

## Your Services - Your Say: Budget Consultation 2017/18

You can also complete this survey online at: [www.southglos.gov.uk/budget](http://www.southglos.gov.uk/budget)

Throughout this survey we ask you to think about “your local area”. When answering, please consider your local area to be the area within 15 to 20 minutes walking distance from your home. Please tick boxes to indicate your answers.

### What do you think of our services?

Q1 In the last year have you used any of the following services funded by the council? (Please tick all that apply)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Care for older people   | <input type="checkbox"/> Highways / roads   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Care for physically disabled and those with learning difficulties | <input type="checkbox"/> Waste and recycling services   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Customer services e.g. one stop shop                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Local bus services   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental health and trading standards                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Sport and leisure facilities   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Planning  | <input type="checkbox"/> Libraries  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public health (not including NHS services)                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Parks and open spaces  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Schools   | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing advice services  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children's social services  | <input type="checkbox"/> Welfare and council tax reduction for which the council is responsible |

Q2 South Gloucestershire Council is a key provider of public services locally, so we would like your views on some of the main services it provides. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with each of the following services provided or supported by South Gloucestershire Council?

|   | Very satisfied           | Quite satisfied          | Neither satisfied or dissatisfied | Fairly dissatisfied      | Very dissatisfied        | Don't know / Not used    |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Care for older people   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Care for physically disabled and those with learning difficulties               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Children's social services  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Customer services   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Environmental health and trading standards                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Housing advice services   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Highways and roads  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Libraries   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Local bus services  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Parks and open spaces   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Planning  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Public Health (not including NHS services)                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Schools   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sport and leisure facilities  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Waste and recycling services  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Welfare benefits and council tax reduction for which the council is responsible | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## The Council Savings Programme

Now in their seventh year of national austerity measures, all local authorities are experiencing unprecedented constraints on spending and must continue to review what they do and how it is done in order to achieve the necessary savings and balance their books.

During the last six years we have reduced our spending by nearly £63.6m through a range of efficiency measures, helping us to protect frontline services from spending reductions while delivering better value for money to residents.

Despite the council tax increase this year, the future projections of expenditure and income through to 2020/21 indicate that further tough decisions will also be needed in these future years as the gap between the forecast resources available and expenditure continues to increase. We therefore need to continue to reduce our spending and have already provisionally identified £14m per annum of further savings by 2019/20. In addition to this the council projects it will still need to find an additional £13m of savings over this period to balance the books.

This is a significant amount and will involve far-reaching changes to our role as well as the services we provide. We will become a smaller council, delivering fewer services, and will need to review our priorities to make sure our more limited resources are focused on our 'core' activities. At the same time we will continue to work more closely with local residents, strengthening and encouraging communities to take greater responsibility for local services to ensure that people's needs are met.

Your answers to this survey will help shape the council's decisions in relation to future service provision

Q3 The council has identified the core services that in future it will focus its limited resources on delivering. How strongly do you agree or disagree with these core service areas?

|  | Strongly agree           | Tend to agree            | Neither agree or disagree | Tend to disagree         | Strongly disagree        | Don't know               |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Delivering jobs, homes and infrastructure      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Improving educational outcomes                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Maintaining safe and clean communities         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Closing the gaps - income, education & health  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Safeguarding vulnerable children and adults    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Meeting assessed needs for children and adults | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Please tell us if you think there are any core service priorities missing?



Q5 Please tell us about any other ways that you think the council could save money or provide services more efficiently?

Q6 Please tell us about any other ways in which you think the council could support local communities to deal with these changes.

Q7 What do you think the impact of these changes will have on you, your local community and the services you receive?

## **Council tax options for 2017/18**

South Gloucestershire Council is considering its budget and council tax levels for next year. Prior to last year the council had frozen council tax levels for five consecutive years. In November 2015 the then Chancellor announced that local authorities could raise an additional 2% council tax levy (precept) to support care for older people as well as a council tax increase of no more than a 2% without incurring any penalty.

In February of this year the council approved its 2016/17 revenue budget, confirming a council tax increase of 1.99% along with the 2% precept for adult social care. It also approved outline budgets for the following three years (2017/18 to 2019/20) - to help it plan for the future. These included planning assumptions for council tax to rise by 1.99% in each of those years, as well as adding the 2% adult social care precept each year, to cover additional spending on adult social care costs. This will be subject to the House of Commons' approval of referendum limits for 2017/18.

Even assuming that the full Council Savings Plan is delivered by 2019/20 and the full council tax and adult social care precept increases go ahead, there will still be a forecast budget gap of over £13m in 2019/20. If the council decides not to increase council tax in future years, then additional savings of approximately £1m per 1% of council tax will need to be found for each year an increase is not made.

Please note that the council has no control over the council tax collected on behalf of the Police, Fire Service and parish and town councils. Each of these bodies will make their own independent decisions.

