

PLANNING OUR FUTURE - PUBLIC CONSULTATION

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 In order to support the Council in progressing ideas for making savings to the right decisions for Argyll and Bute, the Council will carry out a public consultation exercise as part of planning our future.
- 1.2 The consultation will seek the views of our communities on savings options and suggestions for innovation, efficiencies and income growth.
- 1.3 This report sets out for comment the proposed public consultation.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Council approves the public consultation.

PLANNING OUR FUTURE – PUBLIC CONSULTATION

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 Argyll and Bute Council aims to work with as well as for the people of Argyll and Bute.
- 1.2 The Council will therefore carry out a public consultation exercise as part of our planning our future process.
- 1.3 The consultation will seek the views of our communities on options for making savings, so that their views contribute to taking ideas to the right choices for Argyll and Bute.
- 1.4 It will also ask for community suggestions on innovation, efficiencies and income growth.
- 1.5 This report sets out the proposed public consultation.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Council approves the public consultation approach set out in Appendix 1.

3.0 DETAIL

- 3.1 With its funding set to fall considerably in future years, the Council has no choice but to make choices about its future service delivery.
- 3.2 The Council will continue to be a major provider of services, and a key employer in Argyll and Bute. However change will happen to what it does and how it works.
- 3.3 The views of our communities are sought on the wide range of options identified for making savings primarily over the next two years, in addition to inviting suggestions for transforming how it works and for growing income to support service delivery in future years.
- 3.4 The consultation explains the context for change having to happen and invites respondents to assess all options on the basis of 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'neutral', 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree'.
- 3.5 The consultation provides:

- the list of savings options identified, value of savings to be achieved and information on the ideas.
- the opportunity for people to assess only the options of importance to them; assess all options, and/or indicate which of these overall approaches they prefer to making savings - transformation, growing income, reducing, stopping services.
- Savings are highlighted by colour as general categories of work, and listed alphabetically within the four overall approaches.

3.6 It is proposed to carry out the consultation exercise using methods that have proven most useful to citizens in previous budget consultation exercises, including:

- website/social media questionnaire
- Citizens' Panel survey
- Reaching younger people through our Youth Services
- Working with our Third Sector Interface partners to reach people who would not normally proactively respond to a survey
- Printed questionnaires in libraries and customer service points

3.7 An additional step is also planned to help ensure a balanced and representative response: focus groups will be carried out across the area seeking qualitative feedback on options.

3.8 The consultation will be promoted in different ways including:

- On-line (via the website and social media channels)
- Advertising in local media
- Email distribution to our community planning partners and community councils
- The Council's weekly news round up

3.9 Findings will be collated and presented to a Special Policy and Resources Committee in January 2016.

4.0 CONCLUSION

4.1 The overall aim of the consultation approach is to maximise the likelihood of public involvement by providing opportunities for different levels of involvement.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Policy: Consultation findings will support service choice decisions.
- 5.2 Financial: costs are allowed for in the Communications/Strategic Finance budgets.
- 5.3 Legal : none
- 5.4 HR :Change will be managed within all relevant HR policies and procedures.
- 5.5 Equalities: The consultation will be available in different formats

- 5.6 Risk: The approach proposed is designed to encourage feedback at whatever level people are comfortable with, while also ensuring full and balanced responses.
- 5.7 Customer Service: Providing feedback on actions taken following consultation will support future citizens' involvement.

Douglas Hendry
Executive Director, Customer Services

Further information:

Jane Jarvie, Communications Manager, tel: 01546 604323

Appendix 1: Proposed content of consultation

Appendix 1: Proposed consultation content

Planning our Future – Public consultation

From ideas to the right decisions for Argyll and Bute

Please tell us what matters to you

The consultation is set out so that you can give whatever level of response suits you.

- Section 1: Key aims in transforming the work of the Council – do you agree with them?
- Section 2: Savings categories and options: as change must happen, with which options would you least and most agree?
- Section 3: Innovation: we'd like to hear your views on transforming our work to make savings and grow income.
- Section 4: Next steps – the service choice process.

