



FACING THE CHALLENGE

Warwickshire County Council • November 2010

Message from the Leader of the Council



The new coalition government is focused on dealing with the national deficit. Like all public sector bodies, Warwickshire County Council will play its part.

“Although the exact details will not be known until early December, the Comprehensive Spending Review announced on 20 October 2010 indicates a 26% reduction in Government funding to councils over the next four years.

A smaller county council is unavoidable. We will have to take difficult decisions but we will prioritise vital services to meet the needs of our communities.

We will also have to stop doing some things altogether. As the council downsizes, so will the workforce but we will avoid compulsory redundancies wherever possible.

The pace and magnitude of the financial challenge requires large scale reform. We are well placed to do this. Over the last four years the council has been undergoing a transformation programme to do things differently, more efficiently and deliver better outcomes for residents.

Although we don't have a choice about having to make £60 million of



savings by 2014, we will still have a choice about the way we spend at least £220 million a year and we will make every pound of taxpayers' money count.

I have asked council officers to scrutinise every area of spending and investigate fully the choices available to us so that we can continue to provide essential front line services within our reduced budget. Some of the options for consideration are outlined in this document.

This is the biggest challenge this council has ever had to face. We believe that it is essential for our council and our community to pull together to tackle the tough times ahead. We will take this opportunity to review, reform and improve our services to put Warwickshire in a sustainable position for the future.

We want you to tell us how you think public services could be delivered differently - please refer to the back page to give your views.”

Cllr Alan Farnell
Leader of the Council

The facts

1. We will have to make unprecedented savings of up to £60 million by 2014.

2. We have been planning for the challenges ahead and want everybody to know what options are available.

3. We are making significant efficiency savings but the reality is this will not be enough to close the gap.

4. We will have to prioritise vital services and will have to stop delivering some services altogether.

5. Major reform of all services is required.

How will we achieve £60 million savings?

- Becoming a leaner organisation by making our management, administration and support services more efficient.

Approx £17million

- Raising income by increasing charges where people can afford to pay for the services they use.

Approx £7 million

- Reforming our services by continuing with our programme of modernisation so that by doing things differently, we can save money and improve outcomes.

Approx £20 million

And finally, because the size of the financial problem is so big...

- The tough choices of stopping some services completely.

Approx £16 million

A leaner organisation

In accepting the need to face the tough choices about making cuts we, and you, must be confident that the council is as lean and efficient as possible in the way it does business. This means making sure our support services, processes and purchasing arrangements are constantly driving down costs through smarter and more efficient ways of working. We are aiming to deliver £17 million of savings in this way.

We will do this through:

Management and administration savings

We have, over the last few years, put into place a leaner management structure reducing senior roles, such as heads of service and strategic directors, by a third. We will continue to 'de-layer' our structures by reducing the number of managers and leaving vacant posts unfilled wherever we can.

