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## **Council leader launches seven-week budget conversation with residents**

Starting Monday, Moray Council is launching a seven-week conversation with the community on its budget.

Conducted mainly online via social media and the council's website, residents will also be able to take part via libraries, access points and community centres.

A wealth of material and information has been produced and made available to provide as clear a picture as possible of what the council spends tax-

payers cash on. In addition, throughout the seven-week period officers will be available on social media to answer any queries.

Leader of the council, Cllr Stewart Cree, said it was imperative that people take the opportunity to get involved.

“The amount of money we need to reduce our annual spending by - £12million- will mean that services that many regard as being central to the council’s provision will need to be reduced or cut altogether.

“We need to know from residents what they could tolerate in terms of reductions in services, what they feel we could do differently that will save money, or indeed what services they might take on themselves.

“Fundamentally we need to reduce our outgoings. If we can’t agree as a community then these decisions will be taken out of our hands.”

The council has already reduced its annual spending by £24million over the last five years, but it still needs to find the further £12million over the next two years if it is to balance its books.

Cllr Cree warned that should the council not be able to meet the savings target it could be bankrupt in two years’ time.

Moray is joining councils across Scotland in lobbying Scottish Government ministers for an increased grant settlement, but this is likely to take a number of years to bring about any change.

Information packs about the consultation and financial details will be available for download from the council’s website, and in hard copy from many of its premises throughout the area.

In addition, starting Monday the council’s Face Book page will be open to conversations and queries about what could be cut or changed to meet the target.

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Moray Council area stretches from Tomintoul in the south to the shores of the

Moray Firth, from Keith in the east to Forres in the west. The council and its 4,500 employees respond to the needs of 95,510 residents in this beautiful part of Scotland, which nestles between Aberdeenshire and the Highlands.

Famous for its colony of dolphins, fabulous beaches and more malt whisky distilleries than any where else in Scotland, Moray is a thriving area and a great place to live.

Headquartered in Elgin, the administrative capital of Moray.

## Contacts



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