

Royal Burgh of Wigtown & District Community Council

Consultations Working Party

Consulting body	Title	Closing Date	Background/Response summary	Status
Dumfries & Galloway Council	<a href="#">Council budget 2015/16 to 2017/18</a>	21 January 15	<p>The Council's budget will be considered on 5 February 2015. The timeline for making budget decisions is:</p> <p><b>11 December 2014:</b> Draft proposals on where the council could spend its reduced budgets and where it will make future investment will be published.</p> <p><b>18 December 2014:</b> Full Council will consider the draft budget proposals.</p> <p><b>12 - 16 January 2015:</b> Consultation on the budget proposals: DGC will consult with local communities on the draft budget proposals. There will be local community meetings where people are invited to come along and give their views. Dates for the community meetings are: Monday, 12 January 2015, Dalbeattie Town Hall; <b>Thursday, 15 January 2015, Ryan Leisure Centre, Stranraer;</b> Tuesday, 20 January 2015 - Dumfries Academy; Wednesday, 21 January 2015 - The Chambers, Annan Town Hall. The feedback from these meetings will be presented to Councillors by 23 January. This information will allow Councillors to consider your feedback and make decisions before they set their budget on 5 February.</p> <p><b>5 February 2015:</b> Full Council will agree the budget proposals for implementation.</p>	

## Council Budget Proposals survey

You can complete the survey online until 5.00pm on Thursday, 22 January. The survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

## Savings Proposals

Over the next three years the council will have to make £32m of savings. This is in addition to the £40m of savings over the last four years.

In the budget consultation document how the Administration propose to make these savings is set out. Included are 23 specific savings (pages attached).

The areas being considered to deliver savings are:

1. Reducing CCS Management and Staffing
2. Reducing funding to care and repair services
3. Reducing Area Committee Discretionary Grant budget
4. Community Sports Hub management
5. Reducing CCS Central Policy and Strategic Team
6. 3 major Leisure and Sport facilities: alternative method of delivering services
7. Economic Development
8. Further options for reducing staff
9. Public open space grounds management
10. Review of Environmental Activities
11. Revenue Budget Carriageway Repairs
12. Joint provision of Courier Services with the NHS
13. Capitalisation of Surface Dressing
14. School Meals price increase (reduce subsidy)
15. Primary and Secondary Schools: core delivery
16. Reduction to Secondary Management Points
17. Service review of Care at Home
18. Cost reductions through review of care packages and assessment of new self-directed support (SDS)
19. Intensive in-region support for Young People
20. General Efficiencies
21. Dumfries Asset Plan – Offices Focus
22. Form a Valuation Joint Board with Scottish Borders Council
23. Management Savings from Reshaping the Council

**Do you agree that DGC are looking at the right areas in order to save money? Are there savings proposals that you think DGC shouldn't progress?**

## Service Reviews

In addition to the 23 specific savings, the draft budget includes savings through Service reviews.

1. Supporting Learners.

2. Roads and Network Management.
3. Fleet and Vehicle Maintenance.
4. Enterprising Council.
5. Training and Development

**In relation to Service Reviews do you agree that DGC are looking at the right areas in order to save money? Are there savings proposals relating to service reviews that you think DGC shouldn't progress?**

## **Policy Development Funding**

Each year, money is set aside to fund Policy Development Projects. These are usually projects not currently included within individual department budgets as they are often new. Sometimes they are put in place for a short period, such as 1 or 2 years. The proposed Policy Development projects in the draft budget are summarised below.

The Policy Development proposals are:

### **1. Economic Inclusion Programme**

The Scottish Government's policy of centralisation has moved some jobs from our region to other parts of Scotland, including the closure of the local Police and Fire control rooms.

Support with therefore be needed to deliver new employment opportunities in the private and third sectors to replace those lost in the public sector

### **2. Financial Assistance to Small Businesses (FASB) Grant Programmes**

Support for business, and in particular growing small and medium sized businesses. Our successful 2 year Financial Assistance to Small Businesses (FASB) Grant Programme resulted in 66 grants totalling £245,936 being awarded to local businesses to help them deliver projects valued at most than £1m.

This proposal is to extend this grant programme in order to grow businesses with specific targets of increased turnover and employment.

