
ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

Council

Customer Services

27 September 2018

Consultation for budget setting in 2019/20

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out a proposed consultation on public priorities, for use in setting the council's budget for 2019/20.

Consultation for budget setting in 2019/20

2.0 SUMMARY

2.2 Argyll and Bute Council seeks to work with as well as for its communities. The budget consultation set out in Appendix 1 is proposed for use in involving public priorities in the setting of the council's budget for 2019/20.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Members approve the consultation set out in Appendix 1.
- 3.2 Members note that further information in respect of the council's budget-setting timeline will be included in the next budget outlook report, at the Policy and Resources Committee of 18 October.

4.0 DETAIL

- 4.1 The council runs annual budget consultations to involve local people in budget decisions.
- 4.2 Based on previous years' Local Government finance settlements, it is likely that we will not know our funding settlement for 2019/20 until a few days prior to the Christmas break, with the detail not being known until the beginning of 2019.
- 4.3 At the time of writing this report, mid-range estimates indicate that we will have a funding gap of approximately £2.5 million in 2019/20. This however could change between now and February 2019, when the council must set its budget.
- 4.4 It is proposed therefore to ask members of the public for feedback on their council priorities in October/November so that their views will be available once the detail of our funding allocation is known.
- 4.5 The consultation explains broadly where council funding is allocated, and asks people for their views on high level priorities, in relation to the role and services of the council.
- 4.6 Bearing in mind the demands on people's time, the consultation features six questions only in order to encourage as many people as possible to

respond.

4.7 The consultation would be available via the council's website and citizens' panel, as well as in printed copies in our customer service centres and through our Youth Services.

4.8 It would run from 10 October 2018 to Friday 20 November 2018.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 The attached draft consultation would provide information on the public's high level priorities for the work of the council.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1/2 Policy/Financial: Feedback from the consultation will be available for consideration in budget decisions.

6.3 Legal : None

6.4 HR : None

6.5 Equalities :The consultation is designed to reach a wide range of people in line with our duties under the Equality Act 2010.

6.6 Risk: None

6.7 Customer Service: Providing feedback on actions taken as a result of this consultation will highlight the value of citizens taking the time to respond.

Douglas Hendry
Executive Director of Customer Services

For further information contact:

Jane Jarvie, Communications Manager, Jane Fowler, Head of Improvement and HR

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Draft budget consultation

Appendix 2: Draft budget consultation

Planning our Future Consultation October 2018

What do you believe are the most important parts of the council's work?

Given the huge range of services we deliver, this is likely to be a difficult question to answer.

With more cuts to our funding expected, it is a question we will have to consider again, when we set the council's budget for next year.

The majority (80%) of the council's funding comes from the Scottish Government. We won't know how much our funding settlement is until the end of the year, but have to set our budget in February 2019.

We expect to be given a funding allocation for one year only, and at the moment, mid-range estimates indicate that we will have a funding gap of around £2.5 million in 2019/20.

Our challenge is to identify how best to use this reduced funding to invest in the longer term future of Argyll and Bute, as well as in the services that are most vital now.

We would like to match the decisions we make as much as possible to what matters most to people in Argyll and Bute.

Therefore, while we wait for confirmation of our funding allocation, we would like to hear from you about your priorities for the year ahead.

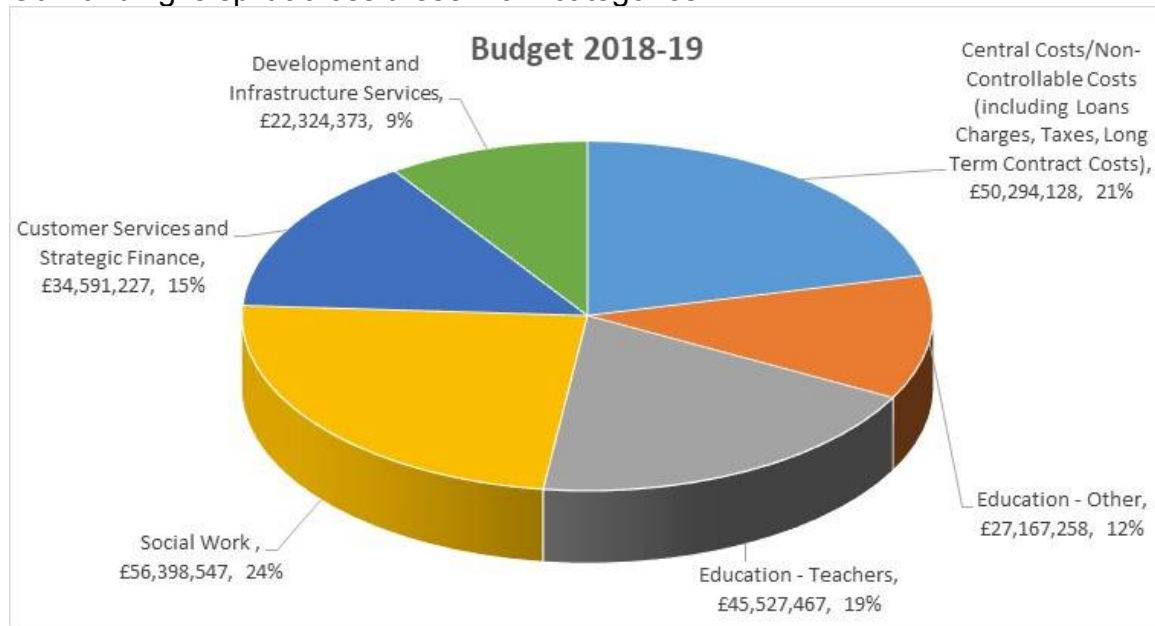
We would appreciate you taking a few minutes to reply to this short consultation so that we can involve you in the budget decisions we will reach in February 2019.

