

# BUDGET 2025/26

Budget Savings Options Prepared by Council Officers for Stakeholder Engagement





# Introduction to your Council's Budget

## Where the money comes from 2024/25

Scottish Government Grant	£316.7M	(65.7%)
Non Domestic Rates	£63.7M	(13.2%)
Council Tax	£77.2M	(16%)
Specific Grants	£6.6M	(1.4%)
Social Care Funding	£10.4M	(2.2%)
Planned Use of Balances	£6.5M	(1.3%)
Agreed Utilisation of Non Recurring Funding	£0.7M	(0.2%)
<b>Total Financing</b>	<b>£481.8M</b>	<b>(100%)</b>

## Where the money is spent

Your council's budget for running costs in 2024/25 is £481.8 Million. The amount allocated for our 13 main areas for service delivery and the cost of our buildings is as follows.

(The percentage of total council budget is also shown as a % and is rounded to the nearest decimal point.)

Health and Social Care For Adults  
**£112.9M** (23.4%)



Secondary School Education  
**£75.6M** (15.7%)



Primary School Education  
**£64.1M** (13.3%)



There is a small number of services and areas of expenditure that support the way your council operates. All these budgets are regularly reviewed and are subject to a planned programme of changes to find efficiencies and make reductions.

Customer and Digital Services  
**£14M** (2.9%)



Social Work for Children and Young People  
**£38M** (7.9%)



Waste Collection and Disposal  
**£14M** (2.9%)



Early Learning and Childcare  
**£41.3** (8.6%)



Roads, Infrastructure and Public Transport  
**£21M** (4.4%)



Financial Commitments  
**£36.6M** (7.6%)



For example, Loans Charges

Central Support Services  
**£11.2M** (2.3%)



For example, Human Resources and Legal Services

Corporate and Democratic Core  
**£8.2M** (1.7%)



For example, Business and Admin Support and Councillor Salaries

Public Spaces and Safer Communities  
**£8.1M** (1.7%)



Leisure and Culture  
**£8M** (1.7%)



Council Assets  
**£18.8M** (3.9%)



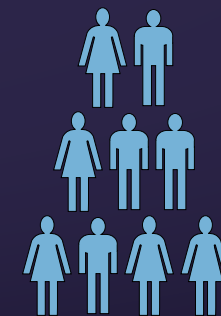
Economic Development and Planning  
**£1.4M** (0.3%)



Community Wellbeing  
**£8.6M** (1.8%)



Staff costs account for **£280.1M** (40%) of the Council's gross expenditure



Teachers  
**£101.5M**

Other council staff  
**£178.6M**

# Savings Options



FOCUS ON  
OUTCOMES



CUSTOMER  
AND DIGITAL



MODERNISATION



ASSETS



WORKFORCE



MAXIMISING  
INCOME

		2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	
<b>Sustained focus of resources on our Council Plan Priorities outcomes</b>					
<b>1.01</b>	End funding of the Summer Activity Scheme	50	50	50	End funding of the Summer Activity Scheme that supports families with disabled children, subject to universal provision being available as part of the existing Summer of Play partnership between our council, the Scottish Government and the third sector.
<b>1.02</b>	Re-prioritise funding supporting secondary schools' Scholar subscriptions	40	40	40	Use Devolved School Management (DSM) funding to pay for subscriptions to the digital platform Scholar, allowing resources from the Curriculum for Excellence budget to be released.
<b>1.03</b>	End enhanced Staff Immunisation Programme	25	25	25	End the enhanced Flu vaccination programme for staff within schools, introduced as part of the pandemic response as no longer required.
<b>1.04</b>	Remove remaining in-house commercial catering provision within leisure centres	-	-	20	Outsource the in-house commercial catering provision provided within the Ryan Centre, Stranraer.
<b>1.05</b>	End policy investment funding for the Youth Beatz festival	160	160	160	End funding allocated to deliver the free annual Youth Beatz festival, aimed at young people aged between 12 and 25.
<b>1.06</b>	End policy investment funding supporting Tackling Poverty and Inequality measures	630	630	630	As part of 2024/25 budget decisions already made, the additional £1.2 million of Tackling Poverty and Inequalities Policy investment funding ends on 31 March 2025. The remaining core budget would stop being available to continue a range of tackling poverty and inequality projects.
<b>1.07</b>	Implement existing council policy on the removal of unauthorised additional residual waste bins	225	225	225	Remove unauthorised additional residual waste bins from households in line with council policy, reducing the cost to landfill caused by the additional waste collected.
<b>1.08</b>	Rationalise school crossing patrol provision	72	72	72	Rationalise the current school crossing provision across the region, removing crossing patrollers where there are automated crossings at 7 sites across the region, as well as from those 17 schools that still have a lunchtime provision (see <a href="https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/budget">https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/budget</a> ).
<b>1.09</b>	Close in-house garden nursery	-	120	120	Close the in-house garden nursery that produces annual bedding plants for 40 flowerbeds throughout the region.
<b>1.10</b>	Efficiencies from re-procurement of food caddy liners	16	16	16	Reduce the cost of providing free food caddy liners to households.
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,218</b>	<b>1,338</b>	<b>1,358</b>	