### **3. Employment Programme for Our Looked After Young People**

It's crucial that everyone is given the opportunity to benefit from support to get back into work. So, DGC propose to introduce paid work experience placements for young people who have left care.

**Do you agree that DGC are investing in the right policy development projects? Please tick any policy development funding proposals that you think DGC shouldn't progress**

## **Capital Funding Allocations**

In March 2014, the Council agreed a Capital Investment Strategy covering the period 2014/15 to 2023/24. This strategy includes a commitment to invest in the following priority projects between now and 2017/18.

These projects are:

1. Dalbeattie Learning Campus
2. Dumfries Learning Town
3. Next Generation Broadband
4. Whitesands Flood Protection Scheme
5. Kirkcudbright Charter
6. Economic Development

**Do you agree that DGC are investing our Capital budget in the right projects? Please tick any capital funding allocation projects that you think DGC shouldn't progress**

In addition to the Capital Priority projects, the council also invests its Capital Budget in existing assets. The assets are:

1. School buildings (£4.25 m base budget)
2. Non-school buildings (£3.7 m base budget)
3. Infrastructure, including Roads (£9 m base budget)
4. Land, including burial grounds, sports pitches and play areas (£500,000 base budget)
5. Vehicles, including gritters etc (£660,000 base budget)
6. Public Transport funding to Dumfries and Galloway Transport Agency (SWestrans) (£800,000 base budget)

**Do you have any comments to make on the Capital Budget allocations for existing assets?**

# Community and Customer Services

## 1 Reducing CCS management and staffing

2015/16 £125,000  
2016/17 £200,000 (cumulative)  
2017/18 £300,000 (cumulative)

The Community and Customer Services department has achieved considerable efficiency savings over the past 3 years through streamlining management, integrating services and reducing staff. While it isn't achievable to continue to make efficiency savings at the same rate, there is scope to achieve further year on year efficiency savings at a lesser rate. These reductions will be achieved through retirement and early retirements, deleting vacant posts and redeploying staff. Reduced staffing levels and reallocating work will increasingly require teams to restructure and develop new ways of working.

## 2 Community Sports Hub management

2015/16 £35,000  
2016/17 £35,000 (cumulative)  
2017/18 £35,000 (cumulative)

Transferring the responsibility for managing the King George V all weather facilities to a local management committee will reduce the cost to the Council. We will consider transferring the fitness suite operation from KGV to Dumfries Ice Bowl in order to reach a wider market and to extend the hours of opening.

The Service Level Agreement would be between the Council and Queen of the South Football Club, which would act as the lead partner with service user groups represented on a management committee. The management committee would be responsible for running the facility and replacing capital items, such as gym equipment. The Council would only retain landlord 'wind and water tight' responsibilities. Staff would transfer under TUPE regulations to being employed by the lead partner/ management committee.

## 3 Reducing funding to care and repair service

2015/16 £300,000  
2016/17 £300,000 (cumulative)  
2017/18 £300,000 (cumulative)

The Council funds Loreburn Housing Association to deliver a care and repair service. This provides financial assistance to vulnerable owner occupiers and private tenants to undertake repairs and adaptations to allow them to continue to live independently. The current budget is £1.5m. This savings option proposes a reduction of up to £300,000 a year. Although some discretionary spending may be affected, it is anticipated that all mandatory requirements can still be delivered within the reduced allocation of £1.2m, particularly since only £1.3m of the £1.5m budget for 2014/15 was spent.

## 4 Reducing CCS Central Policy and Strategic Support Team

2015/16 £48,000  
2016/17 £111,000 (cumulative)  
2017/18 £111,000 (cumulative)

When CCS was first established as a department, it had 3 service managers and 3 principal officers to provide strategic support in improvement and engagement, strategic planning and resource planning. The strategic planning and improvement and engagement posts were amalgamated in 2013. Over a 2 year period, this proposal amalgamates the 3 support functions and reduces the remaining number of service managers from 2 to 1 and the number of principal officers from 3 to 2.

## 5 Reducing Area Committee Discretionary Grant Budget

2015/16 £102,943 (reduced to £2,943 in 2015/16)  
2016/17 £102,943 (cumulative)  
2017/18 £102,943 (cumulative)

The budget for local Area Committee grants totalled £1.372 million in 2014/15. We propose to achieve a saving of £102,943 by reducing the overall Area Committee grant budget by 7.5%. To help mitigate the impact of this recurring saving a one off allocation of £100,000 will be made to the Area Committee discretionary budget in 2015/16. This will allow Area Committees to consider their criteria/priorities before the full saving comes into effect in 2016/17. Third sector regional grants for 2014/15 will be rolled over to 2015/16 at the same current levels.