Welcome from Councillor Dick Walsh, Leader of Argyll and Bute Council:

“We would like to do all that our communities want their Council to do for them, but drastically reduced funding means that this just is not possible.

We need to make choices about the work we do. We need to identify what is most important now, and for our future prosperity. We need to decide how we can make best use of the resources we have.

We would like to make these choices with you, which is what this consultation is about.

The consultation sets out a wide range of ideas for how we might make the savings we must, primarily over the next two years.

The Council has worked hard to find ways in which to transform how we do things and to preserve as many services and jobs as possible. We will continue to be a major employer and we will continue to support all aspects of our communities' lives.

However reduced funding will mean change for us all. We would ask you therefore to take time please to answer this consultation.

Work with us in progressing from ideas to the right decisions for Argyll and Bute. Thank you.”

Facts and Figures

- The Council provides a huge range of services.
- 80% of a council's funding comes from the Scottish Government.
- Over the next five years our funding is expected to be reduced significantly. Budget estimates show that we will have to bridge a funding gap of between £21.7 and £26 million.
- This means a savings target of around £9 million in both 2016/17 and 2017/18 with further savings in future years.
- The Council has already delivered savings of £32 million over the past six years; and recently agreed a further £1 million that can be made without impact on policy, number of jobs or communities.
- While making savings, we must also continue investing in building a prosperous future for Argyll and Bute.

Section 1: Key aims in transforming the work of the Council

<p>Invest in the future</p>	<p>Funding for services is connected to the size of the population. We need to attract people and businesses to the area to create prosperity, and to secure funding for future council services.</p>	<p>Do you agree with these as key aims:</p>
<p>Support our communities now by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Protecting jobs - Provide help most important now 	<p>Employment supports individuals, their families and their local economy.</p> <p>All our services are desirable, we must preserve those most important now.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>No</p> <p>If no, please comment</p>

Section 2 (a): Categories of savings

We would like to know your views on which services are most important to you now and to building prosperity for our future.

Categories of options			Please indicate below which of these overall categories you most support.
Transform	Grow council income	Reduce and retain	Stop to save
Innovation, doing things differently, achieving efficiencies – these can lessen impact of reduced funding.	Increasing charges reduces savings to be made and protects services	Reducing services could avoid losing services and achieve savings	We deliver a huge range of services; reduced funding does not allow all to continue

Section 2(b) – savings options

- To ensure choice, there are more options identified here than we need to take
- Options are wide ranging and include potentially reducing our workforce of 5,000+ by 306 posts (FTE *) through redundancy and 125 by transfer to a new organisation.
- To support our employees the Council has invited interest in voluntary redundancy to create opportunities for posts at risk.

(*) FTE (full time equivalent) - one FTE refers to hours that make up one full time job; full time hours may be split into part time jobs.

How options are listed

Options are listed alphabetically by area of work, in the four categories above. The colours below help you find particular categories of work.

- Pink: Community and Culture – sports, leisure, libraries, museums, community planning
- Purple: Customer/council support services – customer service points, registrars, internal council support services
- Orange: Development and Planning – economic development, planning and regulatory services
- Yellow: Education services
- Blue: Housing services
- Black: Roads and Amenity – refuse collection, recycling, street cleaning, roads and environmental services
- Grey: Social work/care services

Please assess options based on: 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3= neutral, 4= disagree, 5 = strongly disagree.

		Transformation			
		Innovation, doing things differently, achieving efficiencies			
1	2	3	4	5	
Area of work	Option	Comment	Saving £000		
Community Development and Community Planning	Reduce cost of combined community development and community planning teams.	1.7 fewer FTEs Less staff attendance at meetings.	71		
	Introduce consistent management arrangements for our four main community centres.	By changing the current arrangements with Centre Councils, the Council could deliver a consistent approach to pricing across the area.	45		
Creditors	Reduce postage, stationery, and printing costs	Increase email correspondence and electronic transfer (BACS) transactions.	13		
Customer Service Centres	Tiree Service Point service – deliver through contract with voluntary sector	This is in place in Jura and Colonsay. 0.5 fewer posts.	19		
	20% savings on postage, printing and stationery in all service points	Communicate by email rather than post.	10		
Facility services	Develop a Council catering service for events, functions etc	Build on the ad hoc special catering service already provided.	40		
	Spend to save: water utility savings	No significant impact on current service	100		
	Spend to save: energy use savings	No significant impact on current service	25		
	Increase heating efficiency through use of biomass boilers	Minor disruption at point when boilers are installed.	12		
	Reduce costs of Estates Section, through use of external service providers	1.4 fewer FTEs required Increased opportunities for external providers.	50		
	Improve use of fleet (transport) resources between council teams	1 fewer FTE required Consider external partnership working.	16		
Housing	Transfer of strategy staff costs to Strategic Housing Fund.	Subsidy for 5 fewer new houses available.	137		

