

Budget Consultation Spring 2010: Further Savings Ideas
To be read with the budget consultation document

Further ideas and information on community facilities

Council paper reference		Current Budget £m	Indicative Saving £m
ECS 25	Review provision of Community Centres in Inverness	0.425	0.133
<p>The Council provides funding and staffing for 6 community centres in Inverness at a cost of £0.425m. In most Highland Communities, the equivalent provisions made through village halls with a standard grant of £1,000. Can we reduce the support for Community Centres in Inverness?</p> <p>We would like to have your views on whether we could reduce our expenditure by closing 3 or 4 centres, or whether we should reduce the funding for all the centres.</p>			
ECS 26	Review Archive Provision	1.030	0.183
<p>The Council has opened a new archive centre in Inverness and has satellite archives in Fort William, Portree and Wick. The Wick archive is to be combined with the new National Nuclear Archive in Caithness. 2 staff are employed in Fort William and 2 in Portree.</p> <p>We are seeking your views as to whether we should close the Fort William and Portree archives and house these collections in Inverness.</p>			
ECS 29	Review museum provision	1.500	0.400
<p>The council runs 2 large regional museums, Inverness Museum and Art Gallery and the Highland Folk Museum and supports 19 independent community museums throughout the Highlands. The museum budget totals £1.5 million. Can we reduce this provision?</p> <p>The Council would continue its obligation to look after collections that have been gifted over the years. We are seeking your views on whether we should retain only Inverness Museum and Art Gallery, only the Highland Folk Museum, or only our support for the independent sector.</p>			
ECS 31	Review library provision, including ceasing the Bookstart service	2.984	0.394
<p>The Council has 40 local libraries ranging from very small to significant, and provides a school library in our 29 secondary schools. Bookstart is the early year's library service for young children and their families. Can we reduce library provision?</p> <p>We are seeking your views on the following ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Closing up to 17 small local libraries (saving £185,000) - Closing one major urban library (saving £87,000) - Reducing library opening hours by 10% (saving £71,000) - Removing 7 school librarian posts (saving £97,000) - Ceasing the Bookstart service (saving £44,700) 			

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ECS 34	Review Highland wide swimming pool provision	1.277	0.380
<p>The Council manages 12 swimming pools and provides grant aid to 9 others. Can we reduce the number of swimming pools?</p> <p>We would like your views on whether we should use travel time of half an hour between existing pools as the key criteria for determining whether pools should close. This would suggest closing Alness, Tain and Nairn pools. Alternatively, should we use other criteria? If so what criteria should the council use to identify potential pool closures?</p>			
ECS 36	Review the Floral Hall in Inverness – close or find a social enterprise model to continue the operation.	0.115	0.115
<p>The Floral Hall annual budget is £0.115m. It provides a visitor centre and training for adults with learning disabilities.</p> <p>We would like your views on whether the Floral Hall should be closed if more cost effective ways of running it cannot be identified.</p>			
SW/18	Review of day care facility at Beachview, Brora	0.187	0.069
<p>The service is registered for 20 people, and has around 75% usage. We are also seeking to support more people in a wider range of community settings, not day centres, e.g. village hall. Accordingly, we are consulting about withdrawing this service in Brora, providing different models of support locally, and providing places at provision in Tain, for those people who require a day centre and live within travel distance.</p>			
SW/19	Review learning disability day care service at Tigh na Drochaid, Portree	0.085	0.020
<p>Tigh na Drochaid provides a day centre and outreach base for people who have a learning disability. It is registered for 25 people and has less than 50% usage. We are also seeking to support more people in a wider range of community settings, not day centres. Accordingly, we are consulting about reducing the level of this service, as well as providing different models of support locally.</p>			
SW/20	Review Raasay Day Centre	0.014	0.014
<p>Raasay Day Centre provides a one day per week combined day care and lunch club service to between 10 and 12 people. We are seeking your views about discontinuing that service and making the building available for other use.</p>			
SW/35	Review older people's care at Tigh na Drochaid, Portree	0.210	0.065
<p>Tigh na Drochaid is registered for day care for 30 people, but around 15 people use it. We are also seeking to support more people in a wider range of community settings, not day centres. Accordingly, we are consulting about reducing the level of this service, as well as providing different models of support locally.</p>			

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SW/36	Review Staffin respite unit	0.130	0.130
<p>The unit provides residential respite for children affected by disability and their families over long weekends throughout the year. It also provides outreach support to families within their homes and communities. It is largely used by families in Skye & Lochalsh, but also from elsewhere within reasonable travel distance. We are seeking your views about its closure.</p>			

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Further ideas and information on how we could change how we run some services, reduce services or stop some services

Other ways to provide the service?