## 6 3 major Leisure and Sport facilities: alternative method of delivering services

2015/16 £0  
2016/17 £325,000  
2017/18 £400,000 (cumulative)

This proposal relates to achieving savings in National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR). Charitable organisations are able to apply for an NNDR exemption which produces significant savings without any reductions to staffing and front line service delivery. It is proposed that the Council establishes a Charitable Trust and the Council's largest 3 leisure facilities (DGOne / Dumfries Ice Bowl / Ryan Centre) be leased to the Trust. Some facilities staff would need to either TUPE transfer to the new trust or, subject to approval from the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator, the preferred option is that staff would be seconded from the Council to the Trust.

# Planning and Environment Services

## 7 Economic Development

2015/16 £120,000

2016/17 £239,000 (cumulative)

2017/18 £239,000 (cumulative)

Proposed savings come from the Economic Development discretionary budget. This recurring budget was £1.135m in 2014/15 and was used to deliver a range of activity, including annual contracts for Business Gateway (£417,000) and VisitScotland (£240,000). A range of savings is proposed due to existing spending on a number of projects coming to an end over the next 2 years, reducing administration costs, and reviewing visitor centres with VisitScotland, saving £35,000.

## 8 Further options for reducing staff

2015/16 £164,000

2016/17 £473,000 (cumulative)

2017/18 £473,000 (cumulative)

Planning and Environment Services (PES) carried out a service review last year and identified the opportunity to reduce staffing levels in Planning and Regulatory Services and Economic Development, additional to those made in 2014/15.

## 9 Public open space grounds maintenance

2015/16 £60,000

2016/17 £146,000 (cumulative)

2017/18 £146,000 (cumulative)

Neighbourhood Services manages and maintains parks, public open spaces and burial grounds, provides an interment service, and a garden and hedge maintenance service for older and disabled people. The current grounds maintenance budget is £2,635,365. Converting areas of bedding plants and high maintenance shrubs into public green spaces would save £90,000 a year, mainly in staff and vehicle costs. This would require additional works to convert some planted areas so the saving has been reduced for the first

year to pay for this. Reducing the number of bedding plants and high maintenance shrubs would allow the older of our Council's two plant nurseries (Seaforth Nursery and Depot in Annan) to be closed, providing a further saving. This would leave the nursery at Cargenbridge operational. Developing the nursery unit at Cargenbridge for commercial plant sales could also provide an income of £10,000 a year.

## 10 Review of Environmental Activities

2015/16 £116,000

2016/17 £178,000 (cumulative)

2017/18 £178,000 (cumulative)

The Planning and Environment Services (PES) Service Review last year identified the need for environmental activities carried out by the Council to be reviewed. This proposal identifies staff savings in Environmental Planning, Maintenance Rangers, and Countryside Rangers.

## 11 Revenue Budget Carriageway Repairs

2015/16 £500,000

2016/17 £500,000 (cumulative)

2016/17 £500,000 (cumulative)

A service-wide review of road maintenance operations started in 2012 changed the working methods for carriageway repairs to a first time permanent basis wherever possible. This new approach, combined with investment in training, plant and equipment and significant capital investment in road surfacing, has resulted in better repairs and a reduction in the number of carriageway defects on our roads. A complete survey of our local road network in November 2013 found 4,500 defects. A similar survey in May 2014 found only 2,225. As a result, it is proposed to reduce the Roads Service Revenue Budget by £500,000. However, a one-off spend to save investment of £250,000 from the Change Fund will be made to fund additional equipment to continue improving repairs.

## 12 Joint provision of Courier Services with the NHS

2015/16 £35,000

2016/17 £35,000 (cumulative)

2016/17 £35,000 (cumulative)

The Council and NHS Dumfries and Galloway both run an internal courier service, delivering internal mail between buildings on a regular basis. There is potential to deliver savings in both organisations through a review of routes and eliminating service duplication. An initial review has indicated savings of at least 1 driver and vehicle within the Council.

