

Gloucestershire County Council

Spending Plans		
	2012-13 revised £000	2013-14 £000
Service		
Adults	151,658	152,332
Children & families	103,804	98,634
Communities & infrastructure	90,155	85,194
Support services	22,171	21,397
Technical & cross cutting (incl. economic stimulus)	57,442	52,227
Sub total	425,230	409,784
Public Health	-	21,126
Net budget requirement	425,230	430,910
Funded by:		
Formula grant	158,123	159,590
Council tax freeze grant	12,238	8,573
NHS funding: social care	6,503	9,055
New homes bonus	1,212	1,819
One off transitional grant	-	664
Education grant (incl statutory element)	-	6,647
Public health grant	-	21,126
Council tax requirement	247,154	223,436

Listening to your views

The council launched a new Strategy in 2011 and embarked on an ambitious four year programme of change. This programme was designed to transform the way the council works by generating around £114m in savings, reducing management and other running costs and focussing our front-line services on protecting the most vulnerable people, supporting active communities and building a sustainable county. This was the council's response to the significant financial challenges facing the public sector and our contribution to the coalition government's commitment to dramatically reducing the size of the nation's debt.

We are now half way through delivering our Meeting the Challenge programme, and while the size of the challenge has not diminished, the council is making great progress towards the goals we set ourselves. In areas like youth services, bus services and highways we are taking a radically different approach to the way that our services are provided,

by working together with local communities, by joining with our partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors and by focussing on the things that matter most to local people. By March 2013 we will have saved £65m against our target, and are on track to deliver a further £35m in the coming year.

The priorities and plans set out in the strategy have been developed in conversation and consultation with thousands of local people who understand the challenges the council is facing and whose views have helped us design solutions. We are extremely grateful for the way that you have engaged with us to shape this council strategy and are committed to continuing to work with our partners to provide the services that matter most to local people.

The level of council tax

The council's Band D council tax is £1,090.50, which is the same as 2012-13. This is the third year that the council has frozen council tax, utilising Government Grant.

The 2013-14 budget of £430.910m represents a reduction of £15.4m or 3.63% from last year's reworked figures (after excluding Public Health funding). Despite the reduction the budget contains:

- £6.7m investment to meet costs of services to older people and vulnerable adults
- £3.3m to fund further debt redemption
- £7.4m to cover for increased costs due to inflation
- Funding for £40m of new capital investment

In terms of efficiencies, the council is expecting to make savings of £35m in 2013-14, demonstrating the continued commitment to get the most out of funds available and minimise service reductions.

How our budget compares with last year

Budget Comparison		£'000
Revised Budget 2012-13		425,230
Inflation		7,446
Cost and spending increases		12,307
Less cost reductions		-35,199
Public health responsibility		21,126
Budget 2013-14		430,910

Our vision and values

Our vision is to use the resources available to us to improve the quality of life for Gloucestershire people. Our plans build on three clear values that will help steer us through the years ahead:

- Living within our means
- Providing the basics
- Helping communities help themselves

Applying these values will mean that the council is not only smaller, but also more flexible and more responsive to local people's needs and expectations.

Schools

The Dedicated Schools Grant is a specific grant funding schools, early year's settings and Children's Centres. In 2013-14 this grant was announced as £387m. This represents a cash freeze on the pupil unit rate of funding, but is an increase from 2012-13 due to increased pupil numbers and additional responsibilities resulting from schools funding reforms.

Investment in the future

The total capital spend planned for 2013-14 is £78m, £40m new capital spend plus £38m existing capital schemes. The majority of spend is planned for schools and facilities for children (£30m) and Highways and Infrastructure (£42m). All of the new capital investment is being funded from developer contributions, grants and internal resources. There will be no additional borrowing to fund this investment.

A full breakdown is available in the council's budget information at www.gloucestershire.gov.uk. You can also see copies in libraries or in council offices. You can get further information about the council's budget by writing to **Joanna Walker, Strategic Finance Director, Gloucestershire County Council, Shire Hall, Westgate Street, Gloucester GL1 2TG.**

Environment Agency

A proportion of council tax is payable to the Environment Agency for flood defence. For further information please visit www.environment-agency.gov.uk

The Environment Agency has powers in respect of flood and coastal erosion risk management for 2486km of main river and along tidal and sea defences in the area of the Severn Trent Regional Flood and Coastal Committee. Money is spent on the construction of new flood defence schemes, the maintenance of the river systems and existing flood defences together with the operation of a flood warning system and management of the risk of coastal erosion. The financial details are:

Severn regional flood and coastal committee		
	2012-13 £000	2013-14 £000
Gross expenditure	23,870	10,546
Levies raised	1,064	1,064
Council tax base	1,037	874

The majority of funding for flood defence comes directly from the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). However, under the new Partnership Funding rule not all schemes will attract full central funding. To provide "match" funding the Agency may seek funding from the County Council in the form of a local levy. The local levy is shared on the basis of Band D Equivalents between all contributing bodies within the Committee Area.

Changes in the Gross Budgeted expenditure between the years reflect the impact of the Government Spending Review and national prioritisation of capital works. The total local levy raised has remained the same in 2013-14 as 2012-13 at £1.064m.