2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000
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### Modernise how we deliver some services to meet our outcomes

<b>2.01</b>	Reconfigure support for the Autism Attendance Care Experienced Team	81	220	278	Provide greater empowerment to schools through transferring the management of the central Autism Attendance Care Experienced Team to schools. The current team would be reconfigured to reduce central management costs and widen the skills and experience of the team to provide support across a range of areas.
<b>2.02</b>	Reduce Additional Support for Learning (ASL) teachers and reconfigure service – Option 1	243	416	416	A 25% reduction in the number of Additional Support for Learning (ASL) teachers with all remaining staff directly deployed to school clusters.
<b>2.03</b>	Reduce Additional Support for Learning (ASL) teachers and reconfigure service – Option 2	243	416	416	A further 25% reduction (50% in total) in the number of Additional Support for Learning (ASL) teachers with all remaining staff directly deployed to school clusters.
<b>2.04</b>	Remove economic development support now provided by other agencies	108	108	108	Remove duplication of support across the tourism, food and drink sectors, which is available through dedicated partner agencies including South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE) and the South of Scotland Destination Alliance (SSDA).
<b>2.05/6</b>	Reduce office cleaning, including windows, focussing on a reactive cleaning provision	-	17	84	Reduce the level of cleaning undertaken within council premises through staff adherence to 'Find it Clean, Keep it Clean' and implementing a reactive cleaning service. Window cleaning costs will be reduced through restricting cleaning to customer-facing buildings.
<b>2.07</b>	Implement a one-stop shop facilities management model for schools	20	40	195	Modernise our approach to providing facilities management support within schools, developing a multi-skilled workforce to cover all operational requirements and increase flexibility and future sustainability of roles.
<b>2.08</b>	Implement 3-weekly collection of residual waste	-	-	950	Reduce the frequency of domestic residual waste collection from two weeks to three weeks to encourage increased recycling and reduce our council's waste disposal costs.
<b>2.09</b>	Reduce the number of layby bins	42	42	42	Reduce the number of bins in laybys across the region (excluding in 30mph zones and in areas where there is a high need for layby bins), cutting our council's waste disposal costs.
<b>2.10</b>	Reduce energy costs at Locharmoss landfill site through installation of photovoltaic panels	-	-	100	A spend-to-save proposal that will seek to invest in solar photovoltaic panels at Locharmoss landfill site, anticipated to reduce the energy costs incurred on this site by up to 50% per year.
<b>2.11</b>	Reduce employers' superannuation costs (teachers' maternity)	200	200	200	Cost efficiencies from the reduction in the level of employers' superannuation costs that require to be transferred to the Scottish Public Pensions Agency (SPPA) when teachers are on maternity leave. There is no impact on a teacher's maternity pay as a result of this option.
<b>2.12</b>	Savings through best-value procurement activity	250	500	650	Cost efficiencies through the continued application of our council's procurement approach, gaining economies of scale and generating extra income.
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,187</b>	<b>1,959</b>	<b>3,439</b>	

# Maximising Income



FOCUS ON OUR  
PRIORITIES



CUSTOMER  
AND DIGITAL



MODERNISATION



FEWER ASSETS



SMALLER SKILLED  
WORKFORCE



INCOME  
GENERATION

		2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	
<b>Maximise use of fewer assets, working with and within communities</b>					
<b>3.01</b>	Reduce the school estate – Option 1	406	536	623	Our council has an existing policy whereby when a school roll drops to 10 pupils or fewer the school can be considered for mothballing (subject to approval through the Education, Skills and Community Wellbeing committee). These savings are based on the implementation of the existing policy and approval being sought to mothball those schools where it is anticipated that the school roll will drop to 10 or fewer over the upcoming 3-year period, based on projected school rolls.
<b>3.02</b>	Reduce the school estate – Option 2	791	1,474	2,010	This proposal is based on extending our council's current mothballing policy (referenced in the question above) to further rationalise the education estate where the school roll drops to 25 pupils or fewer (instead of the current policy of 10 or fewer).
<b>3.03</b>	Reduce the leisure facility estate and review opening times	-	200	200	Reduce the number of leisure facilities operated by our council by closing Castle Douglas Swimming Pool and Fitness Suite and reducing/reviewing opening times at other council leisure facilities during periods of low use.
<b>3.04</b>	Reduce number of Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs)	-	40	60	Undertake a review of HWRCs, with the aim of reducing the number across the region, based on location, usage and site suitability.
<b>3.05/6</b>	Community facilities review – transfer/closure of public toilets and community halls	-	703	779	Discuss transferring remaining council-operated public toilets and community halls to community groups, and where it is not possible close the facility.
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,197</b>	<b>2,953</b>	<b>3,672</b>	