Improvement and HR	Redesign delivery of personal safety training for employees.	1 fewer FTE required Develop on-line/face to face training	38					
	Redesign the Health and Safety Advisory Team, and develop on-line support	1.5 fewer FTE required. Increase on line support. Prioritise higher risk service areas.	81					
	Combine Improvement and Organisational Development, and Human Resources teams to create a single service	12.2 fewer FTEs required This would provide council services with a 'one stop shop' for support on people management and improvement.	511					
Information Technology	Replace broadband circuits to offices and schools with cheaper, lower bandwidth alternatives	Bandwith requirements will be matched to level of use.	139					
Leisure and libraries	Create Charitable Leisure Trust, bringing together Council owned community halls, libraries, swimming pools and fitness facilities.	This would reduce council jobs; posts would transfer to the new organisation. Experience of other councils would be drawn on in establishing an effective Trust.	700					
Planning and Regulatory Services	Reduce business support costs by efficiency savings provided by staff reductions.	1 fewer FTE to provide business support.	20					
	Reduce central administration costs by improved processes and systems.	1 fewer FTE to provide support.	16					
Revenues and benefits	Reduction in postage, printing and stationery costs	Stop providing pre-paid envelopes; increase correspondence by email	23					
	Council tax e-billing /landlords portals – replace external contract.	In-house solution to be developed; if unavailable withdraw the service	50					
	Retrieve cost of administering the double charge Council Tax from the income raised.	Double charge council tax applies to empty homes.	80					
	Benefit advisor posts –reduce to match expected reduction in caseload.	2 fewer FTEs. Introduction of Universal Credit is expected to reduce caseload.	48					
Roads and Amenity Services	Move to a 3 weekly collection for general waste (green bin), continue fortnightly	7 fewer FTEs New shift pattern to make better use of	548					

	recycling collections using double shift patterns.	fewer vehicles.						
	Energy Reduction Lighting programme	Use new lighting units that would reduce maintenance and energy costs.	150					
Social Work/Care Services	Social Work is the Council's second highest area of spend after Education. In 2014/15 we spent £55.4 million on these services. Proposed savings are for 4%-6%.	Social work/care services will join with health services as the Health and Social Care Partnership from April 2016. Identifying and delivering savings will be progressed by the Partnership.	£2.25m - £3.37m					
Strategic Finance	Review staffing of the team	7 fewer FTEs Training on-going to develop team skills, self-service routes for managers.	259					

Grow council income								
Increasing charges reduces savings to be made and protects services								
Area of work	Option	Comment	Saving £000	1	2	3	4	5
Economic Development	Reduce subsidies to freight operators at Campbeltown	Phased withdrawal of subsidy. From 55% to 33% to 18% to standard rates from 2018/19.	58					
	Increase piers and harbours berthing charges	Charges (for commercial shipping) depend on gross registered tonnage.	37					
Education	Increase fees for non statutory music tuition by 50%. Fees cover lessons throughout the August to June school session.	£150.80 per August–June session to rise to £226.20 for one pupil/one instrument. Cost for a sibling/another instrument to rise from £135.80 to £203.70.	50					
Planning and Regulatory Services	Introduce charging, of developer or property owner, for statutory street numbering	In place in other council areas. £75 to name/number or rename first property and sliding scale for additional properties e.g. £210 for 10 properties and £710 for 50, plus £150 for each new street name	10					
	Introduce charging for pre-application advice for major and locally significant planning applications.	In place in other council areas. Flat fee approx.£1,000 for major applications; maximum of approx. £800 for locally significant.	10					
	Introduce charges for Phase 1 Habitat Surveys	£600 per survey.	3					
	Increase charges to businesses for inspection and certification of food export certificates	Already in place in other council areas. £17 per certificate.	12					
	Increase income from private landlord registration scheme	Targeted enforcement work on unregistered private landlords	8					
Revenues and Benefits	Apply landlord penalties	This would apply to landlords providing tenant information late making it difficult	64					

