

Draft Budget Cuts Programme 2015-16 Information Pack

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Introduction

Welcome to our 2015/16 Budget Information Pack which provides more information about our proposals to address the cuts the Council is required to make. It provides answers to a series of questions and helps you to consider the different options in more detail.

For 2015/16 we have to find cuts totalling **£15.8 million** mainly because our grant from the Government has been cut by a further **13%**. In addition to this we face cuts to other grants and significant demand pressures in respect of vulnerable adults and safeguarding children.

This means that by the end of next year we will have been forced to make cuts of £53.7m since 2010 which is over 50% of the budget that we can directly influence and there is no doubt that this will have serious consequences for our borough and for the many services we provide and which so many people rely on.


Yet again, we feel strongly that Bury has been treated unfairly by the way that the Government distributes its money because many similar Councils receive significantly more funding per head, and have experienced lower grant reductions. We are continuing to lobby the Government on your behalf about this under our **"Fair Deal for Bury"** campaign.

Despite this the Council continues to spend around £200m on providing local services and we will continue to look to balance our books by doing things differently, by prioritising services, by focussing on people with greatest need and by striving for yet more efficiency savings. We have continued to invest in the borough and substantial progress is being made on redeveloping Radcliffe Town Centre, improving our roads, providing better facilities for older people and protecting our children through the use of 20mph zones.

We will do all that we can to reduce the impact of the cuts, particularly on our most vulnerable residents, and try to offer alternative arrangements where we can from 2015 onwards.

Please let us have your views on the proposals set out in this document by **9th January 2015**. Final proposals for savings will be published prior to the Council meeting on **25th February 2015**.

We hope that you find this information.

	<p>Councillor Mike Connolly Leader of the Council</p>		<p>Councillor Rishi Shori Deputy Leader of the Council Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing</p>
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The Council is changing....and we need your help

This is what we have done.

- Reduced from 4 to 3 departments
- 30% reduction in managements posts
- Less staff – 400 employees have left the Council
- Internal Efficiencies have generated over £10m
- Self management of facilities
- “Digital by Default”, more web based activity e.g. Housing reception, Connect & Direct hub
- 3 weekly waste management collections

We now need the help of our residents and communities e.g. creating less litter, promoting more self care and self ownership of issues, prevention, and taking responsibility for their actions.

Changing the expectations about what the Council can deliver – In the future, the Council will not be able to meet all the public’s needs/expectations or be able to deliver services at the quantity/quality/standard that we currently provide. The Council will need to be up-front about the need to cut services, spell out why levels of service are reducing, develop more targeted services or in some circumstances stop delivering services altogether.

Working more closely with individuals and communities to deliver services – The Council will not be organisationally or financially able to meet all service needs in the future and therefore will need to work with individuals and communities to encourage them where possible to undertake more for themselves. This is an approach that we will need to consider across all the Council’s services where we do not have a statutory duty to provide the service. For example, the Council may provide facilities or equipment but community/voluntary groups/individuals may have to organise events, maintenance, support etc. themselves.

This approach builds on the very long standing and successful ‘self management’ partnerships operating for bowling greens, football pitches, allotments and other leisure facilities such as Gymnastics and Burrs Activity Centre. More of this approach is needed and involves engaging and encouraging a greater partnership between the Council and voluntary community groups in providing services in their area. Over the coming period we will be working with 3rd Sector

partners to develop a new and comprehensive Strategy that will support a transformation of this important area.

Stronger focus on demand reduction - Part of the principles behind Public Service Reform is to manage the demand for services, reduce this demand where possible and to identify more cost effective ways of meeting the demands that remain. We have had some success for example through the changes we made in the refuse collection arrangements which has changed people's attitude towards recycling and helped the Council reduce the expensive costs of tipping rubbish into landfill.

Can we do more for less? – Bury Council, its Members and employees have and continue to work miracles in delivering services with less resources and at lower cost.

Over the coming period we must redouble our efforts to ensure the services we directly provide are securing value for money and are delivered in the most effective way as I know our residents would expect this. This may well mean doing things differently to the way we have always delivered services; **No change** is not an option for us!

