0.020m

Savings Delivery Status

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| RAG | Green |
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The full £0.020m savings target has been achieved.

Work Delivery Status

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| RAG | Green |
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Work has been on plan and will continue in future years year to maintain/increase profits.

10 Year Plan for Waste (2021/22 target: £0.400m)

For ecological and financial reasons, it is imperative that local authorities have long term plans for waste. This proposal aims to establish a 10-year plan to increase recycling and contain the growth of waste costs as well as developing a post 2022 solution for disposal of residual waste.

The Authority has a statutory duty to make arrangements to collect household waste that is capable of being recycled. This responsibility is met primarily by providing householders in the Borough with a grey bin and collecting it at the kerbside. As part of waste operations the material is delivered to a contracted processor who is responsible for separating it and finding markets to secure value from it. The contract arrangements were re-tendered resulting in a new contract commencing with a new contractor in October 2019. This new contract will provide the Authority with efficiencies in operational costs.

Savings from New 2021/22 Projects

£0.400m

Savings Delivery Status

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| RAG | Green |
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Operational costs have been reduced and the savings have been be achieved in-line with the business case.

Work Delivery Status

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| RAG | Green |
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The new contract commenced in October 2019. This saving has been achieved through operational changes that the Service was able to implement as a result of the introduction of the new contract, saving on fuel and vehicle costs. The Service is continuing to monitor the impact of Covid-19 on Waste. Volumes of waste collected increased during 2020/21 due to the Covid-19 restrictions that were in place and that higher level has remained during 2021/22 but this has not had an impact on the delivery of this saving.

A Fit for Purpose Organisation

How We Are Organised (2021/22 target: £1.038m)

As services change the organisation must change with them. This proposal aims to ensure the organisation is reshaped to reflect changes in services and reductions in resources. In addition to changes in service delivery it also aims to ensure the organisation's infrastructure is changed and shrinks in line with the rest of the organisation with resultant changes in overheads and recharges. This will include taking opportunities to streamline the Authority's decision-making infrastructure and processes where appropriate; in addition making sure that infrastructure is tested against best practice, the priorities of the Mayor and Cabinet and the market.

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|--|----------------|
| Savings from Full Year Effect of 2019/20 Saving | £0.200m |
| Savings carried forward from 2020/21 | £0.100m |

A. Youth Offending and Early Help (£0.300m)

Savings Delivery Status

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| RAG | Red |
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The original milestone was for the permanent saving to be achieved by March of the respective financial years. The saving for 2019/20 was achieved in that year through the holding of vacancies and the generation of external income from delivering services on behalf of other authorities, and the saving for 2020/21 was achieved through Covid grants, but a permanent solution is being explored for 2021/22. Whilst the target is currently forecast to not be achieved, there are a range of temporary and permanent measures being explored that can contribute to this.

Work Delivery Status

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| RAG | Red |
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Officers continue to explore the development of a new Adolescent Service, which will rationalise some existing support provided across early help and youth justice services, and we expect to lead to service efficiencies. In the meantime, vacancies continue to be held across services, as well as continuing to deliver youth justice services on behalf of another local authority, which is generating income for the service.

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| Savings from Full Year Effect of 2019/20 Saving | £0.200m |
| Savings carried forward from 2019/20 | £0.468m |

B. Additional External Income (£0.500m)

Savings Delivery Status

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| RAG | Red |
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The £0.300m target relating to external funding was achieved in 2020/21 through income received in relation to the Partners in Practice programme; the target has increased to £0.500m in 2021/22 and it is unlikely to be achieved in 2021/22.

Work Delivery Status

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| RAG | Red |
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A significant amount of work continues with other local authorities, linked to the Partners in Practice programme and the income that is received for this work. North Tyneside Council has also been asked to lead work nationally to evaluate and share learning regarding the response to Covid-19 in children's services.

C. Budget Reductions (£0.168m)

Savings Delivery Status

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| RAG | Red |
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The £0.168m target relating to legal and professional fees was met in 2019/20 through management actions and in 2020/21 only through Covid-19 grant income due to an increase in requirement for use barristers to support court proceedings relating to children; only £0.017m is currently expected to be achieved in 2021/22.

Work Delivery Status

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| RAG | Red |
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Work is on-going to identify a permanent solution for this savings target. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic small savings were being realised in both areas; legal and professional fees. However, this has not been maintained during the pandemic.

| | |
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| Savings from New 2021/22 Projects | £0.070m |
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D. Adult Social Care Review of Management (£0.070m)

Savings Delivery Status

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| RAG | Red |
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The planned saving of £0.070m saving has not been achieved.

Work Delivery Status

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| RAG | Red |
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The proposal was to reduce 1 FTE post in the Service. Staffing pressures seen as a result of the pandemic have not made this saving achievable.

Sourcing (2021/22 target: £0.010m)

The Authority is aiming to reduce its maintenance costs in respect of the Street Lighting PFI contract with SSE over each of the next three years

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| Savings from New 2021/22 Projects | £0.010m |
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Reduction in Maintenance costs to SSE (£0.010m)

Savings Delivery Status

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| RAG | Green |
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The planned saving of £0.010m saving has been achieved.

Work Delivery Status

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| RAG | Green |
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Project target achieved.

Maximising Resources

Fees and Charges (2021/22 target: £0.264m)

The Authority has an agreed Fees and Charges Policy that reflects policy priorities, need and the wider market in which we operate. This proposal will continue our work to regularly review our Fees and Charges.

Savings from Full Year Effect of 2018/19 Saving

£0.164m

Facilities and Fair Access (£0.164m)

Savings Delivery Status

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| RAG | Amber |
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The full amount of this saving has not been achieved as a result of a Cabinet decision to delay passing the increased costs to schools due to the impact of Covid-19.

Work Delivery Status

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| RAG | Complete |
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The fee increase has been postponed due to the impact of Covid-19.

Savings from New 2020/21 Projects

£0.100m

Facilities and Fair Access (£0.100m)

Savings Delivery Status

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| RAG | Green |
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The full amount of the saving has been achieved through increased income based on SLA charges to schools for Catering and Cleaning services.

Work Delivery Status

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| RAG | Complete |
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The fee increase has been applied to school SLA charges in 2021/22.