		to collect council tax.						
Roads and Amenity Services	Increase burial charges by 20% plus inflation	From £488.65 to £604 (burial) From £507.95 to £627.83 (cremation)	79					
	Increase cremation charges by 20% plus inflation	These costs below average in 9 comparative local authority areas	59					
	Charge for, or remove services, for Cowal Games	This covers temporary toilets, event support, litter collection, staffing etc	30					
	Increase parking charges	80p to £1; Introduce to Mull car parks; Year round charging	150					
	Recover full cost for event banners and other activities associated with events.	Recover costs from this non-core council activity, or do not provide the support.	15					

		Reduce and retain						
		Reducing services could avoid losing services and achieve savings						
Area of work	Option	Comment	Saving £000	1	2	3	4	5
Adult learning and literacies	Reduce Adult Learning and Literacies service	3.4 fewer FTEs Reduction in classes, courses and other learning support and materials.	104					
	Reduce spend by 50% on adult learning and literacies resources and tutors.		29					
Arts and festivals	Reduce grants to major events and festivals by 20%	Funding/grants to continue to be available but to lesser amount.	37					
	Reduce arts development budget		10					
Community Development and Community Planning	Reduce third sector grant funding by 10%		14					
Customer Service Centres and Registration	Reduce service point opening hours to 30 hours a week. Stop taking council tax payments in servicepoints, promoting alternative options (direct debit, online, Paypoint)	3.5 fewer servicepoint staff, 2 fewer telephony staff, one fewer systems support staff, and (2018/19) one fewer in management structure	207					
	Rothsay service point – reduce opening hours further to 17.5 hours per week	0.5 FTEs removed This service point has the lowest volume of customer face to face contact.	20					
	Reduce property maintenance costs - remove small repairs budget at Jura and Colonsay service points	Small repairs would not be done in these properties. Requirements to date have been minimal.	4					
Governance and Law	Reduce area committee/governance functions with reduced support for Elected Members.	9.8 fewer FTEs required Options include fewer area and central committee meetings, no support for partnership/community planning meetings, increased 'self service' support for elected members.	301					
Housing	Reduce funding to energy and mediation	For example – 50 cases were referred for	41					

	advise services where there are other funding opportunities or reduced service demand.	mediation in 2014/15 compared to 75 the previous year.					
	Reduce funding by 25% for domestic abuse outreach support	Funding to continue to be available but reduced amount	40				
	Reduce funding for tenancy support contracts		191				
	Reduce funding for Rent Deposit Scheme, and service user involvement.	Service user consultation to be carried out by in-house staff; funding reduced in line with demand over past 2 years.	14				
	Reduce budget for Housing IT, strategy development and staff training.	Majority of Strategy work done in 2014/15.	51				
	Reduce staffing costs	1 less FTE; impact on capacity for partnership work, and promotion of housing information.	45				
Education	Reduce the disability access budget (for adaptations in education centres)	The level of demand has meant that this budget has been underspent previously.	20				
	Reduce home and hospital tuition (25%)	Reduced in line with past demand	3				
	Reduce Quality Improvement Team materials (60%)	Reduced opportunities for equipment loans and staff training.	15				
	Reduce specialist equipment budget (20%)	The level of demand has meant that this budget has been underspent previously	7				
	Reduce Repairs Outside Contractor costs for Special Education HQ by 39%	Use risk based approach to property maintenance.	7				
	Reduce Additional Support Needs (ASN) assistants by 45%	72 fewer FTEs Deliver efficiencies and match resources to greatest assessed need.	1,370				
	Reduce Creative Arts in Schools Team by 20%	0.2 FTE reduction Reduction in range of programmes for pupils.	5				
	Reduce instrumental instructors by 20%	2.6 fewer FTEs Impact on choice of instruments available	99				