Changing the way Residents access services

Bury Council has been trying to widen access options in addition to providing very traditional ways residents and service users access services and secure information about services. Whilst there have been developments with the Council's web site to move to become a 24/7 Council access is still primarily through face to face contact and telephone.

The challenge for us is that we need to offer a wider range of 'self service' remote options similar to the high street experience so familiar to many of our residents, such as booking holidays, on-line shopping, and banking. In a post 2015 environment the Council will have to look to becoming a 'virtual' council where the 'high street' experience of 'self service' using smart technology becomes mainstream, whilst still offering the traditional options, but these, because of affordability, will have to steadily reduce over time.

Invest to Save

The Council has and will continue to explore opportunities for growth and reduce its costs through the promotion of innovative service alternatives or develop new service offers. For

example through Invest to Save, over £1m has been saved through directly employing a small resource to market and promote Fostering and Adoption Services.

Other examples are where the Council leads on generating income for our customers or partner organisations – over £2m has been generated for customers through benefits advice linked to financial assessment services in respect of adult care, a proportion of which becomes income for the Council too.

Bury is the leading authority in the development of charging for loaning out major artworks to International Exhibitors in the Far East. With a small resource to market and put together exhibitions on behalf of Greater Manchester Councils, thousands of pounds of fee income has been generated.

In growth terms the development of Tourism and Culture offers, Bury has seen a transformation as a destination and a place where artists and performers want to come to Bury. Tourism spend is increasing along with hotel stays which in turn helps local businesses and where future investors see Bury in a positive light.

Key Facts

- The Council operates over **113** different service areas.
- We serve a population of **186,200** people.
- We provide services to **82,000** individual households.
- We currently have approximately **3,400** FTE staff (this excludes teaching staff in schools).
- Over **400** staff have left the organisation since 2011 as a result of cuts in funding.
- Our current Net Budget is **£138.5 million**.
- The table below shows that we have had to make cuts totalling nearly **£54 million** since 2011.

Year	Cut (£ million)
2011/12	9.6
2012/13	8.7
2013/14	9.9
2014/15	9.7
2015/16	15.8
Total	53.7

Summary of Changes

We have summarised the proposed changes into the following categories;

Category	Explanation	Amount
Alternative Service Delivery Models	We will develop new models of service delivery to ensure that service outcomes are maintained. This will include new approaches to staffing and the use of buildings.	£3.420 million
External Funding Optimisation	We will maximise the benefit to the Council from new and existing grant funding opportunities.	£3.376 million
Grants to Voluntary Sector	We will review how the Council operates with the Voluntary Sector, reviewing grants to ensure that key outcomes are achieved.	£0.200 million
Income Generation Invest to Save	We will further develop existing income streams and identify new sources of income.	£2.012 million
Increased Recycling Invest to Save	We will continue to develop the refuse collection service so that recycling rates are optimised, reducing costs for the Council, and benefitting the environment.	£0.862 million
Managing Assets Invest to Save	We will continue to review our asset base ensuring the optimum use and financial return.	£0.726 million
Procurement Savings	We will review the way we buy goods and services and continue to strive for best value.	£1.320 million
Reduced Provision	Given the scale of cuts facing the Council, it is inevitable that some services will be reduced in quality, frequency, or even stop altogether. Where this happens we will work closely with service users to identify alternative means of provision.	£0.662 million
Staff Restructuring	Staffing is a significant cost for the Council as most of our services rely on people to deliver them. Equally staff are our greatest asset, and we rely heavily on commitment and goodwill at times when budgets are being cut. We will continue to review staffing structures and ensure that operational processes are as efficient as possible.	£3.229 million
TOTAL		£15.807 million

Frequently Asked Questions

What happened to the “Plan for Change”?

This is the most financially challenging time for Local Authorities across the country in our history. Bury, unfortunately, is no exception and we have already been forced to make massive cuts year on year. We are trying our hardest to protect front line services and identify more efficient ways of working but as the cuts increase, this is becoming increasingly difficult.

The Plan for Change was a three year plan covering the period 2012-2015. For 2015/16, however, we have only received one year’s information and even this has yet to be confirmed. We are therefore approaching 2015/16 budget as a “one year” exercise. What is clear however is that cuts to budgets will continue into 2016/17 and beyond.

