

**Acting Head of ICT &
Customer Services
Lynton Jones**

**Pennaeth TGCh a
Gwasanaethau Cwsmer
Dros Dro Lynton Jones**

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20th March 2015

Dear **50+ Forum Member**,

Thank you for your contribution to our Budget Consultation 2015/16

A Special Meeting of Council was held at Penallta House on Wednesday 25th February 2015 to agree the authority's budget for the 2015/16 financial year.

Councillors considered a report which provided a detailed breakdown of the £325million budget for the next 12 months. The money will be used to fund key services such as highways, social services, education, libraries, public protection and leisure services etc.

Cuts totalling more than £12million were required to be identified due to a reduction in the funding provided to the council, but the majority of these savings will not have a direct impact on frontline services in our communities.

The report also contained feedback received from **members of the 50+ Forum** following the extensive public consultation carried out over the past few months. The views of local people were listened to and have played a key part in helping to shape the budget.

A number of cuts contained on the original list of savings proposals were withdrawn as a result of listening to the feedback from residents. The proposals that were **withdrawn** are as follows:

- 10p increase in car park charges at Pay and Display car parks
- Introduction of car park charges on a Sunday
- Increase in car park excess charge notice penalties
- Removal of an Environmental Health Officer post

Amendments were also made to two specific proposals following feedback from the consultation:

- 50p increase in Meals on Wheels (instead of proposed £1 per meal)
- Civic Amenity Sites closed 1 day per week (instead of proposed 2 days)

A small 'match-funding' scheme of £25,000 was also agreed. This will help to retain projects such as the Bargoed Ice rink, Aber Valley Splash Pad and the popular 'Bands in the Park' events programme. This fund will only be used where local partners, such as Community Councils, are able to contribute to the events.

At the meeting, councillors also agreed to adopt a number of key principles that will help guide the budget setting process in future:

- Protecting front-line services where we can and reducing expenditure on management and administrative costs.
- Increasing fees and charges where appropriate
- Reducing, rather than removing services where possible.
- Focussing on priorities.
- Looking at alternative ways of delivering services (collaboration, partnerships, community trusts, etc.).

For more information about the budget and the feedback from the consultation, including a full report of feedback from the **50+ Forum**, please visit the council's website - www.caerphilly.gov.uk

Thank you for taking the time to get involved.

Yours sincerely,



Consultation and Public Engagement Officer