	Reduce level of support available to the Council and providers of Early Learning and Childcare	6 fewer FTEs 40% reduction in council pre-5 resource budgets.	553					
	Withdraw 3% annual increase in payments to Early Learning and Childcare commissioned providers	Continue to commission providers to meet requirement for 600 hours of early learning for 3 and 4 year olds but remove annual increase.	82					
	Reduce Central Support Staff	4 fewer FTEs Reduced administrative support.	78					
	Reduce central PE facilities budget by 50%	Reduce options for example to hire venues for PE.	60					
	Reduce janitorial cover budget by 20%	Cover continues to be available but reduced.	16					
	Reduce central repairs budget by 20%	Prioritise repair work required. .	159					
	Reduce clothing grant budget by 30%	Demand has been less than the budget previously allocated	39					
	Reduce Classroom Assistants by 20% - primary schools	8 fewer FTEs across all 79 primary schools. Resources matched to greatest assessed need.	137					
	Reduce Classroom Assistants by 20% - secondary	6.6 fewer FTEs across all 10 secondary schools. Resources matched to greatest assessed need.	110					
	Reduce clerical assistants(20%) - primary	13 fewer FTEs Prioritise support provided.	217					
	Reduce clerical assistants (20%)-secondary	6.2 fewer FTEs Prioritise support provided.	108					
	Reduce pupil support assistants (20%) primary	3 fewer FTEs 111 fewer hours per year across 30 primary schools. Resources matched to greatest assessed need.	62					
	Reduce janitor costs by 20% - primary	8.6 fewer FTEs Prioritise service provided.	153					
	Reduce janitor costs by 20% - secondary	2 fewer FTES Prioritise service provided.	39					

	Reduce supply teacher costs (20%)– primary	Cover to continue to be available but to a reduced level.	98					
	Reduce supply teacher costs (20%) – secondary		75					
	Reduce grounds maintenance by 20% - primary	Work to be prioritised.	12					
	Reduce grounds maintenance by 20% - secondary		8					
	Reduce (devolved) budgets for individual schools by 20% - primary	These budgets are supplementary to the central education budget.	85					
	Reduce (devolved) budgets for individual schools by 20% - secondary	Expenditure to be prioritised.	105					
	Reduce school technician costs	6 fewer FTEs: reduced support for delivery of technical, ICT and science.	170					
	Reduce Educational Psychology Services budget by 7%	0.6 fewer FTEs. Reduced visits to schools.	37					
	Reduce budget for residential schools (outside the area) by 7%	Young people cared for outside the area reduced by 53% over last 5 years.	74					
Facility Services	Reduce by 14.5% central repairs budget by removing planned maintenance for schools, libraries and social work premises	3 fewer FTEs Maintenance to be prioritised.	164					
	Reduce by 8% central repairs budget by removing planned maintenance for shared offices from 2016/17	1 fewer FTE Maintenance to be prioritised.	46					
	Reduce by 22% shared office central repairs budget from 2017/18	Maintenance to be prioritised.	118					
	One off 25% reduction in bus stop/shelter budget in 2016/17 only	Prioritise/reduce bus shelters and stops built or replaced in 2016/2017.	16					
Housing	Reduce Housing budget for Rent Deposit Scheme, and cost of Housing service user involvement	Service user consultation to be carried out by in-house staff	14					
	Reduce Housing budget for IT and Strategy	Limit survey and research work possible.	51					