How much more money does the council have to find?

We estimate that we will need to make cuts of £15.8 million in 2015/16.

The Council’s core funding from Central Government is likely to be cut by over 13% (although this is not yet confirmed). Bury still receives a poor settlement compared to similar Authorities and we are lobbying the Government for changes.

We also face cuts to a number of grants we receive e.g. Early Intervention and Education Services.

In addition to reduced funding, the Council faces pressures e.g. Customer demand, inflation, increments, and levies from other bodies. Finally we still face considerable uncertainty following the localisation of Business Rates – where we now share income (and losses) with the Government.

Will there be further cuts?

We originally set a three year plan covering 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15, and we still firmly believe that taking a longer term view is the right thing to do. For 2015/16, however, we have only received one year’s information and even this has yet to be confirmed. We are therefore approaching the 2015/16 budget as a “one year” exercise. What is clear however is that cuts will continue into 2016/17 and beyond.

How is work progressing towards achieving savings for Internal Efficiencies?

For the period 2011-2014 over £10m of internal efficiencies has been saved. We will strive where possible to make more efficiency savings and reduce the level of cuts facing front line services. However, given the level of savings made to date this is becoming increasingly difficult and we are now at the point where real service reductions are inevitable.

What is the difference between back office and front line services?

We use these terms to show the difference between those services which directly work with or relate to our residents (front line), for example children's centres or leisure centres, and those which are needed to make sure the organisation works well (back office), for example, financial management.

How are you supporting staff through this process?

We have put in place a range of support for staff including:

- Now and Next – we have a dedicated resource area on the intranet where employees can find out more information about training opportunities, CV skills, interview techniques and apply for jobs.
- Redeployment – staff who are facing redundancy are prioritised and either matched with suitable vacancies or given the opportunity to apply for vacant posts across the council when they occur. This takes place before jobs are advertised internally.
- Voluntary Severance, Voluntary Early Retirement and Flexible Retirement – we have offered staff a range of options to allow us to make efficiencies and changes to the organisation.

How can I get involved in the consultation?

- Attend a public meeting – dates are on the website www.bury.gov.uk/Budget201516 and will be promoted in the local media.
- Read the proposals and comment online at www.bury.gov.uk/Budget201516
- Read the information at your local library and send in your comments
- Call us 0161 253 5696
- Email Budget201516@bury.gov.uk
- Write to us at Budget201516, Bury Council, Knowsley Street, Bury, BL9 OSW to leave your comments or request a hard copy of the proposals.

What are the next steps in the budget consultation process?

We are consulting on all the proposals until 9th January 2015. The comments and feedback will then be analysed before final proposals are taken to Budget Council on 25th February 2015. The Budget Council is a public meeting which members of the public can attend. It takes place in the Council Chamber at Bury Town Hall.

Alternative Service Delivery Models

Proposal: We will develop new models of service delivery to ensure that service resilience and sustainable outcomes are maintained. This will include new approaches to staffing and the use of buildings.	Cut: £3.420 million
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Why are we making these proposals?

The Council is seeking to examine alternative ways of delivering remaining Council services and change the expectations about what the Council can deliver.

What changes are we undertaking to meet these Cuts?

The Council is seeking to examine alternative ways of delivering remaining Council services, ensuring they are fit for purpose and sustainable and to help service users be better informed about what the Council is able to deliver.

What changes are we undertaking to meet these Cuts?

Adult Care provider services will be reviewed to develop alternative models of delivery. These include service of Supported Living; Day Care and Short Stay.

Following earlier consultation, two options are currently being examined:

- Local Authority Owned Company; or
- Social Enterprise

Whichever model is chosen, budgets will be reduced by developing a new service model. Operational Services will be reviewed to provide assessment services which promote greater inclusion and control for people to carry out assessments. To include social work provision, reablement, intermediate care and crisis response service.

Children’s Centres – the proposals for a new targeted delivery model for Children’s Centres is currently out to consultation. It is proposed that one main Hub in each township is retained plus an additional spoke Children’s Centre in Bury East. Seven buildings would be released and re-used for development of two year old childcare provision.