2025/26  
£000

2026/27  
£000

2027/28  
£000

### Develop a smaller more flexibly skilled workforce for the future

<b>4.01</b>	Phased reduction in number of play pedagogy principal teachers	19	72	177	Redeploy current play pedagogy principal teachers into mainstream teacher vacancies due to the implementation of new approaches to play in the classroom, now embedded into practice.
<b>4.02</b>	Create a centralised School Technician Team	-	99	170	Centralise school technician roles to create a more responsive operating model to respond to school curriculum needs. This will result in a reduction in the number of school technicians required.
<b>4.03</b>	Reduce the number of school-based clerical/administrative staff	-	-	386	Update the current administrative-staff staffing formula in both primary and secondary schools. This will be implemented at the next vacancy in each school.
<b>4.04</b>	Remove the central schools team for English as an Additional Language and gypsy travellers	140	379	619	Remove the current English as an Additional Language (EAL) and Gypsy Traveller Team, retaining reduced provision to maintain a critical focus on authority planning, professional learning and development and quality assurance.
<b>4.05/6</b>	Reduce management resources in Sensory Services/Additional Support for Learning teams	46	127	209	Reduce the level of management resources available to support the Sensory and Additional Support for Learning teams, shifting the focus of resources away from a centralised approach, and instead into schools.
<b>4.07</b>	Restructure Early Learning Centre (ELC) support	-	489	1,328	Restructure of the current Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) delivery model to meet all learners' needs.
<b>4.08</b>	Reduce number of quality improvement officers – Option 1	-	-	86	A 0.8 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) reduction in the number of quality improvement officers that support schools, deliverable from 1 April 2027.
<b>4.09</b>	Reduce number of quality improvement officers – Option 2	-	-	62	A further 1 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) reduction in the number of quality improvement officers that currently work within schools deliverable from August 2027 in proportion to the number of schools at that time.
<b>4.10/11</b>	Revise the approach to absence management in primary and secondary schools	257	503	503	Change the approach to absence management in schools to provide more targeted support.
<b>4.13</b>	Rationalise Support Services Team	26	196	417	A phased reduction in the Support Services Team within the Education, Skills and Community Wellbeing service.
<b>4.12/14/16</b>	Release of vacancies across Education, Skills and Community Wellbeing	49	113	113	Removal of vacant positions that are no longer required.
<b>4.15</b>	Review of Community Planning and Engagement	40	120	200	Deliver management reductions and increased income from the administration of the Community Windfarm Benefit Fund.
<b>4.17</b>	Review youth work services	52	52	52	Review the current approach to providing Youth Work services, reducing the workforce and generating a more focussed delivery model.
<b>4.18</b>	Reduce number of teachers to reflect falling school rolls	236	1,258	2,046	Reduce the number of teachers required to maintain the current pupil-teacher ratio due to the extent of projected pupil roll reductions over the next 3 years.

2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000
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### Develop a smaller more flexibly skilled workforce for the future

<b>4.19</b>	Remove inclusion bases to mainstream provision	-	24	102	A change of approach from the provision of inclusion bases to supported mainstream provision, retaining resource to create a new central response budget that will ensure that there are pathways for young people in extreme circumstances.
<b>4.20</b>	Modernise Learning and Development training	40	75	75	Cost efficiencies through adopting a commissioned training model that covers all training requirements across our council.
<b>4.21/22</b>	Reduce council management and other staff-related costs	289	415	540	Reduce the management costs of our council through redistribution of management capacity across vital services. In addition, agency and consultancy spend will be cut while managing overtime and absence cover requirements.
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,194</b>	<b>3,922</b>	<b>7,085</b>	

### Maximise our income and underpinning fairness through targeted concessions

<b>5.01/2/3/4</b>	Increased income generation options across Leisure and Sport services	192	222	282	Increase level of income generated across the region's council-run leisure and sport facilities through increasing Pay as You Go (PAYG), facility hires and coached activities fees and charges. Discounted rates for Prime membership will be removed and we will increase the number of people using our facilities through enhanced marketing and promotion.
<b>5.05</b>	Phased retention at school canteens of S1–S3 pupils during lunchtime	34	53	53	Implement a phased retention of S1 to S3 secondary pupils during lunchtime in school canteens to ensure direct access to a nutritious meal, which supports the Scottish Government's Healthy Eating in Schools legislation.
<b>5.06/7</b>	Increased income generation options – commercial and bulky waste collection	167	167	167	Increase income generated through the disposal of commercial waste through enforcing the legal requirement for all commercial properties to have a contract for waste disposal. Further increased income will be generated through increasing the cost of uplifting bulky waste items.
<b>5.08/9/10</b>	Increased income generation options – marriages and civil partnerships, and third-party legal charges	111	301	301	Through increasing the fees and charges for marriages and civil partnerships, liquor and non-liquor licences and reducing the subsidy on legal charges to third parties.
<b>5.11/12</b>	Review of parking charges	-	-	167	To review opportunities associated with the introduction of parking charges, including an 'invitation to pay' option, or a phased implementation of mandatory parking charges across the region with pilot activity starting in Dumfries. This would generate additional income that can be invested in the region's roads infrastructure.
<b>Total</b>		<b>504</b>	<b>643</b>	<b>970</b>	

### TOTAL BUDGET SAVING OPTIONS

<b>5,300</b>	<b>10,815</b>	<b>16,524</b>
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