The council would like your views on the level of council tax the council should consider for 2017/18.

**Option 1: To increase council tax in 2017/18 by 1.99% and in addition to raise a 2% council tax levy specifically to support care for older people**

Looking after older people, for example in care homes or with help in their own homes, is the biggest part of the council's budget. Nationally, it is estimated that by 2019/20 the cost of supporting older people's care needs will increase by some £6billion. The additional 2% council tax levy will contribute around £2 billion towards this increase in 2019/20 if all relevant authorities take up this option.

If taken, this would mean a 3.99% council tax increase for South Gloucestershire Council and would be an increase of £51.67 per year (or £4.30 per month) for a band D household, raising an additional £4.7 million and removing the need for additional savings/reductions in services over and above those mentioned above.

**Option 2: To increase council tax in 2017/18 by 1.99%**

This would mean an increase of £25.77 per year (or £2.15 per month) for a band D household. This would raise an additional £2.4 million. With no adult social care precept this could mean further cuts of £2.3m to council services in order to maintain adult social care services at their current level.

**Option 3: To freeze council tax in 2017/18 at the current level.**

While the council is committed to protecting frontline services as much as possible, if council tax is not increased, this would mean further cuts to council services because the current level of service would no longer be affordable. The council would need to make additional savings of around £4.7m more than those which have already been identified.

Q8 Which of the following options would you prefer?

- Option one: A 1.99% increase in council tax in addition to a 2% council tax levy specifically to support care for older people (3.99% increase in council tax)
- Option two: A 1.99% increase in council tax

- Option three: A 0% rise in council tax
- No preference
- Don't know

**Extra question on adult social care precept increase of up to 3% in 2017/18 & 2018/19**

Central Government is currently consulting on a proposal within the 2017-18 local government finance settlement which allows for an increase to the flexibility offered on the use of the Adult Social Care precept. The policy intention set out at the time of the 2016-17 Settlement was that this would be 2% per year up to 2019-20.

In recognition of the particular pressures on adult social care services, especially in the next two years, social care authorities will now be able to introduce the rise sooner. They will have the freedom to increase by up to 3% in 2017-18 or 2018-19, but still cannot exceed 6% in total over the three-year period.

This means that the total rise in bills should not be any greater over the period, but because the rise would be earlier, this would generate an additional £3.7m of resources over this period for investment in adult social care.

As South Gloucestershire Council is currently consulting on its budget and council tax levels for 2017-18, we would like to gauge your views on the following option:

Q9 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the council should further increase the adult social care precept from 2% to 3% for 2017-18 and 2018-19, resulting in a 0% increase (rather than 2%) in 2019/20?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree             | <input type="checkbox"/> Tend to disagree  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tend to agree              | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither agree nor disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know        |

Councils wishing to use the extra freedom to raise their precept by 3% instead of 2% in 2017-18 must also show how they plan to use this extra money to improve social care.

To ensure that councils are using income from the precept for adult social care, councils will be required to publish a description of their plans, including changing levels of spend on adult social care and other services. This must be signed off by the Chief Finance Officer.

**Please note that should these increases go ahead in the 2017-19 period there would be no further increase in the 2019-20 year.**

### What do you think of your local area and the council?

Throughout this survey we ask you to think about “your local area”. When answering, please consider your local area to be the area within 15 to 20 minutes walking distance from your home.

Q10 Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Fairly dissatisfied |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fairly satisfied                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Very dissatisfied   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know          |

Q11 Over the past 2 years, do you feel that South Gloucestershire has become a better place to live, is the same or is worse?

- |                                   |                                     |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better   | <input type="checkbox"/> Worse      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The same | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |

Your local area receives services from South Gloucestershire Council. South Gloucestershire Council is responsible for a range of services such as refuse collection, street cleaning, planning, education, social care services and road maintenance.

Q12 Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way South Gloucestershire Council runs things?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Fairly dissatisfied |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fairly satisfied                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Very dissatisfied   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know          |

In considering the next questions, please think about the range of services South Gloucestershire Council provides to the community as a whole, as well as the services your household uses. It does not matter if you do not know all the services South Gloucestershire Council provides to the community. We would like your general opinion.

Q13 To what extent do you agree or disagree that South Gloucestershire Council provides value for money?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree             | <input type="checkbox"/> Tend to disagree  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tend to agree              | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither agree nor disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know        |

Q14 To what extent do you agree or disagree that South Gloucestershire Council keeps you informed about the services it provides?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree             | <input type="checkbox"/> Tend to disagree  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tend to agree              | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither agree nor disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know        |

Q15 To what extent do you agree or disagree that South Gloucestershire Council keeps you informed about any proposals for change?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree             | <input type="checkbox"/> Tend to disagree  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tend to agree              | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither agree nor disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know        |

Q16 To what extent do you think South Gloucestershire Council acts on the concerns of local residents?