Reducing accommodation costs

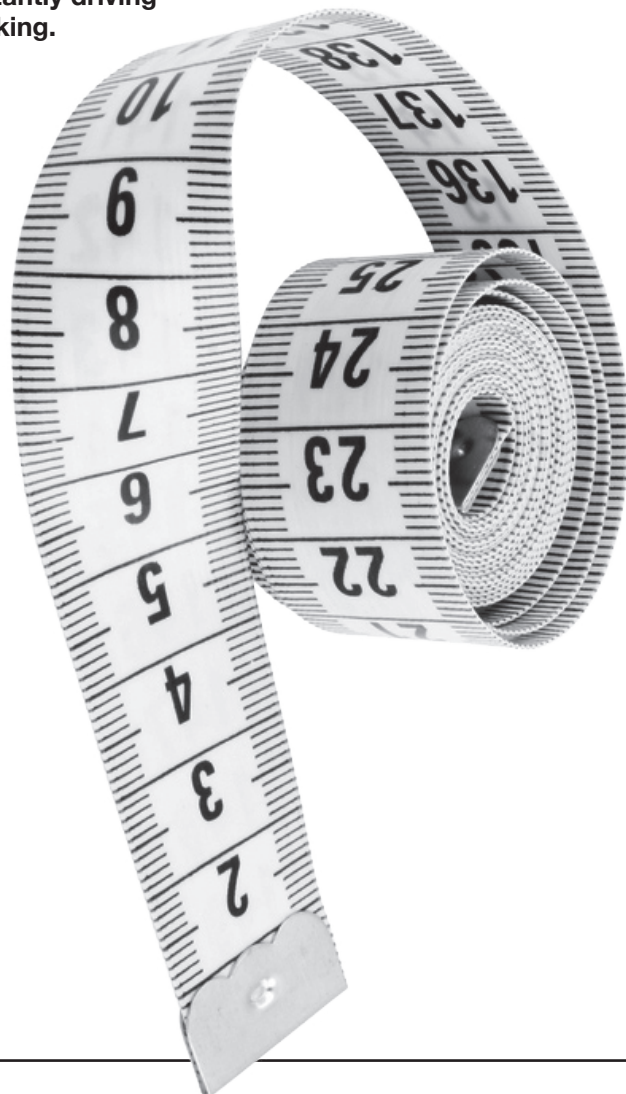
Our property strategy has a challenging target to reduce accommodation costs (excluding schools) by 30% by 2014. Of the properties that the council keeps, we will increase levels of occupancy and share buildings with partner organisations. This has the potential to cut our overheads and bring in extra money by selling surplus sites.

Introducing new IT systems

We will introduce new IT systems to support our services, starting with our financial systems. Investment will be prioritised; focusing on those that will provide more timely and accurate information for lower costs and are better able to support our front-line staff.

Better purchasing

We are already part of a large purchasing consortium to achieve economies of scale with our partners. A full review of all of the council's procurement activity is being undertaken to achieve further savings.



Raising income

We raise about 9% of our income from charging people for the services they receive. The need to make savings has meant we are looking at other areas where we can fairly increase this. This could mean increasing existing charges to reduce the level of any subsidy or by starting to charge for services for the first time. So far we have identified areas where we could raise an additional £7 million.

We have already consulted with the public about increased charges for adult social care.

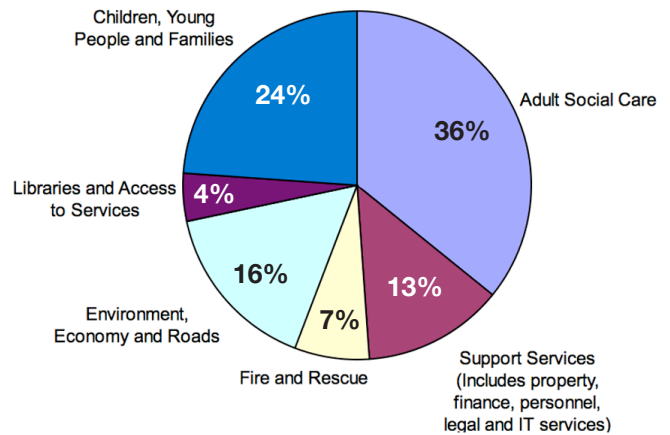
Other areas we are looking at include:

- **Increasing the income we make from our country parks, business centres and gypsy and traveller sites.**
- **Students paying the full cost of transport to faith schools and post-16 transport to schools and colleges.**
- **Increasing income from on-street parking charges.**

Revenue Budget

By 2014 the Council will have had to reduce its budget by up to £60 million but this will still leave a considerable budget of over £220 million to spend on services. This figure does not include areas where we are unable to make reductions such as the Dedicated Schools Grant.

How our revenue budget is currently distributed



Reforming our services

Our strategy is to transform services to meet the needs of our modern communities and get more for our money.

We will do this by:

- Introducing new ways of providing services that focus on the outcomes people want and not on the process
- Actively working with partners and sharing the provision of services with other local authorities
- Maximising the contribution made by communities and voluntary organisations.

We have identified the potential to achieve savings of £20 million by transforming the way we deliver our services.

One Front Door

We want people to be able to access the information and services they need as quickly and efficiently as possible. We are already working with other partners, such as borough and district councils and the police, to bring our services together so people can get what they need in a way that suits them – whether that's face-to-face at a One Stop Shop, over the phone, by email or on the web. This approach is central to our savings plan.