Council paper reference		Current Budget £m	Indicative Saving £m
SW/16	Review in-house supported housing services for learning disabilities in Inverness	0.410	0.035
The Council operates a specialist supported housing services to people who have learning disabilities in Inverness. All similar work elsewhere is out-sourced to independent providers, who can perform the same job at less cost. We are seeking your views about extending this model to this group of services in Inverness.			
TECS/37	Review the long term arrangements for the Corran Ferry	0.200 (net)	0.200 (net)
The Corran Ferry provides a 7 day a week service between Ardgour and Corran and cuts out the difficult road journey around Loch Eil. The spare ferry, the Maid of Glencoul, provides cover during the period when the MV Corran is undergoing its annual overhaul, and for any breakdowns. The Maid of Glencoul is an older vessel, and will need to be replaced at some stage in the future, and we are seeking your views on the long term arrangements for the ferry service .			
ECS 33	Review development of the Am Baile gaelic heritage web resources, and seek alternative methods of provision	0.222	0.172
The Council has an award winning heritage resource provided by Highland Libraries. It can be visited at www.ambaile.org We are seeking your views as to whether the Council should offer this resource to someone else to run. If no-one else is willing to run it, should the existing site be put onto a "care & maintenance" basis with no further development work?			
TECS/22	Use contractors to replace seasonal staff employed on grounds maintenance	0.600	0.050
We currently employ temporary seasonal staff to supplement the grounds maintenance workforce over the peak summer months. This proposal will examine the option of replacing directly employed seasonal staff with external contractors, as this has been shown to produce savings in Lochaber, Skye and Lochalsh.			
TECS/23	Bught Nursery – examine option to procure plant material from external providers	0.225	0.100
The Bught Nursery in Inverness produces bedding plant material from seed. This proposal will examine the option to procure plant material from external providers to establish if savings can be made.			

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TECS/34	Replace external contractors (Street Lighting) with internal staff from Roads and Community Works to Street Lighting	0.219	0.050
<p>The street lighting operation currently uses external contractors to carry out the civil engineering works associated with laying cables and erecting street lighting columns. This proposal would see external contractors replaced with the Council's internal workforce and would assist with the redeployment of Council staff from other areas of the service, should that be necessary.</p>			
TECS/38	Review Materials Testing Laboratory	0.057	0.050
<p>The Council operates a material testing laboratory, and its main function is to test materials used in road construction. This review will establish whether there are savings to be made by procuring materials testing from an external provider.</p>			

Targeting services to those most in need?

ECS 23	Review of Youth Work Provision	1.146	0.573
<p>The Council employs 29 Youth Workers based around each secondary school at a cost of £1.146m. They work with young people in and out of school and in the evening and weekends supporting local youth clubs and other services. They particularly support the achievements of less-academic young people. Each post costs about £32,000 including salary, additional costs of 30% and a small budget.</p> <p>Can the Council reduce this service for young people?</p> <p>We are seeking your views as to whether this provision should reduce by 50% and be focused on areas with relatively higher levels of poverty and unemployment.</p>			
ECS 24	Further review of Adult Education	0.398	0.050
<p>The Council spends £0.398m on courses and classes for adult covering employment skills, how to run community groups, computing and IT skills, and health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Can this provision be reduced £0.050m?</p> <p>We are seeking your views on whether we run fewer courses and classes and reduce community support, or focus only on communities with specific needs.</p>			

Reducing the service?

ECS 19	Review Additional Support Needs provision	18.231	1.000
<p>We currently spend £18.231m on Additional Support Needs (ASN). This provides an educational psychologist service, classroom support and additional teaching and specialist services. In addition we spend £3.179m on special schools in Inverness, Dingwall and Easter Ross.</p> <p>Can we reduce our educational psychologist service by 20% (creating a saving of £0.257m) and reduce other targeted areas of ASN spending by 50% (creating a total saving of £1m)?</p> <p>This would have the effect of increasing waiting times for referrals to Educational Psychologists and would reduce the level of support to individual pupils in both mainstream and special schools.</p>			
SW/24	Reduce the fostering & adoption budget	2.381	0.100
<p>We are seeking your views about reducing budgets across the fostering and adoption service, which may include the reduction by one social worker and a small reduction in the level of support offered to foster parents. The service is currently graded as excellent by the Care Commission, so some reduction could be tolerable.</p>			
TECS/20	Review standards of road maintenance	13.2	0.400
<p>Can we reduce the level of road maintenance? We currently spend £13.2m on road maintenance. This includes surface dressing, repairing potholes, replacing road markings, cutting grass on roadside verges, cleaning ditches and gullies, and we are seeking your views on reducing the level of service on these activities.</p>			

Stopping the service?