- |  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A great deal  | <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A fair amount | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not very much |                                     |

Q17 How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement?  
I can influence decisions affecting my local area.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree             | <input type="checkbox"/> Tend to disagree  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tend to agree              | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither agree nor disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know        |

## Your comments

Q18 Please use this space to make any comments or suggestions that you think are relevant.

## Future Devolution Consultation

*Please note that this is separate to the council's budget consultation.*

Devolution is where national government gives more power and funding to local government.

Here in the West of England, three councils - Bath & North East Somerset Council, Bristol City Council and South Gloucestershire Council endorsed a West of England devolution deal agreed in March 2016. When the final decision is made in November 2016, if the three councils agree to proceed, the deal, would be the largest in the country, worth £1 billion or £1,000 per head of population. This deal would see more decisions being made locally on topics such as transport, housing and skills and could help to create more local jobs and speed up housing development.

Alongside this devolution deal, the councils are also working collectively on a Joint Spatial Plan to identify the housing and employment needs for the region and a Joint Transport Plan, identifying the transport infrastructure to support development.

The three councils would work together as a West of England Mayoral Combined Authority to oversee the new funding and powers. A requirement of the deal would be for the public to elect a West of England Mayor (in May 2017) who would oversee the new funding and powers. The West of England Mayor, the leaders of Bath & North East Somerset and South Gloucestershire Councils and the Mayor of Bristol would be the members of the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority.

The Government has been very clear that such a devolution deal is the beginning of a process that allows Combined Authorities headed by a Mayor to negotiate further deals for additional local control over spending priorities and powers to support these. South Gloucestershire would like to receive your views on the priorities emerging from the current deal and the priorities for any further devolution.

Q19 The devolution deal agreed in March 2016 identified speeding up housing delivery as a priority. Do you agree that this area should remain a priority for any future discussions?

Strongly agree

Tend to disagree

Tend to agree

Strongly disagree

Neither agree nor disagree

Don't know

Comment

Q20 The Joint Transport Study (2016) has shown a need for £7.5bn of investment in transport to match the regions housing and employment needs. Do you agree investment in transport should be a priority?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree             | <input type="checkbox"/> Tend to disagree  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tend to agree              | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither agree nor disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know        |

Comment

Q21 The devolution deal agreed in March 2016 will see the Adult Education Budget (aged 19 and over) decided locally, which could allow the Combined Authority to better match provision of courses to local labour market requirements. Do you agree that future discussions should go further and seek greater control over education provision from the age of 16 to be able to respond better to local employment needs?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree             | <input type="checkbox"/> Tend to disagree  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tend to agree              | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither agree nor disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know        |

Comment

Q22 Overall, the devolution deal agreed in March 2016 saw funding and changes to legislation to allow decisions to be made locally for Housing, Transport, Skills, Employment and Business Support. With the possibility of future discussions leading to further deals, are there any more areas you would like to see treated as a priority?

Please leave any comments here

### About you - responding as?

Q23 Are you responding as?

- |   |   |                                |
|---|---|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A local resident                           | <input type="checkbox"/> A parish or town council | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A voluntary, community sector organisation | <input type="checkbox"/> A local business         |                                |

If 'other' please specify or if you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please tell us its name.

Q24 Please tell us your full postcode i.e. BS\* \*\*\*

## About you

This section is really important as it helps us to understand more about the people who use council services and may be affected by any changes to the council's budget. Any responses to these questions will remain confidential, individuals will not be identified and personal details will not be published. If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, you do not need to answer these questions.

Q27 Are you?

Female

Male

Prefer not to say

Q28 How old are you?

16 to 24

45 to 54

Over 75

25 to 34

55 to 64

Prefer not to say

35 to 44

65 to 75

Q29 Do you consider yourself to be disabled?

No

Prefer not to say

Yes - Physical impairment, such as difficulty using arms or mobility issues which may mean using a wheelchair or crutches

Yes - Sensory impairment such as being blind/ having serious visual impairment, or being deaf/ having a serious hearing impairment

If yes, please tell us how this impacts on your use of council services?

Yes - Mental health condition, such as depression, anxiety or schizophrenia

Yes - Learning disability/ difficulty (such as Down's Syndrome, dyslexia, dyspraxia) or cognitive impairment (such as autistic spectrum disorder)

Yes - Long standing illness or health condition, such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease or epilepsy

Yes - Other (please state)

Q31 Please tell us your ethnicity

Thank you for taking the time to tell us your views. Please return your completed survey by 18th December 2016 by posting it to: FREEPOST RTCT-JXLE-EETT, South Gloucestershire Council, Budget Consultation 2017/18, Civic Centre, High Street, Kingswood, Bristol, BS15 9TR

Any personal information that you have supplied will be held by South Gloucestershire Council in accordance with the Data Protection Act. This information will only be used as part of this exercise and personal information will not be published or passed onto any other organisation.