



## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

### **Why does the council need to make savings?**

The Scottish Government allocates a sum of money to each of the 32 Councils across Scotland. Councils are faced with the challenge of allocating their budget efficiently to ensure services are delivered. However, due to an anticipated smaller sum being given, Dumfries and Galloway Council is required to save an estimated £30 million over the next two years.

### **How much have Dumfries and Galloway Council already saved?**

Since 2011/12, the Council has managed to save a total of £85.8 million.

### **What happens to any money that is left over at the end of the financial year?**

Any remaining money that is left over at the end of the financial year is offset against any overspend in other parts of the Council or, if this is not required, it is carried forward to fund services in the next financial year. The Council is also required to retain a small level of reserves (currently 2% of the total council budget). No funding is returned to the Scottish Government.

### **Why is a Budget Simulator being used?**

Dumfries and Galloway Council has four Priorities. One of these is “to be an inclusive Council”. It is therefore responsible for ensuring that all individuals are fully engaged and are able to have their say and express their thoughts and ideas in an accessible way. The Budget Simulator Challenge allows individuals to take part and have their say on how their Council’s Budget should be balanced.

### **Why is it only those particular areas in the Simulator that I can choose from?**

Council officers have made propositions on where savings can come from. Elected Members have agreed a range of propositions that can then be consulted with staff, partners, service users and customers etc...

### **Will there be an opportunity for me to discuss issues other than the Council’s Budget?**

This event is being held to compliment and promote the Budget Simulator, and ensure individuals’ preferences are expressed. If you do have any other issues then raise them with one Community Council members or Council Officer in attendance at the event.

### **Will there be more than one Community Conversation held on the Budget Simulator Challenge in my area?**

Community Conversations will be held across Dumfries and Galloway throughout the month of November. It is expected that in your local area, there will be at least one Community Conversation taking place. However, it is also likely that other Community

Councils in neighbouring areas will be hosting Community Conversations too. These are open events and you will be more than welcome to attend any. For areas where there are no established Community Councils, local organisations and associations that represent their Communities have been invited to host a Community Conversation.

### **Will my contributions be private/anonymous?**

Yes. Your contributions will be recorded and posted on The Budget Simulator, but only the following information is mandatory; Postcode, Gender and Age. All other fields are optional.

### **What will happen to Budget Simulator results and how will they be made available?**

Results for The Budget Simulator Challenge will be published on the Budget Simulator webpage, Dumfries and Galloway Council's Budget webpage, and will be presented to Dumfries and Galloway Council's Elected Members for consideration at the meeting of Dumfries and Galloway Council on the 18<sup>th</sup> of December 2018.

### **What will my contributions actually be used for?**

Your participation is greatly important. It will be used to inform Elected Members thinking before they decide on Dumfries and Galloway Council's Budget for February 2019.

### **How long will the Budget Simulator Challenge run for?**

The Budget Simulator Challenge will run throughout November and early December. It is scheduled to close/shut down at 11.59pm on Monday the 5th of December 2018.

### **How long does it take to complete the Budget Simulator Challenge, and do I have to stay until the end of this Community Conversation?**

The Budget Simulator Challenge is not time restricted, and you can take as long as you need. It is estimated that it will take around 15 minutes to complete. You can even complete it at home. You are free to leave the Community Conversation event at any time. However, there will be a chance for questions and evaluations when the event is drawing to a close so it is recommended that you stay to the end.