

**CABINET – 24 JANUARY 2019  
QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Agenda item 5 refers

1. **Mr David Forman to Councillor Mike Danvers, Portfolio Holder for Resources**

The Council's Medium Term Financial strategy 2019/20 - 2021/22 supplied to tonight's Cabinet meeting, in agenda item 11, includes consideration of the General Fund Budget Parameters as set out in Appendix A.

Contained within these parameters is an item titled 'staff vacancy savings target'. The assumption stated is 2 per cent per annum for the coming years up to April 2022, this assumption being no change from that in February 2018.

Consequently, please state:

- a) How many staff vacancies were not replaced in the previous financial year, the current financial year and the number of full-time equivalent posts this equates to over both of these financial years.
- b) The number of staff vacancies that it is assumed will not be replaced over the next three financial years and the number of full-time equivalent posts this will equate to over each of those financial years.

**Reply from Councillor Mike Danvers, Portfolio Holder for Resources**

The staff vacancy target" recognises that in any organisation there will be periods when, as a result of factors including resignation and retirement there will be savings generated as a result of posts becoming vacant. The Council recognises this and sets the 2 per cent target to reflect what it considers to be a reasonable level of savings that may be achieved as a result of such occurrences.

The target does not set a figure for the deletion of posts, it is merely a level of realistic savings against the payment of salaries when staff recruitment is undertaken following a vacancy occurring in a service or team. Under normal practice there will be a period for the recruitment itself and in most cases where a successful appointment is made the new member of staff will be required to work out a period of notice with the previous employer all of which results in periods of vacancy (and associated salary savings) against which this target is set. There are no staff vacancies that it is assumed will not be replaced over the next three financial years.

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The target for 2017/18 and 2018/19 was 2 per cent and the actual saving achieved was 1.5 per cent in 2017/18 and is forecast to be 1.4 per cent in 2018/19

2. **Mr David Forman to Councillor Mike Danvers, Portfolio Holder for Resources**

Further to my previous question, as stated in Appendix A to the Medium Term Financial Strategy, these staff vacancy savings are a 'target'. Therefore, will council management take such measures as are necessary to achieve these targets?

**Reply from Councillor Mike Danvers, Portfolio Holder for Resources**

As stated in the answer to the previous question, the target is set to reflect what is considered to be a reasonable level of savings caused by transition periods between new and old staff. As a result of this, the Council's management is not taking steps to ensure that the staff vacancy target is met.