Will front line services be affected – what changes will residents see and when will this take place?

Cuts to any budget inevitably impacts on services and these proposals will see a reduction in capacity and an increase in waiting lists for non urgent cases and places.

We will seek to maintain service outcomes, however the delivery mechanisms will be different and more targeted – e.g. less focus on building based activity in Children’s Centres and more targeted outreach work.

Adult Care proposals seek to maintain service standards; however these will be delivered through new operating structures.

Will any geographical area be particularly affected by this proposal?

All geographical areas would be affected.

What back of office changes are proposed to achieve this target and minimise impact on front line services?

Management and administrative processes will be examined as part of this proposal and further efficiencies targeted.

Does this mean additional charges for this service?

We aim to achieve the saving through reductions in cost, however increased charges will be made where it is appropriate and necessary to do so.

Does this budget proposal affect staffing?

As in previous years we will seek to manage any job losses, in the first instance, on a voluntary basis, however compulsory redundancies may be necessary. Where there are compulsory redundancies, every effort will be made to facilitate redeployment for affected individuals.

Will I be consulted on how these changes affect my personal circumstances (e.g. changes to care arrangements)?

Yes. We would welcome views regarding these proposals.

External Funding Optimisation

Proposal: We will maximise the benefit to the Council from new and existing grant funding opportunities	Cut: £3.376 million
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Why are we making these proposals?

We will continue to be innovative in the way we use existing Grant Funding, and we will continue to explore new funding opportunities.

What changes are we undertaking to meet these Cuts?

Housing- We will be reviewing how we utilise grant monies allocated for Housing/Homelessness purposes to ensure we get the maximum benefit for residents.

Sport/Leisure – We will examine the cost of our sport/leisure assets and the potential for income generation. We will also continue to deliver the externally funded 'I Will if You Will' movement to test what helps create a shift in attitude and what encourages more women and girls to be more active, more often.

Health - We will work closely with Partner agencies – especially the NHS to ensure that funding for Adult Social Care is used to the best effect e.g. Better Care Fund.

Children's - We will make more effective use of grant funding available for young people.

Will front line services be affected – what changes will residents see and when will this take place?

In using external funding, we are endeavoring to ensure that individuals see no change to the service they receive.

Will any geographical area be particularly affected by this proposal?

All geographical areas would be affected.

What back of office changes are proposed to achieve this target and minimise impact on front line services?

More effective use of external funding should reduce the impact of cuts on front-line services.

A risk remains that some of grants may not be available in future years.

Does this mean additional charges for this service?

We aim to achieve the cut through better use of grant funding, however, charges will be made where it is appropriate and necessary to do so.

Does this budget proposal affect staffing?

There will be no compulsory redundancies from this element of the proposals.

Will I be consulted on these changes?

Yes. We would welcome your views regarding these changes.

Grants to Voluntary Sector

Proposal:	Cut: £200,000
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We will review how the Council operates with the Voluntary Sector, reviewing grants to ensure that key outcomes are achieved.	Cut: £200,000
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Why are we proposing these Cuts?

To review the relationship between the Council, the Community and the Voluntary Sector.

What changes are we undertaking to meet these Cuts?

We will review funding to the voluntary sector, with a greater focus on outcomes that supports the Council's priorities.

Will front line services be affected – what changes will residents see and when will this take place?

We will seek to maintain service outcomes, and opportunities for the Community to engage with the Council, however the delivery mechanisms may be different.

Will any geographical area be particularly affected by this proposal?

All geographical areas would be affected.

What back of office changes are proposed to achieve this target and minimise impact on front line services?

Management and administrative processes will be examined as part of this proposal.

Does this mean additional charges for this service?

This service area does not currently levy charges, however charges will be made where it is appropriate and necessary to do so.

Does this budget proposal affect staffing?

To be determined.

Will I be consulted on how these changes affect my voluntary group or individually?

Yes. We would welcome any views regarding these changes.

Income Generation

Proposal:	Cut: £2.012 million
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We will further develop existing income streams and identify new sources of income.	
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Why are we making these proposals?

We will build on existing sources of income, and identify new sources of sustainable income where possible.

What changes are we undertaking to meet these Cuts?

