

ANGUS COUNCIL

SPECIAL FAMILY, EDUCATION AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE – 29 FEBRUARY 2024

BUDGET UPDATE – EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING DIRECTORATE

REPORT BY KELLY MCINTOSH, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND LIFELONG DIRECTORATE

1. ABSTRACT

This report summarises the budget issues, savings and amendments to charges identified by Education and Lifelong Learning for the Council's 2024-25 revenue budget. Identified budget savings for future years referred to in this report are included on an indicative basis only. Final decisions on those savings will be made as part of the budget setting process for those financial years.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICIES

This report contributes as a whole to the delivery of the Council Plan.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) note and discuss the Education and Lifelong Learning budget issues detailed in Appendix A, totalling £1,300,000;
- (ii) note and discuss the budget savings identified for Education and Lifelong Learning detailed in Appendix B, totalling £1,705,000 for 2024-25, £1,452,000 for 2025-26 and £450,000 for 2026-27;
- (iii) note and discuss the proposed 20p increase to school meal charges as detailed in Appendix C; and
- (iv) agree that feedback and comments will be reported verbally by the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning to the meeting of Angus Council on 29 February 2024, following the conclusion of this Committee.

Items (i), (ii) and (iii) above are before Angus Council for consideration later today as part of the Council's overall revenue budget for 2024-25.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Reference is made to [Report 72/23](#) and [Appendices A-E](#) which described budget efficiencies and efficiencies for Education and Lifelong Learning Directorate in 2023-24. The identified efficiencies and budget issues were agreed as set out in the Minute for the Angus Council budget meeting held on 02 March 2023.
- 4.2 Reference is made to [Report 21/24, Appendix 2](#) which sets out the latest risk assessment for Angus Council in terms of financial sustainability. At present this risk has been assessed at 25, the highest possible score.
- 4.3 The Committee is also referred to [Report 49/24](#) – Finance and Change Plan which is part of the agenda for the Special Angus Council meeting later on 29 February 2024. This plan provides further context for the 2024-25 budget setting process and why such significant savings are required.

5. CURRENT POSITION

Budget Issues

- 5.1 As part of the budget planning process, officers from Education and Lifelong Learning have identified budget issues relating to inflationary increases for key services. Reference is made to Appendix A.

Identified Budget Savings

- 5.2 Reference is made to Appendix B, which sets out savings identified for the Education and Lifelong Learning Directorate in 2024-25. Item 1 was previously agreed as part of the Change Programme for financial year 2018-19 (Report 69/18 refers). As detailed in [Report 79/21](#) it was agreed to reprofile the delivery of the remaining efficiencies. 2024-25 is the final year of the saving agreed in 2018-19
- 5.3 Item 2 refers to a review of all 2-18 staffing structures to identify further efficiencies in future years. No saving is proposed for 2024-25.
- 5.4 Item 3 refers to a proposed removal of the non-statutory School Crossing Patroller service. Finalised savings will be dependent on the outcome of workforce change processes overseen by Tayside Contracts.
- 5.5 Item 4 refers to the further contraction of the Angus Virtual School (AVS) service. This saving removes the opportunity for secondment to AVS.
- 5.6 Item 5 refers to operational efficiencies for the school transport service. In terms of school transport, the ability to deliver this saving is likely to be impacted by inflationary pressures on the wider market. There will be no impact on entitlement to school transport.
- 5.7 Item 6 was previously agreed by Family, Education and Justice Committee in January 2024 ([Report 2/24](#) refers) and will be implemented during financial year 2024-25.
- 5.8 Item 7 refers to the removal of the remaining visiting specialist role in primary schools. The role currently delivers specialist input in relation to the Arts and Physical Education. This proposal does not affect our ability to deliver on the national expectation to provide at least two hours of quality Physical Education provision per week. Arts input will be maintained through learning experiences as part of the Broad General Education. Consultation is underway with potentially affected employees and no redundancies will be required. If approved, this saving will be effective from August 2024 and affect 7.2FTE.
- 5.9 Item 8 refers to the removal of additional settlement funding allocated by Scottish Government for increasing teacher numbers. The first element of this funding was ring-fenced and Angus Council appointed 22FTE additional teachers and 10FTE School & Pupil Support Assistants on a permanent basis. A portion of the second element is funding our LEAP Programme, which is set out in the Angus Education Plan 2022-27 as a Directorate priority. On 12 February 2024 the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills confirmed the expectation that teacher numbers should be maintained at the same level as recorded in the 2022 staff census.

Review of Charges

- 5.10 Angus Council last increased school meal charges in 2015. Due to inflationary pressures, there is now significant divergence between the charge levied and the actual cost of producing a school meal. As set out in Appendix C, it is proposed that school meal charges increase by 20p for both primary and secondary schools. If approved, the revised cost of a primary school meal will be £2.30, and a secondary school meal will be £2.40. All children in P1-5 will continue to have access to a free school meal. A free school meal will also be available to children and young people in P6 – S6 who are eligible on financial grounds.

6. PROPOSALS

- 6.1 Members of the Family, Education and Justice Committee are asked to note and discuss the budget issues, savings and increases to charges as set out in Section 5. The Director of Education and Lifelong Learning will provide verbal feedback to the Special Angus Council meeting taking place on 29 February 2024.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no additional financial implications for the Council beyond those set out in the body and appendices of this report. All savings identified are considered necessary due to the continued pressure on the Council's finances and real terms reductions in government grant funding for core services. Members should note that any changes to the budget savings identified in this report which have financial implications will impact the Council's overall budget and the basis for achieving a balanced budget.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 Corporate Risk Register
- Financial Sustainability
 - Transforming for the Future
- 8.2 Directorate Risk Register
- Delivery of directorate priorities

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Appendix B includes a proposal to remove the School Crossing Patroller service. If implemented, this could potentially discourage active travel behaviours, with a resultant negative impact on the Council's net zero targets.

10. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT, HUMAN RIGHTS AND FAIRER SCOTLAND DUTY

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been carried out for each budget efficiency and proposed increase to charges that impacts on people. EIAs are available at Appendix B1 and C1.

11. CONSULTATION

The Director of Finance and the Director of Legal, Governance and Change have been consulted in the preparation of this report. Head Teachers and trade union representatives have also been consulted. The Education and Lifelong Learning Directorate will continue to monitor the effective use of budgets and consult with Head Teachers and setting managers to evaluate the service provided to our children, young people and families.

NOTE: The background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) which were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report are: (list them below)

- [Finance Circular 8/2023](#)
- [Report 72/23](#) and [Appendices A-E](#)
- [Report 21/24, Appendix 2](#)
- [Report 79/21](#)

REPORT AUTHOR: Beth Reader, Service Leader – Education and Lifelong Learning
EMAIL DETAILS: childrenandlearning@angus.gov.uk

List of Appendices:

Appendix A – Directorate Budget Issues

Appendix B – Directorate Budget Savings

Appendix C – Directorate Review of Charges

Appendix D – Directorate Net Expenditure Summary - 2024/25 Provisional Revenue Budget

Appendix E – Directorate 2024/25 Provisional Capital Budget

Appendix B1 – Equalities Impact Assessment – Budget Savings –

1. Remainder of Change Programme teachers' budget savings
2. Removal of School Crossing Patrollers
3. Service Contraction – Angus Virtual School
4. Review of management time allocations for primary schools
5. Removal of visiting specialist teacher role in primary schools
6. Use of increased settlement funding allocated by Scottish Government

Appendix C1 – Equalities Impact Assessment – Review of Charges

- Increase school meal charges