

CONSULTATION – SPECIFIC COMMENTS ON 2016/17 SAVINGS PROPOSALS WITH A SERVICE USER AND/OR PUBLIC IMPACT

Council Tax/NNDR – Increase in Court Fees

“Council tax - court fees increase. People already struggling to pay council tax - court fees increase even more worrying only just over the threshold.”

“Increasing Council Tax Court Fees; many defaults are because individuals can't afford to pay in the first instance, this will only lead to and increase more debt that would realistically not be recoverable, with less resources available to recover such debt - what a joke.”

Customer Services – Further reduction in opening hours

“Closing libraries and customer first centres is a counter-productive measure that saves very little yet causes disruption for many. This is one minor example.”

“Reducing the hours of all customer service centres is worse than closing one of them. In fact people who work are relying on the early or late opening hours and have been negated this option completely. There could be fewer customer services but accessible at normal opening times and provided they can be accessed easily with public transport, bearing in mind that most vulnerable residents categories would have a reduced if not free bus pass, would have been a fairer and possibly more efficient choice. Some fixed costs are there whether you operate a building/office for 7 or 5 hours.”

“I write on behalf of Bargod Town Council who have great concerns on the proposed reduction of hours in relation to the library service and cash offices / customer first centres. Members believe that any reduction in hours or days to either of these services will have a detrimental impact to footfall within towns.”

“Changes to customer services proposals appears to assume that 'everyone' is in the digital era, well, there are many of our citizens who are not (approx. 1/3rd).”

“Reducing face to face/physical opportunities will lead to poorer and less efficient services, increasing barriers, and increasing 'waste' in our service provision by reducing opportunities for 'getting things right first time' and 'enabling citizen engagement.’”

“Either open one night till 5pm and close all day one day a week or put more staff on duty on a Saturday morning.”

“Moving services online adversely affects the elderly and financially disadvantaged disproportionately. The rationalisation of council accommodation has had a similar impact. For example, my elderly mother and her friends have been complaining about the loss of the customer first office in Blackwood - these services have moved to the Library which although is nearby involves crossing a busy road with fast traffic which is a serious concern for them.”

Cease Mobile Customer Services Centre

“Customer first van - decommissioned - no need for it.”

“Dropping the customer first van at this point is NOT a saving. it is a realisation, FINALLY, that it was a waste of money in the first place. I am more interested in how much was wasted on the project from the start rather than how much is 'saved' from cancelling this folly.”

Corporate Property - Disposal of surplus buildings

“Yes, look for savings in admin costs, rationalise buildings.”

“Sell off parts of public land that are not already in the process of being sold. I don't mean fields or old buildings I mean grass verges, land between council houses, corners of car parks etc. Look to change the use of council buildings - create flats in shops, convert houses to flats, etc.”

“I do CCBC need to look at restructuring their staffing and their premises costs to run the buildings.”

“I seriously wonder if we need a building like Ty Penallta and question if the current facilities are too large for current usage?”

“I agree that council owned buildings should be rationalised but it would be sensible if services which had regular contact with the public were located in places which could be easily accessed by the public e.g. the Planning Division is moving from Ty Pontllanfraith to Tredomen. It is a service which has regular contact with the public but it is being relocated to an office which is difficult to access by public transport.”

“Can I suggest that the council looks to cut its own bills via the following Property and land sales.”

“I stated a number of years ago via online budget etc., about reducing buildings - that should have been the main objective when Ty Penallta conceived. A number of years down the line CCBC is still closing offices - how much could have been saved if this was done initially.”

“Review all departments to see if buildings/storage spaces are being rented from the private sector. Reallocate staff/materials/storage to council owned premises'.”

“Rationalise Council offices and asset portfolio, don't hold onto land and buildings we don't need as a Council.”

Transfer of lease to HRA (Market Place, Blackwood)

No comments received.

Pre-planning advice income

*“There is no mention of a charge for developers. A flat fee of £48 discriminates against ordinary members of the public if developers are to be charged the same. Surely **all those who want Pre-Planning Advice** should pay a fee which reflects the time taken to give that advice. It would be more equitable if the advice were charged on an hourly basis.”*

Phased withdrawal of Care & Repair Funding (Housing)

“Care and repair could go, as, although useful sometimes, are often more expensive than private handymen.”

"I believe that a (more) robust risk and needs assessment process should be introduced to ensure that the safety and security of individuals is protected and that cuts made in current council services do not result in increased costs elsewhere in the public purse, especially for the NHS - e.g. the decommissioning of care and repair, home adaptations, hospital discharge services could result in delayed discharges and bed blocking in hospitals."

"We may need help from Care and Repair or with equipment in the future and don't have independent means to fund this ourselves."

"If care and repair services are cut, communities should be given as much warning as possible, perhaps vocational courses students at local colleges could be involved in a reasonable scheme to provide them with experience and older individuals with a free or low cost service."

Withdrawal of funding for Family intervention project (Housing)

"Housing – cease payment for family intervention – strongly disagree – people need help with housing and the council."

Introduce charge to school for setting up Sandwich Places

"Sandwich places - will charge the schools. School will pass on costs - schools will not have money to spend on other things."

"Introducing school charges for sandwich places is ridiculous."

"Introduce charge to schools for setting up sandwich places – NO! Dinner ladies are paid to cover lunch time. Parents also do packed lunch as can't afford dinners."

"Introduce charge to schools for the setting up of sandwich places: I strongly disagree with this as table and chairs have to be set up for dinners anyway plus parents can't afford to pay for this that why they chose for their child to have packed lunch."

"I strongly disagree with all cuts to the education sector and social care sector such as: introduce charge to schools for the setting up of sandwich places."

"The introduction of a charge to schools to set up sandwich places will, I believe, impact on already stretched school budgets and thereby reduce the monies available for teaching and learning. I would oppose this proposal."

"Gelligaer Community Council disagree with Introduce charge to schools for the setting up of sandwich places."

"School meals/Sandwich places - the costs of administering these services could be outweighed exponentially if food services were to be funded through mainstream school budgets and not separate service provisions. The impact of these affects the opportunities for children to develop/be engaged properly in educational establishments and succeed, not to mention future health implications (this could widen the deprivation gap even more)?"

Reduce Breakfast Club staff cover by 1 hour per day

"Some children don't have breakfast at home it is essential to keep breakfast clubs in school, we must look after the next generation."

“Reduce operational Breakfast Clubs costs by 1 hour of staffing per day- Gelligaer community council object as this service is beneficial to a child’s day and learning.”

“I have never understood why we waste money on school breakfast clubs.”

“There are many services provided by Caerphilly Borough Council (CBC) which I do not use and a few whose validity I question. I am totally opposed to the notion of 'Breakfast Clubs' and have no idea what 'Adventure Services' provide. I think these should be privately financed services.”

“Some children don't have breakfast at home it is essential to keep breakfast clubs in school, we must look after the next generation.”

“Breakfast Clubs should be free for free meal pupils, a lot use as and early drop off, Charge parents who can afford it like the after school clubs.”