	development, and training.							
	Reduce Staffing costs	1 fewer FTE. Reduced capacity to participate in partnership and promotion work.	45					
Libraries	Reduce Library management costs	1 less FTE Reduced capacity to deliver library service	40					
Planning and Regulatory	Reduce Development Management team – validation and registration of planning applications	1 fewer FTE Longer time to register planning applications.	30					
	Remodel Planning enforcement team	1 fewer FTE (vacant post) Increase in response time to complaints about planning breaches	42					
	Remodel Access Team	2 fewer FTE (one post currently vacant, one potentially from 2018) Focus on statutory duties only	50					
	Remove vacant Regulatory Services alternative enforcement post	0.6 post removed. This post has been vacant for 18 months.	17					
	Reduce the debt counselling service	1 fewer FTE Focus on complex cases affecting most vulnerable people	36					
	Review Development Policy Team	Staff reduction equivalent to £50,000. Ability to deliver Local Development Plan and so support jobs, housing and the environment reduced.	50					
Roads and Amenity Services (R&A)	Close 43 public conveniences that cannot be run without cost to the Council	7.6 fewer FTEs These are located across Argyll and Bute	140					
	Reduce hedge maintenance from 2/3 to 1 cut per year	0.9 fewer FTEs Hedges to be maintained in winter only	18					
	Reduce to one grass cut per year / stop grass cuts	1 fewer FTE One cut in October/November; allow some areas to grow wild.	21					
	Reduce Environmental Warden Team	4.5 fewer FTEs Reduced enforcement /monitoring of litter, pest control, dog	113					

		fouling, commercial waste etc						
	Reduce Street Sweeping frequency (50%)	4.5 fewer FTEs Streets maintained to reduced standards	79					
	Reduce maintenance- R&A property (25%)	Prioritise dangerous/urgent work	64					
	Reduce maintenance of depots (25%)		26					
	Additional reduction in staffing across the Roads and Amenities service	Approx. 8 fewer FTEs Impact on areas' visual appearance	167					
	Reduce coastal and flooding work budgets	1.8 fewer FTEs Priorities for coastal protection and flooding work to be set	81					
	Reduce bridge assessment budget	0.2 fewer FTEs Prioritise most vulnerable structures	13					
	Reduce central administration costs through improvements to process and systems, and a reduction in training budget	1 fewer FTEs Source alternative training options (eg e-learning).	64					
	Reduce budget for road works / bridge maintenance	3 fewer FTEs Work to be prioritised.	164					
	Street lighting – increase planned repairs on an area basis, reduce reactive repairs	0.5 fewer FTEs Longer response time for lighting repairs.	49					
	3 weekly general waste, bi-weekly co-mingled uplift by internal resource for Islay.	This is in line with other local areas	17					
	Remove vacant posts in Waste Management service	2 fewer (vacant) FTEs Roads and Amenity service to be restructured	54					
	Further reduce road operations costs (from 2017)	Up to 5 fewer FTEs Savings to be sought across range of service activities.	140					
	Further reduce central support team (from 2017)	2 fewer FTEs Reduced level of administrative support	60					

Stop to save								
We deliver a huge range of services; reduced funding does not allow all to continue.								
Area of work	Option	Comment	Saving £000	1	2	3	4	5
Culture and libraries	Withdraw mobile library service	3.5 FTEs removed The service travels to remote mainland communities, Islay and Mull.	137					
	Offer Campbeltown Museum for community ownership.	If no interest from the community, close the Museum	37					
Education	Withdraw services that the Council is not required to provide for children under 5	8 FTEs removed Withdraw community childminding service	382					
	Remove Attendance Officer posts	4 FTEs removed Loss of support for schools in following up on pupil absences.	68					
	Remove management development and training budget – primary schools	Reduced opportunity for professional development of teaching staff	49					
	Remove management development and training budget – secondary schools		37					
	Remove school librarians in secondary schools	10 FTEs removed Reduction in library resource for pupils	319					
	Stop paying for lunches for lunchtime supervision staff – primary	Staff volunteer for supervision	12					
	Stop paying for lunches for lunchtime supervision staff – secondary		12					
	Withdraw Early Years third sector grants and services	Impact on families who receive services through this funding across the area.	183					
	Remove Early Years Change Fund		90					
	Remove budget for external support in modern language education	Foreign language training to be provided through the Scottish Government	36					

