



Council: 11 December 2024

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**Report of: Chief Legal & Democratic Services Officer**

**Relevant Lead Member: Leader – Councillor Yvonne Gagen**

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**FINANCIAL SAVINGS/EFFICIENCIES - REVIEW OF MAYORAL SERVICE AND LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

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Wards affected: (All Wards);

**1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To seek approval for the new Mayoral Function and proposed savings proposals in support of the delivery of the Medium Term Financial Strategy, ( MTFS), savings proposals and 2025/26 budgets

**2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL**

- 2.1 That the revised Mayoral Function be approved and implemented from Annual Council 21 May 2025
- 2.2 That the financial efficiencies and savings outlined in this report be approved.
- 2.3 That the Chief Legal & Democratic Services Officer (Monitoring Officer) be given delegated authority to take all necessary steps to implement the approved financial and efficiency savings outlined in this report.

**3.0 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 As part of the proposed efficiency savings outlined in the MTFS report presented to Council on the 16<sup>th</sup> October 2024 consideration has been given as to what, if any savings could be achieved from a review of the Mayoral/Civic Support as well as Legal & Democratic Services generally. This report sets out suggested savings proposals.

3.2 The cost saving measures in this report are therefore made in the context of those other savings and efficiency options required as a whole Council in order to set a balanced budget for 24/25.

#### 4.0 CURRENT POSITION

##### Mayoral/Civic Support

4.1 Consideration was given as to how the Mayoral Role could be revised to maximise cost efficiencies going forward.

4.2 The Mayor is legally required to Chair full Council but other than that each Council can establish their own procedures as to the role and functions of the Mayor on an annual basis.

4.3 The table below shows the proposals for future delivery of the Civic Function:

<b>NEW MAYORAL FUNCTION/SUPPORT</b>	
This table outlines the provisions in respect of the delivery of the new Mayoral Support Function from Annual Council on the 21 <sup>st</sup> May 2025	
<b>MAYORAL RESPONSIBILITIES</b>	
Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Mayor/Deputy Mayor will be expected to Chair the meeting of Council and undertake the normal functions of the Mayor in relation to the Council's democratic functions.</li> </ul>
Events other than those organised via the Mayor's Charity Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Mayor/Deputy Mayor are expected to continue to attend Council events.</li> <li>Democratic Services will give the Mayor/Deputy Mayor advance notice of any events the Mayor/Deputy Mayor are expected to attend.</li> <li>These events shall take priority over any events organised independently via the Mayor/Deputy Mayor.</li> </ul>
Civic Car and Chauffeur (For all events)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Civic Car and Chauffeur will no longer be provided and will not be accompanied by a member of Democratic Services.</li> <li>All visits by the Mayor/Deputy Mayor will only be within the Borough</li> <li>The Mayor/Deputy Mayor will be responsible for their own travel arrangements.</li> <li>The Mayor/Deputy Mayor will self-drive to functions (within the Borough) or use a taxi – Taxi fees will be paid on production of receipts and should be claimed by the Mayor/Deputy Mayor via the payroll system</li> </ul>
Chains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It will be the responsibility of the Mayor/Deputy Mayor to collect and return the Mayoral Chains from the safe at Derby Street</li> </ul>

<p>Mayoral Visits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Mayor/Deputy Mayor will be responsible for their own diary management regarding Mayoral Visits/Meetings.</li> <li>• This includes organising visits to local community and voluntary organisations, care homes, schools, businesses, churches and events within the Borough</li> <li>• The Mayor/Deputy Mayor will be responsible for writing any required speeches for events not organised through Democratic Services.</li> </ul>
<p>Fund Raising/Committee Events</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Mayor will be given the option to organise his/her own Fundraising Events and external Committee (if any), sending out invites, dealing with attendance at events, production of posters, printing and selling of tickets.</li> <li>• The Mayor/Deputy Mayor will be responsible for their own diary management.</li> <li>• Please note that there will be no officer involvement in the establishment or running of the Fund Raising Committee and/or organisation or delivery of any activities or events including those outlined below.</li> <li>• The Fund Raising Committee will be responsible for organising attendance at their own Committee meetings, taking minutes of decisions and reporting finances, responsibility for the bank account and finances (audit) and the Licensing of events.</li> <li>• The arrangement of the bank account will remain and operate under the same conditions</li> <li>• The Mayor's Fund Raising Ball will be run entirely by the Fund Raising Committee – it will be for the Mayor to decide if he/she would like to hold one.</li> <li>• The Mayor/Deputy Mayor will be responsible for arranging and hosting events to promote civic pride, such as honouring individuals or groups to recognise excellence or contribution to the community and engaging with schools and visitors to the area</li> <li>• The Mayor/Deputy Mayor will be responsible for organising visits to local community and voluntary organisations, care homes, schools, businesses, churches</li> </ul>