ECS 35	Review support for sports development and play through review of Council and Partner provision	0.138	0.138
<p>The council works with Sportscotland and others to support Coaching Highland, the Highland Swim Team and sport for those with a disability. The Council employs 6 of the staff and spends £0.138m and attracts £0.048m in grant support. It also spends £0.010m on supporting play for very young children.</p> <p>We are seeking your views as to whether we should continue support in this way and also whether we should continue to support play development.</p>			
ECS 30	Review Financial Support for Cultural and Sporting Events and Festivals	0.509	0.509
<p>The Council has a pan-Highland budget of £0.500m and a budget of £0.009m in Lochaber to work in partnership with others to promote major Highland, national and international events, such as the World Mountain Biking Championships in Fort William and a variety of musical and other festivals.</p>			

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We are seeking your views as to whether the Council should cease to support events.			
SW/23	Ceasing providing long-term care at The Orchard, Inverness.	0.701	0.150
The Orchard is a joint Highland Council and NHS Highland respite unit in Inverness for children with disabilities. Some places are being used for permanent stays and we are seeking your views about refocusing the service for respite care. Alternative arrangements would be found for those requiring long-term care.			
ECS 27	Out of Eden drama provision including the Highland wide Higher Drama course	0.195	0.195
Out of Eden provides the only drama support to 28 secondary and 183 primary schools. It ensures young people across Highland can participate in curriculum and out of school drama activities and can study higher drama and higher dance. It employs 8 full time staff. We are seeking your views on removing this provision.			
TECS/26	Review Pest Control function	0.095	0.095
Can we stop providing a Pest Control service? We currently provide a pest control service for domestic properties in some areas, however the service is not uniform across the highlands. There are private firms who can provide these services, and we are seeking your views on the Council stopping this service.			
TECS/27	Remove budget for unadopted roads	0.050	0.050
We currently have a budget of £50k which is allocated to carry out minor repairs to unadopted (private) roads where there is a case of social inclusion, for example a resident requiring regular medical treatment at home, and the road is in need of repair to allow safe access for medial staff. The proposal is to remove this budget.			

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Further ideas and information on how individuals and communities could contribute

Increasing charges?

Council paper reference		Current Budget £m	Indicative Saving £m
ECS 8	Review delivery of music tuition and region-wide music support	1.800	0.559
<p>We currently spend £1.8m on music tuition in schools and in supporting a wider range of opportunities to participate in music performance (instruments, bands and orchestras). Currently around 3070 pupils take part, paying a contribution of £120 per annum, which means approximately £4.50 per half hour. Currently a number of concessions apply including for families with low income. In 2010-11 fees are increasing to £180 per annum, approximately £6 per half hour. How can we reduce the cost by £559,000?</p> <p>One option is to double the fee to £360 per annum (this can be paid in 12 monthly instalments and would mean £12 per half hour session), providing £554,000 of savings to the Council, with the Council still funding at £1.246m (69% of costs). Concessions could still apply.</p> <p>Or should we retain the fee at £6 per half hour, reduce the number of staff from 35 to around 20 full time equivalents (FTE), providing a saving of £559,000? With the reduction in around 15 (FTE posts) the service could be provided to around 1500 pupils rather than 3070. With half the places available, access to them would be more competitive.</p>			
ECS 32	Review logistical support for libraries	1.278	0.100
<p>Highland libraries are supported by a central unit that manages the mobile libraries, orders and administers library stock (books and other catalogue material), provides IT support catalogue services to local libraries. It ensures best value through economies of scale and costs £1.278M. Can we reduce this support?</p> <p>We would like your views on whether we could introduce charges for requests or reduce the frequency of mobile library visits to very rural communities?</p>			
TECS/35	Review level of subsidies for public transport	3.2	0.500
<p>We currently provide financial support, amounting to £3.2m, for rural bus services and ferry services, in areas which do not generate sufficient passenger numbers to operate on a commercial basis. We are seeking your views on reducing the overall level of subsidy which could result in some of these routes ceasing to be viable, or increasing the level of fares.</p>			

Reducing entitlement?

ECS 14	Review Clothing Grant Allowance provision - Reducing level of award and changing to "voucher" system	0.201	0.080
<p>We currently provide 4,200 clothing grant payments to families in receipt of Income Support, Income-based Jobseekers Allowance, Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit. Can we reduce the amount of the payment to £30.00?</p> <p>The current annual payment is £50.00</p> <p>At the same time can we change from a cash-based payment system to a voucher system which could be exchanged for clothing items in local outlets?</p>			

Voluntary organisations, community business, communities and individuals doing more?