		Languages 1+2 budget					
	Remove subsidy payments to community swimming pools	Subsidy currently paid to swimming pools in Mid Argyll and Islay.	15				
	Remove central budget for additional ASN assistant cover (eg in-service days)	Use existing resources	80				
Facility Services	Remove out-of-hours property emergency line cover	Repairs to be reported Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm.	9				
	Remove discretionary community transport grant funding	Support no longer available to community transport groups.	93				
Planning and Regulatory	Remove aerial photography provided by Ordnance Survey	Council still able to provide a similar service.	5				
	Remove general budget for local development plan consultation events	Increase on-line consultation	5				
	Remove software/licences used for local development plan consultation	Internal software solutions to be developed	24				
	Remove budget for footpath maintenance and signage works	Reduce activity to core duties –statutory access rights/of way, and up-to-date Core Path Plan.	5				
	Remove footpath survey software and Local Access Forum support budget	Use alternative ways of surveying, and supporting the Forum.	4				
	Remove specialist legal expenses budget for resolving access disputes	Draw on internal legal advice if it is required.	8				
	Remove direct funding to advice agencies	This funding supports general advice organisations.	55				
	Revenues and benefits	End (discretionary) non-domestic rates relief for charitable bodies.	This will vary between 20% and 100% depending on charitable status.	90			
Roads and Amenities	Removal of hanging baskets	1.5 FTEs removed. Reduce visual appeal.	30				
	Replace annual bedding displays with grass areas	1.6 FTEs removed. Reduce visual appeal.	33				
	Remove rose and shrub beds, return to grass	3.4 FTEs removed. Reduce visual appeal.	70				

	Removal of Christmas lights	Free up staff for lighting maintenance	100					
	Remove all school crossing patrollers	13.5 FTEs removed. This is not a core function of a council.	200					
	Remove food waste collections in Helensburgh area	4 FTEs removed Helensburgh is the only area in Argyll and Bute designated (Scottish Govt/Zero Waste Scotland) for food waste collections.	76					
	Remove subsidies to Tobermory Harbour Association	Subsidy to be removed on a phased basis.	8					
Strategic Finance	Review size of team further.	3 FTEs removed Service provided to Council would reduce	120					

Section 3: Transforming for the future: we'd like to hear your ideas on how we could transform what we do, make savings or grow our income.

As indicated in many of the options listed, the Council has taken steps to find ways in which we can transform how we work and reduce the impact of savings on employees or communities, by making efficiencies or growing our income.

This focus on innovation will continue in order to support the Council and our work in the short and longer term. As part of this we invite your views on the questions below.

Transformation for the future – innovation, savings and growth		
Question	Comment	Yes / No
Would you support the Council sharing the delivery of services with other organisations as a way to make savings?		
Would you support an increase in council tax?		
What would you recommend for making savings or generating income for the Council?		
Other comments		

Thank you for letting us know your views and sharing your ideas. Information will be available on how answers to the consultation have contributed to decisions made, after the budget setting meeting scheduled for February 2016.

Section 4 - From ideas to decisions – the service choice process.

We have:

- Considered what we as a council are required to do and what is additional
- Set targets for savings options that ensure the council can balance its budget
- Identified more options than needed so that we can reach final decisions with the views of our employees and communities.

We are:

- Asking you to tell us what matters most now and for future prosperity
- Speaking with our employees and trade unions about their views
- Developing ideas for innovation that could reduce the need for savings over time.
- Raising with the Scottish Government the need for additional local government funding for Argyll and Bute. Argyll and Bute benefits from having both rural and island communities. In fact we have the highest number of inhabited islands of any Scottish local authority. This brings with it financial challenges in delivering services and support.

We will:

- Gather the views of our communities and employees
- Develop decisions bearing in mind those views and assessments of impact of options.
- Make decisions, after the Council's government funding allocation is confirmed, at a budget meeting scheduled for February 2016.

If you would like this document in another language or format, or if you require the services of an interpreter, please contact us.

Ma tha sibh ag iarraidh an sgrìobhainn seo ann an cànan no riochd eile, no ma tha sibh a' feumachdainn seirbheis eadar, feuch gun leig sibh fios thugainn.

Argyll and Bute Council, Kilmory, Lochgilphead PA31 8RT
Telephone: 01546 604437 Fax: 01546 604349