Thank you.

Councillor Aileen Morton
Leader of Argyll and Bute Council

Section 1 – The role and services of the Council

Our funding is split across these main categories.



Central/non-controllable costs include for example loan charges, landfill tax, energy costs or long term contract costs.

Customer Services and Strategic Finance include for example school and public transport, registrar (births, deaths and marriage) services, HR, IT, legal, property and procurement services, customer support/advice/information services, finance planning and management services.

Development and Infrastructure Services include for example roads, harbour and airport maintenance, refuse collection, planning services, environmental health, business support, economic growth, environmental safety and building standards services.

Education includes our 77 primary schools and 10 secondary schools. Please note: A proportion of the Education budget is committed to the national requirement to maintain teacher numbers, and is not available to reduce.

Social work services, now delivered as part of the Health and Social Care Partnership, provide support for vulnerable children and adults.

Here is an example of how our services fit together

Teachers who teach our young people are supported by for example:

- Human Resources, advertising and payroll services to recruit and pay them
- Estates, facility, legal and health and safety services to ensure safe, legally compliant school buildings and working conditions
- Road services to maintain and grit main routes (we grit over 700 miles of roads when freezing conditions are forecast, and maintain around 900 bridges).

Section 1: The role and services of the Council

Every day the council delivers a wide range of services directly to our communities. We are also working longer term with our partners to develop our local economy and so build a successful future for the area.

Q1	<p>What matters most to you about the overall role of the council? (Please rank in order of importance with 1 the most important and 5 the least)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> We deliver a wide range of services <input type="radio"/> We are a major employer in the area <input type="radio"/> We help people get involved in developing their communities <input type="radio"/> We work to attract the people and jobs Argyll and Bute needs for its future. <input type="radio"/> Other [please say what]
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Last year you told us that your priorities were education services for young people, social care services (now delivered by the HSCP - Health and Social Care Services) and roads. As a result in 2018/19:

- The council continued to dedicate more funding to our education services than to any other area of work.
- We protected the HSCP from the funding cuts to council services: since 2014, council funding for social work services has increased by 1%; budget remaining to fund other council services has decreased by 4%.
- We dedicated another £15 million between 2018/2020 to our road network.

Q2	<p>Which of the following do you most use? (Please rank in order with 1 as the service you use most often)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Education for adults <input type="checkbox"/> Education for children <input type="checkbox"/> Customer support/information services <input type="checkbox"/> Economic development/business support services <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental services (eg recycling, refuse, street cleaning) <input type="checkbox"/> Public transport <input type="checkbox"/> Regulatory services (eg planning, trading standards, environmental health) <input type="checkbox"/> Roads/harbours <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)
Q3	<p>What are your priority services for 2019/2020? Please indicate your top 3.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Education for adults <input type="checkbox"/> Education for children <input type="checkbox"/> Customer support/information services <input type="checkbox"/> Economic development/business support services <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental services (eg recycling, refuse, street cleaning) <input type="checkbox"/> Public transport <input type="checkbox"/> Regulatory services (eg planning, trading standards, environmental health) <input type="checkbox"/> Roads/harbours <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)

Q4	Any other comment on the role or services of the council?
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Section 2: Transforming our work to make savings and raise income

We have taken action on ideas given to us by our communities in previous consultations. You can find out more, for example in the [actions report](#) on last year's.

The council has a wide range of resources, for example, vehicles, buildings, professions and skills relevant to other businesses. We invite additional suggestions for making savings or raising income.

Q5	What suggestions do you have for raising income or making savings for council services?
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Providing services on-line saves money and can make services more easily available to customers. Please see www.argyll-bute.gov.uk for information on requesting, booking, paying and information services on-line.

The average cost for the Council to process a payment or service request:

- o In person at our Customer Service Points = £8.62
- o By phone = £2.83
- o Online = 15 pence

Q6	What council services or processes would you use if they were available on-line?
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Thank you for taking time to give us your views.

Contact us on: planningourfuture@argyll-bute.gov.uk

[Please return your completed form to a customer service point or to the Communications Team, Argyll and Bute Council, Kilmory, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8RT]