We will review the services included in the buy-back arrangements with partner organisations by ensuring we offer quality services at affordable prices.

Additional income will be generated from the loan of art / external exhibitions.

The Community Safety Service will focus on new income generating work for external clients.

The Council's investment portfolio / treasury management strategy will also contribute to this element of the proposals by widening the scope of investment opportunities.

Will front line services be affected – what changes will residents see and when will this take place?

We will seek to maintain current service provision in these areas – funded by additional income being generated.

Will any geographical area be particularly affected by this proposal?

All geographical areas would be affected.

What back of office changes are proposed to achieve this target and minimise impact on front line services?

Management and administrative processes will be further streamlined to support clients needs as part of this proposal.

Does this mean additional charges for this service?

The primary focus will be on identifying new customers and generating additional income but increase charges to cover costs cannot be ruled out.

Does this budget proposal affect staffing?

There will be no compulsory redundancies from this element of the proposals.

Can other suggestions to improve income be made?

Yes. We would welcome any suggestion that would result in the Council securing increased levels of income.

Increased Recycling

Proposal: We will continue to develop the refuse collection service so that recycling rates are optimised, reducing costs for the Council, and benefitting the environment.	Cut: £862,000
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Why are we proposing these Cuts?

Waste disposal is a significant cost for the Council, and we also have duty to ensure waste is disposed of in an environmentally responsible manner.

What changes are we undertaking to meet these Cuts?

We have reviewed our Waste Management Strategy and changed the frequency of household waste collections to increase recycling. Household rubbish collections have been reduced from 2 weekly to 3 weekly and recycling collections have increased from 4 weekly to 3 weekly.

Will front line services be affected – what changes will residents see and when will this take place?

Change to three-weekly collections for residual waste (Grey Bins).

Improved collection frequencies for recyclable waste.

New, replacement or extra recycling bins, kitchen caddies and compostable liners are all provided free of charge. There is also no charge to upsize from a 140 to a 240 litre grey bin.

Waste audits are carried out as part of the application process for additional grey bins to help residents with managing their waste. Recycling advice is widely available over our website via the recycling information line, our customer contact centre and on request.

Will any geographical area be particularly affected by this proposal?

All geographical areas would be affected.

What back of office changes are proposed to achieve this target and minimise impact on front line services?

Technology / IT systems have been used to ensure the smooth rollout of the new collection rounds; coupled with support from our Customer Contact Centre, and development of applications on the Council's website.

Does this mean additional charges for this service?

No.

Does this budget proposal affect staffing?

No.

Can I still comment on these changes?

This service is now operational. However we always welcome feedback in order to continue improving this service.

Managing Assets

Proposal:	
We will continue to review our asset base ensuring the optimum use and financial return.	Cut: £726,000

Why are we proposing these Cuts?

The Council manages a large portfolio of assets which we continually review to ensure the best use and financial return.

What changes are we undertaking to meet these Cuts?

Under-utilised assets will be reconfigured / disposed of - resulting in less call on Maintenance budgets.

We recognise that this sometimes takes time and the Council's own financial rules permit a temporary use of balances pending review / development of new facilities, or disposal of assets.

Will front line services be affected – what changes will residents see and when will this take place?

Underperforming assets may be subject to change of use / disposal.

Will any geographical area be particularly affected by this proposal?

Not known at this stage, however assets will be examined "Borough wide".

What back of office changes are proposed to achieve this target and minimise impact on front line services?

We will ensure that our back office functions facilitate effective and responsive management of our assets.

Does this mean additional charges for this service?

No.

Does this budget proposal affect staffing?

No.

Can I still comment on these proposals?

Yes. We would like your views regarding these changes.

Procurement Savings

Proposal:	Cut: £1.320 million
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We will review the way we buy goods and services and continue to strive for best value.	Cut: £1.320 million
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Why are we making these proposals?

A large proportion of the Council's budget is spent on buying goods and services. We already have a strong track record of effective procurement and will be seeking to build upon this.

What changes are we undertaking to meet these Cuts?

Re-tendering of existing contracts has already taken place and achieved savings e.g. Domestic Violence support services.

Some areas are already achieving these savings by restricting spending, e.g. Children's Centres, Early Years, Emergency Duty Team and administrative functions.