## 13 Capitalisation of Surface Dressing

2015/16 £1m

2016/17 £1m (cumulative)

2016/17 £1m (cumulative)

We propose that an additional £1m of surface dressing works, currently funded from the Roads Maintenance revenue budget, is funded through the Infrastructure Asset Class in the Capital Budget. Between the financial years 2013/14 and 2014/15, £0.5m of funding was removed from the Roads Maintenance revenue budget in a similar move. In the same time period, the budget for the Infrastructure Asset Class for 2014/15 onwards was increased from £8m to £9m, in part to offset this additional capital funding of surface dressing.

## 14 School Meals price increase (reduce subsidy)

2015/16 £50,000

2016/17 £50,000 (cumulative)

2016/17 £50,000 (cumulative)

This savings option reduces the school meal subsidy by increasing the price of a school meal by 10p. The current price of a school meal in Dumfries and Galloway is £1.75 at primary school and £1.85 at secondary school. The national average school meal price for primary meals is £1.85 and for secondary meals is £2.00. Currently, all primary 1 pupils receive free school meals and, from January 2015, this will also apply to all primary 2 and 3 pupils.

## 15 Primary and Secondary Schools: core delivery

2015/16 £643,000

2016/17 £1,102,000 (cumulative)

2016/17 £1,102,000 (cumulative)

These savings will be made in the primary and secondary school budget, which was £85.1m in 2014/15. There are 3 elements to the proposals.

1) Efficiencies in reducing staff above RICCT (reduction in class contact time). Entitlement. RICCT for primary teachers means employing staff to provide 2.5 hours a week cover for Primary Teachers. In Dumfries and Galloway a significant portion of this is provided by specialist teachers. With the saving, it is proposed to reduce the number of specialist teachers by 6 full-time equivalents (FTE). This would still leave Dumfries and Galloway with 10 FTEs more than required to meet RICCT requirements.

2) Efficiencies in reducing staffing above formula. At present the allocation of primary teachers is 7 FTE above the agreed formula. Reducing primary teacher numbers by 7 will bring them to current formula level across all schools.

3) Reducing 16 FTE teachers in secondary schools, which is the equivalent of an average reduction of 1 FTE per school but based on staffing formula.

## 16 Reduction to Secondary Management Points

2015/16 £133,000

2016/17 £229,000 (cumulative)

2016/17 £229,000 (cumulative)

There has been an ongoing drive to reduce management costs across the Council. We propose to extend reducing management points to schools. Currently, each secondary school is allocated management points. Head teachers use this allocation to support a structure of posts that is designed to meet the needs of day to day management and curriculum development.

Currently, 6,584 points are awarded to secondary schools. Each point is worth £348. The points are used at the discretion of the Head Teacher. Typically, a principal teacher post may account for 30 to 40 points. This saving proposes to cut 657 points (10%) from the Management Points Allocations.



## 17 Service review of Care at Home

2015/16 £200,000

2016/17 £400,000 (cumulative)

2016/17 £400,000 (cumulative)

We are carrying out a fundamental review of all aspects of how we provide Care at Home. Early pilot work with 4 independent providers of care on electronic monitoring of care hours delivered to vulnerable people shows that using a system to electronically monitor care hours actually delivered enables us to confirm that the care has been provided. This ensures that the Council only pays providers for hours actually delivered, not those planned. This savings proposal involves rolling out the electronic monitoring of care hours beyond the pilot work.

## 18 Cost reductions through review of care packages and assessment of new self directed support (SDS)

2015/16 £855,000

2016/17 £1,525,000 (cumulative)

2016/17 £1,525,000 (cumulative)

There are 2 elements to this proposal:

1) A review of existing care packages. A high proportion of our Council's costs in Social Work relate to providing historic care packages to people with specific needs. Until recently, many of these packages have not been reviewed regularly. Recent experience shows that a thorough review can often provide the same or an improved level of care, in a more personalised way, closer to home, at a lower cost. The change in the needs of service users over time can also be assessed and better met through a personalised approach. Assistive technology and other alternatives can also be at lower cost. The target saving for 2014/15 from the Review of High Cost Packages was £375,000. To date, we've identified about a third of this

from the review of all packages costing over £1,000 a week, with 30 cases remaining. We now propose to extend the review to those packages costing £750 a week.