To avoid a reduction in service, could communities and individuals do more?

TECS/21	Review standards of grounds maintenance	4.3	0.500
<p>Can we reduce the frequency of grass cutting and the number of flower beds? We currently spend £4.3m on grounds maintenance, and we are seeking your views on reducing the quantity and frequency of grass cutting, and the number of flower beds.</p>			
TECS/24	Review standards of street cleaning	3.9	0.500
<p>Can we reduce the frequency of street cleaning and litter picking? We currently spend £3.9m on street cleaning and litter picking, and we are seeking your views on reducing the level of service provided. We would also seek your views on increasing the level of enforcement as a means of reducing littering.</p>			

Should voluntary organisations see budgets reduced as well?

TECS/32	Review level of grant to Social Enterprise Groups	0.550	0.055
<p>We currently provide £0.55m of financial support to 7 Social Enterprise groups who are involved in local re-use and recycling schemes. The groups receive grants varying from £5k to £200k, and we are seeking your views on reducing the level of grant to these groups by 10%, by encouraging the groups to find efficiencies, or increasing their income from other sources.</p>			

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TECS/36	Review level of grant to Community Transport Schemes	0.5	0.050
<p>We currently provide £0.5m of financial support to 23 Community Transport Schemes who provide local transport schemes, for example “community car” schemes. The groups receive grants varying from £5k to £70k, and we are seeking your views on reducing the level of grant to these groups by 10%, and encouraging the groups to find efficiencies, or increase their income from other sources.</p>			
ECS 22	Further review of support for Voluntary Organisations	3.060	0.312
<p>We currently spend £3.06m to support voluntary organisations, clubs and groups and social enterprise/community business to provide sports and leisure and arts and culture services. The funding takes three forms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - £2.27m to around 40 organisations including 11 running faculties such as Eden Court theatre, Leisure centres, swimming pools. Payments range from £10,000 to £1m. - Around £0.500m is provided to 29 organisations providing services such as community arts, sports, Gaelic, youth work and adult education. Grants range from £800 to £105,000. - Around £0.300m is routed through three grant schemes providing small grants (of up to £1000) to local arts promoters, sports clubs, youth groups and village halls. Normally around 450 grants are awarded each year. <p>The Council has already decided to reduce this budget by £0.350m in financial year 2011/12. This will be done by reductions of 10%, 20% or 30% for certain organisations and by discontinuing funding for 3 organisations. All grant schemes are affected, other than village halls revenue grants of £1,000 per annum.</p> <p>We are seeking your views on a reduction of a further £0.312m in our support for voluntary organisations.</p> <p>We would like your views on whether this should be an across the board cut of 10% for all organisations or whether we should stop supporting particular organisations or areas of activity?</p>			

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Further ideas about our resources – staff, assets etc

Reduce staff costs?

Council paper reference		Current Budget £m	Indicative Saving £m
ECS 1&3	Review Secondary timetabling methods, curriculum delivery methods and review teacher entitlement formulae	54.906	1.791
<p>We are looking to review timetabling and use of technology in secondary schools to support delivery of the curriculum at a time when pupil and teacher numbers will decrease in a number of schools. We are seeking your views also on a reduction in teacher numbers in secondary schools.</p> <p>We currently spend £54.906m on teacher salaries in Secondary schools. We have 1,208 full time equivalent teachers. Can we reduce our expenditure by up to 3.7% of this total? This would equate to the loss of 45 full time equivalent teaching posts.</p> <p>We currently have class sizes of 1 teacher to 20 pupils on average in English and Mathematics classes in 1st and 2nd year in Secondary schools. The reduction could be managed by changing back to maximum class sizes of 1 teacher to 33 pupils in 1st and 2nd year English and Maths classes.</p> <p>As an alternative we could stop filling vacancies in teaching posts as these occur. This would need to be managed carefully to avoid disproportionate impact on individual schools and subject areas.</p> <p>We are also looking at a review of timetabling and use of technology in secondary schools to support the delivery of the curriculum at a time when pupil numbers will decrease in a number of schools and we would seek to lessen the impact of reduced teacher numbers through greater use of technology and new approaches to timetabling of staff.</p>			
JCCYP 9	Reduce Nursery Co-ordinator Teacher staffing in line with service rationalisation	1.810	0.100
<p>It is envisaged that the number of 3 and 4 year olds will reduce across the authority, as well as the number of nurseries. Currently there are at least 20 units with fewer than 5 children. We seek views about the proportionate reduction in the number of teachers from 40 to 38.</p>			
ECS 13	Review peripatetic janitor support to small Primary Schools	0.287	0.287
<p>Peripatetic janitors currently provide a service to small primary schools which would not normally have janitors. We currently have 140 schools without dedicated janitors and the peripatetic service delivers to 60 of them. We are seeking your views on discontinuing the service on the basis that it is not provided consistently to all schools and maintenance issues can be dealt with through the Council's Housing and</p>			