A review of various discretionary budgets is taking place.

Will front line services be affected – what changes will residents see and when will this take place?

It is unlikely that improved procurement savings will impact on service outcomes.

Will any geographical area be particularly affected by this proposal?

Savings will relate to all areas.

What back of office changes are proposed to achieve this target and minimise impact on front line services?

We continue to make effective use of the latest procurement techniques and undertake joint exercises with other Greater Manchester Authorities where appropriate.

Does this mean additional charges for this service?

No.

Does this budget proposal affect staffing?

No.

Can other suggestions to reduce procurement costs be made?

Yes. We would welcome any suggestions that would result in the Council reducing its costs.

Reduced Provision

Proposal:

Given the scale of cuts facing the Council, it is inevitable that some services will be reduced in quality, frequency, or even stopped altogether. Where this happens we will work closely with service users to identify alternative means of provision.

Cut: £662,000

Why are we proposing these Cuts?

This is the most challenging category of these proposals; whilst we strive to make efficiency savings where possible, the scale of cuts is such that some services will see reduced levels of provision.

What changes are we undertaking to meet these Cuts?

We will continue to review the standard of grounds maintenance, bedding and tree services in our parks, countryside and open spaces.

Funding to Summer Playschemes will cease.

Will front line services be affected – what changes will residents see and when will this take place?

Yes; there will be noticeable changes to the above service areas, and this will start from April 2015.

Will any geographical area be particularly affected by this proposal?

All geographical areas would be affected.

What back of office changes are proposed to achieve this target and minimise impact on front line services?

Management and administrative processes will be examined as part of this proposal.

Does this mean additional charges for this service?

No.

Does this budget proposal affect staffing?

Yes – there will be job losses. We will seek to achieve this on a voluntary basis in the first instance, however compulsory redundancies may be necessary. Where there are compulsory redundancies, every effort will be made to facilitate redeployment for affected individuals.

Can I comment on these proposals?

Any proposals will, in the first instance, be discussed with affected staff before consulting more widely.

Staff Restructuring

Proposal: Staffing is a significant cost for the Council as most of our services rely on people to deliver them. Equally staff are our greatest asset, and we rely heavily on commitment and goodwill at times when budgets are being cut. We will continue to review staffing structures and ensure that operational processes are as efficient as possible.	Cut: £3.229 million
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Why are we proposing these Cuts?

Staffing is a key element to all services. We need to continually review structures to ensure they are fit for purpose and sustainable.

What changes are we undertaking to meet these Cuts?

We will review front line services to ensure cuts to services are minimised, but they will have to operate within reduced budgets.

We will make greater use of volunteers in some service areas.

Further restructuring will take place in back office services where a large number of senior staff have already left the organisation under voluntary redundancy / early retirement options.

Management savings have already been made by the transition from 4 to 3 departments.

This category also includes proposed changes to staff Terms and Conditions.

Will front line services be affected – what changes will residents see and when will this take place?

There may well be a reduction in the standard of service – e.g. longer processing / response times, more emphasis on self service. We will use the latest technology to mitigate this impact.

Will any geographical area be particularly affected by this proposal?

All geographical areas would be affected.

What back of office changes are proposed to achieve this target and minimise impact on front line services?

Improved use of smart technology; development of new more interactive web site with more self service and remote access for a 24/7 virtual council.

We will further develop Apprenticeship schemes and smarter working through improved use of Business Analysts.

Does this mean additional charges for this service?

No.

Does this budget proposal affect staffing?

Inevitably, resources will have to be reduced as further rationalisation takes place. Over 400 staff have already left (or have agreed to leave) the organisation. Potentially there will be further job losses and we would seek to achieve this on a voluntary basis in the first instance, however compulsory redundancies may be necessary. Where there are compulsory redundancies, every effort will be made to facilitate redeployment for affected individuals.

Through training and development the future focus has to be the introduction of a range of skills and upskilling and re-training where appropriate to achieve successful outcomes in this crucial area.

Can I still make contact face -to-face or over the phone about these proposals?

Yes. Any proposals will, in the first instance, be discussed with affected staff before consulting more widely.