

# 2 – 18

## Structural Delivery Service Review



# Frequently Asked Questions

## Q. *Who decides there's going to be a Service Review?*

A. It's Elected Members who make this decision. These are your locally-elected Councillors. The Elected Members look at how much money the Council has as a whole and how it's divided up between the different Council Directorates like Education. The Elected Members have asked Education Services to carry out Service Reviews and then return to Committee with a set of proposals for Education services. The Elected Members will then consider these proposals and decide whether to agree them.

## Q. *What is the aim of the Service Reviews?*

A. The aim is to have services that:

- Help all children and young people to achieve the best possible outcomes
- Are high-quality
- Are within budget and sustainable for the future

All Education Services Reviews look at all the education services for children from the age of 2 to 18 across all Dumfries and Galloway. By looking at everything from age 2 to 18 it's possible to find ways of re-arranging services to ensure there is fair access to them and they make the best use of the money that's available.

## Q. *Why do these Service Reviews have to happen?*

A. The Council has to make big savings over the next 3 years. Services for children are being protected as far as possible but Education Services still has to save money as it is the biggest department in the whole council.

## Q. *What happens in a Service Review?*

A. The reviews involve looking at each of these areas and asking questions. For example, the sort of questions that the Service Review Team has had to ask and consider include:

- Is the service making the most of the resources it has to support children and young people?
- Is the service helping the Council to meet its priorities?
- How much does each aspect cost every year?
- Are the right people accessing the right services for them?
- Is the service delivered differently across Dumfries and Galloway? Are there other services that are doing something very similar?
- Are there examples of good practice from other local authorities which could help?

The reviewers collect and analyse information about the way the services are organised and delivered. Then they develop a set of savings proposals based on their findings. The savings proposals are then presented to Elected Members at Dumfries and Galloway Council who will consider then take a decision about them.

## Q. *Is it all just about making cuts?*

A. No. We do have savings to make but if it was just about making cuts then the Council could just keep shaving slices of money from all the different service budgets. It makes much more sense to look at the big picture instead and look at how we may need to change what we do in order to make the service sustainable and efficient.

**Q. What do the savings proposals mean for my child?**

- A. Budget managers will look at their available resources and prioritise to ensure the key principles of our service are maintained:
- Help all children and young people to achieve the best possible outcomes
  - Are high-quality
  - Are within budget and sustainable for the future

**Q. What do these Service Reviews mean for Parents and Carers?**

- A. There is a possibility that services will change due to the reduction in budgets over the next few years. The teams have to make difficult decisions to ensure a fair and balanced service which can be sustained in the coming years. The proposals made will be based on a range of evidence, professional knowledge and experience, research into what makes the biggest positive difference to children's learning, what other countries do with their resources and how successful they are as a result, consultation with all those who have an interest in learning in Dumfries and Galloway and how other authorities are organising their resources.

**Q. What happens if all of the savings proposals are not taken?**

- A. The Service Review Team have identified savings of £1.9M. Elected Members will decide to make £1.4M savings from this.

**Q. When is the Consultation Period?**

- A. The consultation period is between 1st October 2015 and 15th November 2015.

**Q. Why is the consultation taking place during a holiday period?**

- A. The timetable for consultation changed due to the decision by the Scottish Government to retain teacher numbers which affected the whole timetable of the Service Review.

**Q. How will the decisions about what to save be taken?**

- A. The decision about which savings are to be made and from which budgets will be made by the Education Committee in March 2016. This will take account of the findings from the consultation process.

**Q. What's the point in me offering my opinion?**

- A. All opinions matter. Elected Members will consider all of the information presented to them prior to making decisions.

**Q. In what way can I respond to the savings proposals?**

- A. You can respond collectively as part of your school's parent forum (your child's school will let you know when they are meeting or individually, either via Survey Monkey [www.surveymonkey.co.uk](http://www.surveymonkey.co.uk) or by completing form (available from your child's school office).

**Q. How will I know what's been accepted as savings?**

- A. Decisions about savings will be agreed at the Education Committee in March 2016. All Committee Reports are available by visiting [www.dumgal.gov.uk](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk)

**Q. How can I say what I think should be saved?**

- A. Your school's Parent Council will be consulting with the wider school body during the consultation phase (1 October – 10 November 2015). You should take part in the discussions which will centre on the savings proposals.

**Q. Will we have to go through the same process again next year?**

A. A further £2M requires to be saved by session 2017/18. The Service Review Team will look at a range of options, will come up with savings proposals and will consult on these next session. We would be delighted to receive any ideas about future saving proposals from you - Education-2-18ServiceReviewConsultation@dumgal.gov.uk

**Q. Is it only Education that's having to make cuts?**

A. No. There are currently 12 Service Reviews taking place in the Council.

**Q. Are you going to reduce the amount of teachers?**

A. No. We have had a clear directive from Scottish Government that teacher numbers cannot be reduced therefore they are not part of the current savings proposals.

**Q. Are you going to reduce the amount of support staff in schools?**

A. No. A Service Review looking at Supporting Learners was held last session and those decisions are currently being implemented. This is not part of the current review. Some schools will experience a reduction in office staff when a vacancy occurs due to a realignment in the allocation process.

**Q. How many Service Reviews are taking place in Education services at this time?**

A. There are two Service Reviews taking place at this time. This one, (2-18 Structural Delivery Service Review) and a Music Service Review. Whilst the Music Service is being reviewed as part of this process, Elected Members have asked for a separate review of this part of the service. This Review will be concluded by November and will inform the 2-18 Structural Delivery Service Review.

**Q. What happens if the Education budget is not spent? Does it go back into the Council budget?**

A. If this happens, Central Budgets which are not spent by Education Services are returned to the centre to account for potential overspends elsewhere or can be retained by Education as a reserve for a specific project.

**Q. What happens if the school budget is not spent?**

A. Schools can retain 2.5% of any surplus budget at the end of the year.

You can e-mail the Service Review Team at:

[Education-2-18ServiceReviewConsultation@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:Education-2-18ServiceReviewConsultation@dumgal.gov.uk)