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Property Service as happens already in schools with no janitorial provision.			
ECS 9	Reduce the number of Quality Improvement Officers by 2	0.695	0.140
ECS 12	Reduction in teaching absence cover funding	0.470	0.047
JCCYP 11	Reduction in expenditure to support early years staff qualification standard	0.225	0.050
There has been significant expenditure to support staff to reach the necessary qualifications for registration, and by 2012 the number of staff to be trained will have reduced.			
SW/28	Overnight provision in Children's Units	3.898	0.150
Only two of the five children's units have waking night staff. We are seeking your views about these units adopting the same practice as the other units, which involves sleepover cover.			
TECS/28	Review the burial administration function for the Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey Area.	0.400	0.020
The burial administration function for the Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey is currently carried out at 3 locations, Kingussie, Nairn, and Inverness. This proposal will review the options for consolidating the service, which is mainly provided to Funeral Directors, at the purpose built office at Kilvean Cemetery.			
TECS/40A	Review staffing levels for Environmental Health	1.9	0.060
Environmental Health provides the front line health protection function for the Council by ensuring food is safe, food premises are hygienic, water supplies are safe and workplaces are safe. They also protect the environment by monitoring air quality and contaminated land. We are seeking your views on reducing the levels of staffing/service within Environmental Health. The proposal to reduce staffing levels by 2 out of 55 would result in a reduced level of service			
TECS/40B	Review of staffing levels for Trading Standards	0.9	0.060
Trading Standards provides the front line consumer protection function for the Council by protecting consumer rights and the safety and wellbeing of people in the Highlands. Staff ensure goods and services are safe, and protect the public from rogue traders, internet scams, bogus contractors, and carry out checks on weights and measures. We are seeking your views on reducing the levels of staffing/service within Trading Standards. The proposal to reduce staffing levels by 2 out of 20 would result in a reduced level of service.			

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TECS/16	Review of overall staffing structure	-	0.075
This proposal involves reviewing the staffing structure, including recently vacant posts, to identify where staffing levels can be reduced. It should be noted that a number of the other savings proposals for TEC Service are likely to involve reductions in staffing levels.			
TECS/44	Review business processes	2.339	0.040
This proposal is linked to the Council's Corporate Improvement Programme and will seek to identify efficiencies through improved business processes.			

Generate more income?

ECS 20	Income generation opportunities in School Residences	Nil	0.060
TECS/18	Review all income streams	6.7m	0.300
All external income streams will be reviewed to ensure full cost recovery, (this excludes car parking and ferry charges). In addition any new opportunities to raise income will be investigated.			
TECS/39	Review Airstrips	0.026	0.026
The Council owns three airstrips, Broadford, Plockton and Dornoch, and this review will establish if savings can be made from disposing of these assets, or if there are opportunities to generate additional income.			

Use fewer buildings?

TECS/45	Review temporary mortuary facilities at Glen Nevis, Fort William	0.005	0.005
This review will examine the impact of closing the temporary mortuary facilities at Glen Nevis. Alternative facilities are however available at the Belford and Raigmore hospitals.			
TECS/42	Review provision of vehicle workshops including options for amalgamation	(0.200)	0.050
The Council operates vehicle workshops to maintain its fleet of vehicles and plant. This proposal will consolidate 3 workshops (Kingussie, Dingwall and Inverness) at the Inverness site. The proposal will generate revenue savings, but more importantly avoid significant capital expenditure required to refurbish the existing workshop facilities at Dingwall.			

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TECS/43	Review provision of materials stores including options for external provision	0.868	0.075
This proposal will review options for reducing the number of materials stores, linked to the proposal to reduce the number of vehicles workshops, and also examine options to use external suppliers to provide “just in time” deliveries where practicable.			

Note: In total, the ideas contained within this document are estimated at saving £11.8m. Within the budget consultation document which asks the ‘big questions’ a total of £9.06m is shown for the ideas listed here. The difference is due to us avoiding double counting, as some of the savings in this document are already counted towards the ‘big questions’ consultation.