	and events within the Borough as they see fit.
<b>DEMOCRATIC SERVICES RESPONSIBILITIES</b>	
Full Council and other responsibilities/meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current arrangements will continue</li> </ul>
Annual Council / Alderman / Freedom of the Borough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current arrangements will continue</li> </ul>
Organisation of other ceremonial events and flag raising eg. Remembrance Sunday, Armistice Day, Armed Forces Flag Raisings,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A flag will be raised on all agreed dates.</li> <li>• Flag raising ceremonies to be kept to a minimum.</li> </ul>
Requested Visits by Civic dignitaries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current arrangements will continue</li> </ul>
Schools Parliament elections / Local Democracy Week (to be combined where appropriate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools Parliament elections / Local Democracy Week (to be combined where appropriate)</li> </ul>
Secretarial support for the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Production and circulation of Annual Christmas Cards</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

#### 4.4 As a result of these changes the following financial efficiencies will be achieved:

Budget	2024/25	Potential 2025/26	Saving
Hospitality	3,000	2,000	1000
Bar Provisions	400	200	200
Uniforms	500	0	500
Mayors Allowance	9641	4950	4691
Deputy Mayors Allowance	1,780	1780	0
Mayoral Equipment/Repairs	350	350	0
Civic Occasions = Remembrance Events x3 Ormskirk (Sunday) Skelmersdale (Sunday) Armistice Day	9,750	9,750	0
Chauffer/Mayor's Attendant	35, 148	0	35,148
Car (approx. based on spend for 23/24)	1,500 (inc Tax insurance, service but excluding petrol)	0	1,500 Plus petrol costs

#### Legal & Democratic Services

- 4.5 Members will recall that further savings proposals were agreed at Council on the 16<sup>th</sup> October 2024 which will be implemented by officers under delegated authority. Those savings along with those outlined in this report are part of an overall restructure of Legal & Democratic Services which results in the disestablishment of two vacant posts as well as three compulsory redundancies (including the post highlighted above). Since the last report, efforts to try to secure expressions of interest in voluntary redundancy for these affected officers has unfortunately not succeeded. In addition, it has come to light that one of the posts subject to compulsory redundancy is part time

(2 days per week) which has resulted in the payback period being 4.5 years rather than the normal maximum payback period of 3 years. In view of the scale of the efficiency requirements, this payback period, given that it relates to a part time role, is deemed to be acceptable and in line with the proposed savings proposals on a pro rata basis.

- 4.6 In accordance with the Constitution, authority is therefore sought to proceed on the basis of a 4.5 year payback period as part of the general financial and efficiency savings contained in this report.
- 4.7 Consultation has already taken place with the staff affected by this change and where appropriate and feasible their views will be taken into account in the way in which the restructuring is implemented. Consultation has also taken place with the Trade Unions, who are aware of the supportive measures that are being taken by the council to minimise compulsory redundancies and seek alternative redeployments as an alternative to redundancy wherever this is possible.

## **5.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Achieving a sustainable budget is a priority for all organisations and this report seeks to assist the Council in achieving this goal.

## **6.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The proposal to review Mayoral duties is expected to deliver annual revenue savings of around £43k per annum, per table 4.4 above.
- 6.2 The proposal to restructure the Legal & Democratic team under delegated authority will deliver further savings.
- 6.3 Both proposals will incur one-off severance costs. Paragraphs 4.5 and 4.6, above, advise that one post will have a payback of 4.5 years.

## **7.0 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no health and wellbeing implications arising from this report.

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### **Background Documents**

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

This report does not have any direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and / or stakeholders. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

### **Appendices**

None