

budget 2012

Making your money count

Every day of the year, Central Bedfordshire Council provides services to your community.

All of us will make use of some of these services, whether they are road maintenance, waste collection or the social care services that protect our vulnerable children and adults.

However, providing these services is an expensive business. Central Bedfordshire Council spends more than £180 million a year delivering these services.

Looking ahead, we know there will be less Government grant available for the council than there has been in the past, as the efforts to tackle the national deficit continue. There are also increasing pressures on some of the services we provide because of increasing needs and rising costs.

Central Bedfordshire Council are continually striving to provide value for money. We've achieved savings of more than £20 million already from reviewing what we do and how we work. This year we must save another £19m and expect further reductions in the next financial year.

Taking all these factors into consideration, the council is preparing a financial strategy for the next four years - and we want your views to be at the heart of our plans.

Whatever your opinions, we want to hear from you, so please take this opportunity to shape the plans and make your money count!

have
your
say...

To have your say on the council's budget priorities, please complete this short survey and return by

Friday, 14 October 2011

to **FREEPOST RSJS GBB2 SRZT, Budget Consultation, Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford, SG17 5TQ** (you do not need a stamp).

Alternatively, you can complete the survey online at www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/consultations.

What happens next?

The feedback from this survey will help Councillors prepare options for savings for next year and beyond.

We will consult on these options during December and January.

You can keep up to date with the council's budget setting process via our website www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/consultations



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Making your money count

Central Bedfordshire Council provides many important services to the public and we need to understand which of these services are most important to residents.

Q1a From the following list of council services, which services would you be least willing to see savings made, if savings have to be made? PLEASE TICK ✓ UP TO FIVE BOXES.

Q1b From the following list of council services, which services would you be most willing to see savings made, if savings have to be made? PLEASE TICK ✓ UP TO FIVE BOXES.

	a) Least willing to see savings	b) Most willing to see savings
Activities for teenagers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adoption and fostering services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attracting and supporting businesses to create jobs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cultural facilities (e.g. theatres and arts)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Country parks, open spaces and rights of way	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day centres and activities for disabled and vulnerable adults	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day centres and activities for older people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental health, trading standards and consumer protection	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facilities and activities for young children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improving town centres	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Libraries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maintaining the roads and pathways	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Planning (including managing the increase in new housing in the area)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reducing traffic congestion and subsidising public transport	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recycling (including household waste recycling centres)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Refuse collection	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Residential care services for older people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Services to help and protect vulnerable children (e.g. children in care)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Services to support children with disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Services to support older, disabled or vulnerable people to stay in their homes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Services to support parents and families with young children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social housing (housing provided by the council for local people)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sports and leisure facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Street cleaning (removing graffiti, litter, fly tipping and abandoned cars)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working with schools to improve educational progress and attainment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working with the police to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Your council tax pays for public services provided by Central Bedfordshire Council. Last year the government announced that local councils would receive a 28% cut in government grant over the next four years. This means, like many other councils across the country, Central Bedfordshire Council needs to reduce its spending. Last year the council proposed a budget which saved £19million but did not raise council tax. For 2012/13 the Council anticipates needing to reduce spending by a further £10million.

Q2 When Central Bedfordshire Council sets the level of council tax next year, which of the following would you prefer it to aim for? PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

- Reduce council tax and spend considerably less on public services, this will mean cutting some services
- Keep council tax the same, improve efficiency and only spend less on services if absolutely necessary
- Increase council tax to enable the council to keep all its services and spend more on some services
- Don't know

The council is already making significant savings by reducing the cost of running the council. For example reducing the number of managers and getting better deals on contracts. It maybe possible to achieve further savings through better use of technology and reducing administrative costs in back office services such as human resources (personnel) and finance.

Q3. To what extent to do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

I would rather see savings made in the cost of running the council than in frontline services

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

The council may also be able to save money by delivering some council services in different ways by working with other organisations or through new technology. For example, some Town and Parish Councils have taken on responsibility for toilets and grass-cutting in their local area and we have contracts with private companies to deliver some services.

Q4. In order to protect front line services the Council may need to consider different ways of delivering services. Would you support any of the following options for providing council services to save money? PLEASE TICK ✓ AS MANY AS APPLY.

- Local communities providing some council services through volunteers
- Town and parish councils providing some council services
- Private sector organisations providing some council services
- A charity or social enterprise providing some council services (social enterprises re-invest their profits back into the service or into the community)
- Introducing and/or increasing charges for some council services
- Changing the criteria for accessing council services so fewer people will be eligible for some services
- Combining some of our council services with other local public sector organisations to share the costs
- Encouraging local people using some council services to contact us by the internet instead of the phone or in person
- Asking individuals to do more for themselves
- None of the above

Q5. Is there anything else you would like to add? PLEASE WRITE IN BELOW

About yourself

Please complete these questions which will help us to see if there are differences between the views of different residents. All the information you give will be kept completely confidential.

Q6. Are you a: PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

- Central Bedfordshire resident/ tax payer
- Local business
- Town or Parish Council
- Voluntary organisation or charity
- Other public sector organisation (PLEASE TICK ✓ AND WRITE IN BELOW)
- Other (PLEASE TICK ✓ AND WRITE IN BELOW)

Q7. Are you male or female? PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

- Male
- Female

Q8. What was your age on your last birthday? PLEASE WRITE IN BELOW

_____ Years

Q9. Do you have any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity? (Long-standing means anything that has troubled you over a period of time or that is likely to affect you over a period of time.) PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

- Yes
- No

Q10. To which of the following ethnic groups do you belong? PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

- White
- Black or Black British
- Asian or Asian British
- Mixed/multiple ethnic groups
- Other ethnic group (PLEASE TICK AND WRITE IN) _____

Q11. What is your home postcode? (PLEASE WRITE IN BELOW)

Thank you for completing this survey.

Please return your completed survey by **14 October 2011** to
FREEPOST RSJS GBB2 SRZT, Budget Consultation, Central Bedfordshire Council,
Priority House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford, SG17 5TQ (you do not need a stamp).

Data Protection Act 1998. Please note that your personal details supplied on this form will be held and/or computerised by Central Bedfordshire Council for the purpose of analysing the feedback to this budget survey. The information collected may be disclosed to officers and members of the Council and its' partners involved in this consultation. Summarised information from the forms may be published, but no individual details will be disclosed under these circumstances. Your personal details will be safeguarded and will not be divulged to any other individuals or organisations for any other purposes.

Information classification: Protected when complete