2) Assessment of new Self Directed Support (SDS) allocations, which enable people to choose how their support is provided to them by giving them control over the individual budget allocated for their support. A number of other Councils are introducing methods to control the costs of SDS so that they can manage increasing demand within budgets. For example, one Council has limited SDS to 80% of previous budgets. Our proposal is to apply a deflator of 10% when calculating the indicative budget for SDS allocations, working with service users to identify how to meet their required outcomes at lower cost.

## 19 Intensive in-region support for Young People

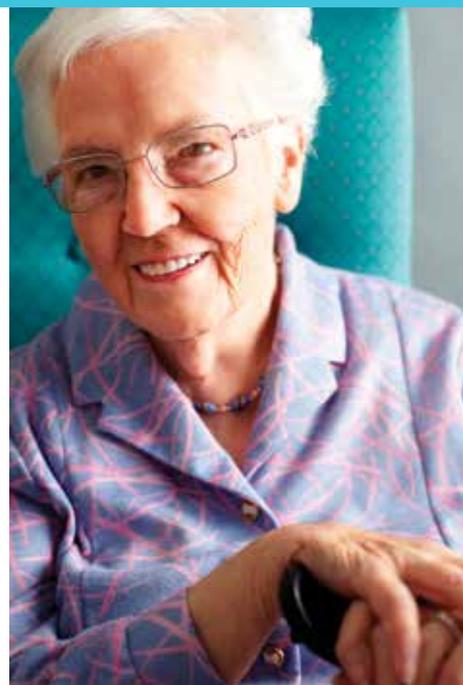
2015/16 £0

2016/17 £500,000

2016/17 £500,000 (cumulative)

Social Work Services must commission residential placements for a small number of young people with very specific personal circumstances, such as residential schools and secure units. Currently we support around 20 young people in this situation. The forecast spend in 2014/15 is in the region of £3m.

While a number of children are supported for a short time, a smaller number are accommodated for a number of years, so our direct costs on 1 person over a number of years can range from £0.5m to £1.5m. By identifying these children early, we could invest in more intensive, outcome focused support, aiming to return the young people to their own communities more quickly. Returning 5 of the children receiving the highest out of region support to their local community every year would generate a recurring saving of £1m.



Families would be supported to manage the needs of the young person in the family setting, which would require investing around £500,000 a year in staffing. However, there would be a genuine positive impact on service users.

## 20 General Efficiencies

2015/16 £500,000

2016/17 £500,000 (cumulative)

2016/17 £500,000 (cumulative)

The new Social Work Services senior management team is developing a new culture, including shared ownership of issues and greater responsibility for budget management and accountability. It is proposed to apply a required saving 'across the board', providing an opportunity to embed this new way of working and to change the culture of the service, raising cost awareness and valuing creative solutions to managing resources more effectively. If each of the 46 Social Work Services budget holders identified savings of £11,000 this would deliver more than the target saving.

# Chief Executive Services / Corporate

## 21 Dumfries Asset Plan - Offices Focus

2015/16 £25,000

2016/17 £110,000 (cumulative)

2016/17 £335,000 (cumulative)

This proposal is to continue the work to reduce the number of Council offices. By having fewer, better buildings savings can be achieved in costs such as heating and light. The initial focus of this proposal and saving is around Dumfries office accommodation, although it is intended to move to other centres across the region.

## 22 Form a Valuation Joint Board with Scottish Borders Council

2015/16 £0

2016/17 £84,000

2016/17 £101,000 (cumulative)

Scottish Borders Council has shown an interest in forming a Valuation Joint Board with Dumfries and Galloway Council, taking over the functions of Assessor and Electoral Registration Services. The savings would come from employing only 1 Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer to serve 2 valuation areas and removing duplicated costs from 2 budgets

## 23 Management Savings from Reshaping the Council

2015/16 £0

2016/17 £750,000

2016/17 £2,000,000 (cumulative)

Our Council is embarking on a major reshaping, reducing the number of Council Departments from 6 to 4 and reducing the number of senior officers. We estimate the net savings to be in the region of £225,000 (including on-costs).

Our Reshape involves analysis of our organisation's structure and reporting lines, showing relationships between managers and the number of staff they manage (span of control) and the number of tiers in the organisation. We propose to increase the span of control and, except for exceptional circumstances, there should be no managers with fewer than 5 staff reporting to them.

We estimate that we can reduce our management costs by a further £1.8m.

