



## The Council Savings Programme

Now in their eighth 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 £15m 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:

Q4 In the future, the council will need to find ways to make services more affordable as it adjusts to its more limited resources. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following approaches?

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree or disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Targeting resources on the most vulnerable and people most in need	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reducing the quality of some services provided	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increasing fees and charges for some services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Making more services available online	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using digital technology more widely to support the delivery of services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Making more efficient use of council assets such as land and buildings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scaling back or stop providing some services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stopping provision of some discretionary services to protect services to older people and the vulnerable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Changing working practices to make better use of technology and more efficient ways of working	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working in partnership and sharing services with other councils and public sector agencies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transferring services to other organisations like commercial companies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transferring services to other organisations like community groups, social enterprises and town and parish councils	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Encouraging more people to volunteer their time to become involved in the delivery of services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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 2018/19

South Gloucestershire Council is considering its budget and council tax levels for next year. Prior to 2015 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. Subsequently flexibility for billing authorities was announced in November 2016 allowing the increase precept to be increased to 3% in 2017/18 (capped at 6% overall increase over 3 years) as well as a council tax increase of no more than a 2% without incurring any penalty.

In February 2017 the council approved its 2017/18 revenue budget, confirming a council tax increase of 1.99% along with the 3% precept for adult social care. It also approved outline budgets for the following three years (2018/19 to 2020/21) - 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 3% adult social care precept in 2018/19 followed by a 0% increase to the adult social care precept in 2019/20, to cover additional spending on adult social care costs. This will be subject to the House of Commons' approval of referendum limits for 2018/19.

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 nearly £16m in 2021/22. 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 under current government rules, should these increases go ahead in 2018/19, there would be no further increase in the adult social care precept in 2019/20.

### **The council would like your views on the level of council tax the council should consider for 2018/19:**

#### **Option 1: To increase council tax in 2018/19 by 1.99% and in addition to raise a 3% 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. If used in full, setting the precept at 3% rather than 2% as previously planned nationally, this would have raised a little over £200m more than previous plans in 2017/18 and £425m more in 2018/19.

If taken again, this would mean a 4.99% council tax increase for South Gloucestershire Council and would be an increase of £67.84 per year (or £5.65 per month) for a band D household, raising an additional £8.7 million and removing the need for additional savings/reductions in services over and above those mentioned above

#### **Option 2: To increase council tax in 2018/19 by 1.99% and in addition raise a 2% council tax levy specifically to support care for older people**

Rather than continuing to take the full adult social care increase in 2018/19 of 3%, the council could chose to increase the adult social care precept by 2% in 2018/19 with a further increase of 1% in 2019/20 possible to ensure it stays within the 6% cap across 2017/18 to 2019/20.

This would mean an increase of £54.38 per year (or £4.53 per month) for a band D household. This would raise an additional £7.5million. With only 2% adult social care precept this could mean further cuts of £1.2m to council services in order to maintain adult social care services at their current level.

#### **Option 3: To increase council tax in 2018/19 by 1.99%**

This would mean an increase of £27.06 per year (or £2.25 per month) for a band D household. This would raise an additional £5.0 million. With no adult social care precept this could mean further cuts of £5.0m to council services in order to maintain adult social care services at their current level.

### Option 4: To freeze council tax in 2018/19 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 1:** A 1.99% increase in council tax in addition to a 3% council tax levy specifically to support care for older people (4.99% increase in council tax)
- Option 2:** A 1.99% increase in council tax in addition to a 2% council tax levy specifically to support care for older people (3.99%)
- Option 3:** A 1.99% increase in council tax
- Option 4:** A 0% rise in council tax
- No preference
- Don't know

Councils wishing to use the extra freedom to raise their precept by 3% instead of 2% in 2018/19 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 Financial Officer.

Please note that should these increases go ahead in 2018-19 there would be no further increase to the adult social care precept 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.

Q9 Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
- Don't know

Q10 Over the past 2 years, do you feel that South Gloucestershire has become a better place to live, is the same or is worse?

- Better
- The same
- Worse
- 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.

Q11 Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way South Gloucestershire Council runs things?

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
- 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.

Q12 To what extent do you agree or disagree that South Gloucestershire Council provides value for money?

- Strongly agree
- Tend to agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

Q13 To what extent do you agree or disagree that South Gloucestershire Council keeps you informed about the services it provides?

- Strongly agree
- Tend to agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

Q14 To what extent do you agree or disagree that South Gloucestershire Council keeps you informed about any proposals for change?

- Strongly agree
- Tend to agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

Q15 To what extent do you think South Gloucestershire Council acts on the concerns of local residents?

- A great deal
- A fair amount
- Not very much
- Not at all
- Don't know

Q16 How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement?  
I can influence decisions affecting my local area.

- Strongly agree
- Tend to agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

## Your comments

Q17 Please use this space to make any other comments or suggestions about the budget and council savings plan:

Q18 Are you responding as?

- A local resident
- A voluntary, community sector organisation
- A parish or town council
- A local business
- Other

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

Q19 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.

Q20 Are you?

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say

Q21 How old are you?

- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 16 to 24 | <input type="checkbox"/> 55 to 64          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 25 to 34 | <input type="checkbox"/> 65 to 75          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 35 to 44 | <input type="checkbox"/> Over 75           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 45 to 54 | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |

Q22 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
- 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)

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

Q23 Please tell us your ethnic origin

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arab  | <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed/multiple ethnic group - Other                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Asian British - Bangladeshi                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed/multiple ethnic group - White & Asian                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Asian British - Chinese                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed/multiple ethnic group - White & Black African           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Asian British - Indian                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed/multiple ethnic group - White & Black Caribbean         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Asian British - Other                       | <input type="checkbox"/> White - English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Asian British - Pakistani                   | <input type="checkbox"/> White - Other   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black/African/Caribbean/Black British - African   | <input type="checkbox"/> White Irish   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black/African/Caribbean/Black British - Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> Other   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black/African/Caribbean/Black British - Other     | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gypsy or Traveller                                |  |

If other, please specify

Q24 Sexual Orientation:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bisexual           | <input type="checkbox"/> Heterosexual      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gay man            | <input type="checkbox"/> Other             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gay woman/ lesbian | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |

**Thank you for taking the time to tell us your views.**

Please return your completed survey by 15th December 2017 by posting it to:  
Freepost Plus RTXL-YHGY-GSYS, South Gloucestershire Council, Corporate  
Research & Consultation Team, Budget 2018/19, Council offices, Badminton Road,  
Yate, BRISTOL, BS37 5AF

*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.*