Adult Social Care

Our approach is to ensure older people, adults with disabilities and mental health needs can maximise all opportunities to live independent lives. By working more efficiently and reducing costs, we can ensure that money is spent on those who need it most.

Through our free reablement service, in the all important weeks following a hospital stay or time of crisis, people are regaining the skills and confidence to live safely in their own homes. This also reduces demand for costly, long-term care packages. We are making better use of technology and adaptations to people's existing homes and we are increasing the availability of 'extra-care' and supported housing as a preferable alternative to residential care. Where people are eligible for care, we will give them the

funds in the form of a 'direct payment' so that the customer has the choice and control over the most cost effective service to meet their individual needs.

Sub-regional working

The sub-region of Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire offers an increasing opportunity to radically change the delivery of public services. With a total population of more than one million and a strong basis for partnership working, shared services can be delivered in the future to meet the needs of customers, rather than within geographical or organisational boundaries.

There are opportunities to provide services including regeneration, economic development, museums, trading standards, emergency planning, highway maintenance and waste management in this way.

Children's Services

Through our Early Intervention Service we are working with our partners, such as schools, police and health, to best meet the needs of children, young people and families in Warwickshire. By understanding our pupils, and being able to spot when they need help the most, we can ensure that every individual gets help at an earlier stage and prevent underachievement later on. By intervening early we aim to improve outcomes for young people and avoid expensive measures later on. We are in the process of moving to locality based multi-agency teams to improve our response to children in need.

Local Enterprise Partnership

We will play a stronger role in developing and growing the local economy through the Local Enterprise Partnership, which will replace the existing structure of Regional Development Agencies. This exciting partnership between the private sector and local authorities will help shape the use and allocation of the new Regional Growth Fund – helping to create new private sector jobs over the next three years.

Tough choices

Even after taking all of the savings from greater efficiency, we will not have saved enough to close the funding gap. Around a quarter of our savings will have to come from stopping or reducing the levels of services we provide.

Here are some of the options that we may have to consider in the future:

Adult Social Care

- Removing subsidies for people who are able to pay for services themselves.
- Reducing council-run day centre services and developing options with the private and voluntary sector for less money.
- Reviewing council-owned residential care homes and considering closure or selling to external providers.
- Reducing high-cost care packages.

Services for Children and Young People

- Reducing youth services.
- Reducing the Educational Psychology Service.
- Reviewing local authority services to schools, which may be decommissioned or offered on a traded basis.
- Reviewing provision of passenger assistants on school transport for primary school children.
- Removing the subsidy to the County Music Service.

Highways and Transport

- Stopping non-statutory road signs and carriageway marking schemes.
- Reducing spending on maintaining rights of way and access to the countryside.
- Reducing spending on highways maintenance.
- Stopping community transport services, subsidised evening bus services and reducing the bus network serving Coleshill Parkway and Birmingham International.
- Switching off street lights overnight.



Community Safety

- Reducing speed camera enforcement.
- Reducing Trading Standards enforcement and intervention work.
- Stopping funding to Warwickshire Police for Police Community Support Officers working on anti-social behaviour.

Community Based Services

- Reducing the opening hours of household waste recycling centres.
- Reducing the opening hours of visitor and tourism venues.
- Stopping some arts projects.
- Reducing library services.
- Stopping community regeneration projects.
- Scaling down work on economic development and skills.

Feedback

We would like to hear your comments

Over the coming months the council will be gathering information and views from community representatives about suggested changes to services.

We want you to tell us how you think public services could be delivered differently. How can we encourage people like you to get more involved in your neighbourhood? How can the council help you and others make a difference to the lives of people in Warwickshire?

We are launching a number of initiatives for example an interactive web financial reckoner called *You Choose* where you will be able to see how each financial decision impacts on a service.

With your help, your views and your suggestions we can focus on the changes that need to be made for the years ahead.

For more information

Email: youchoose@warwickshire.gov.uk

or write to:

**You Choose
Resources Directorate
Warwickshire County Council
Shire Hall
Market Square
CV34 4RR**