

Council – 5th March 2026

Amendment: Proposals of the Labour Group

Budget 2026/27

First and foremost, I would like to thank council officers, trade union representatives and colleagues that helped throughout the process of the Labour Group budget this year.

Each person that has taken the time to work on any council budget will know that each year we are tasked to take part in what can only be explained as a cost saving exercise.

This year we believe that the proposals that our group is presenting are difficult, yet they put the people of South Ayrshire first.

Within our budget we have prioritised jobs. Working people are the lifeline of this organisation and should not face the price of the financial pressures placed on us. Though we have had to make difficult choices in terms of the cuts we have taken, our priority is clear, ensuring that fairness is at the heart of every decision that we have made.

The Labour group is not proposing the closure of any of the incredible community centres, libraries or hubs within our local areas ensuring that communities can flourish and utilise the wonderful services that we as an organisation provide.

We have proposed a **6.5%** increase in council tax, which we understand is difficult at a time when working peoples finances are stretched so thin, however, in order to present a balanced budget, protect Jobs, and ensure that vital assets for our communities stay open, this is an unfortunate step that we must take.

Further to this we have allocated an additional **£0.934m** to the HSCP resulting in an overall uplift of **£9.008m** on last year's allocation. We have done this through use of an additional **£1m** from reserves to help fund a service that has been stretched tightly by the Scottish Governments funding settlement once again.

This budget has not been about making easy choices; it is about standing on the side of the working people in South Ayrshire. It recognises that our communities are strongest when we protect our incredible services that hold us together and support those who need it most. We have a collective responsibility as elected members to put people first and we must not shy away from that role.

Councillor Cameron Ramsay

Member for Prestwick Ward 2

Annex 1

<u>Specific 2026/27 revenue budget proposals</u>	£m
1) To note the remaining budget gap as identified of:	8.463
2) To provide additional funding to the Health and Social Care Partnership in 2026/27, beyond the £115.232m noted in the covering report, of £0.934m resulting in an overall uplift of £9.008m on last year's allocation:	0.934
3) To agree to progress savings proposals as identified in Annex 2 to this amendment totalling:	(1.555)
4) To uplift all Council tax bandings by 6.5% resulting in a Band D equivalent of £1,671.42 which, after applying a bad debt provision of 3% (as noted in Annex 3 to this amendment), is expected to generate additional Council Tax income in 2026/27 of:	(4.842)
5) In addition to utilising the planned use of committed reserves of £2.000m, as described in the covering report, utilise uncommitted reserves of:	<u>(3.000)</u>
6) To note by applying items 1 to 5 above this results in a final balanced budget gap position of:	<u>0.000</u>
7) To note the above decisions results in an overall Council budget of £398.601m for 2026/27, shown at Directorate level in Annex 4.	
8) To agree the Common Good budget as identified in Appendix 4 of the covering report.	

Annex 2

Savings proposals

Ref	Proposal	Amount £	Yes/ No	2026/27 £	2027/28 £
Sports, Leisure and Golf					
C&T-01	Progress Closure/Transfer Muirhead Activity Centre	44,000	No	-	-
	Progress Closure/Transfer Mossblown Activity Centre	39,000	No	-	-
	Progress Closure/Transfer Coylton Activity Centre	35,000	No	-	-
	Progress Closure/Transfer Northfield Bowling	113,000	No	-	-
	Phase out diving and deep-water sessions at the Citadel to focus on higher-demand programmes	20,000	No	-	-
	Prioritise swimming lessons by adjusting public and club pool access	80,000	No	-	-
	Reduce opening hours/staffing at Riverside Sports Arena	150,000	No	-	-
	Discontinue the Senior Golf Concession Scheme to standardise pricing	20,000	No	-	-
	Remove protected tee times to improve equitable access for all golfers	30,000	No	-	-
	Remove council delivered golf events to refocus resources on core services	5,000	No	-	-
Thriving Communities					
C&T-02	50% reduction in Small Business Grants	25,000	Yes	25,000	-
	50% reduction in Start Up Grants	10,000	Yes	10,000	-
	50% reduction in Ambition to Grow Grants	25,000	Yes	25,000	-
	50% reduction Business Expert Help Grants	10,000	Yes	10,000	-
	Progress Closure/Transfer of Dundonald Community Centre	38,077	No	-	-
	Progress Closure/Transfer of Crosshill Community Centre	46,699	No	-	-
	Progress Closure/Transfer of Monkton Community Centre	35,022	No	-	-
	Progress Closure/Transfer of Colmonell Community Centre	31,793	No	-	-
	Progress Closure/Transfer of Ballantrae Community Centre	39,162	No	-	-
	Reduce administration budgets	4,200	Yes	4,200	-
	Remove SAFE Taxi Marshall funding	13,000	No	-	-
	Remove SAFE Police Scotland contribution	10,000	Yes	10,000	-
	Remove School as the Hub resources budget	10,000	Yes	10,000	-
	Reduction in Problem Solving and Communities budget	10,000	No	-	-

	Reduce Health and Wellbeing service budget	2,000	No	-	-
	Cancel memberships – Industrial Communities Alliance & Prosper	5,333	Yes	5,333	-
	Progress Closure/Transfer of Prestwick Community Centre	101,980	No	-	-
Destination South Ayrshire					
C&T-03	Increase SLA with Maclaurin Art Gallery to reflect SAC contribution.	15,000	Yes	15,000	-
	Delete existing L9 Heritage Post	50,000	No	-	-
	Progress closure of Ballantrae Library.	10,760	No	-	-
	Progress closure of John Rodie (Mossblown) Library	16,182	No	-	-
	Progress closure of Symington Library	21,696	No	-	-
	Progress closure of Ayr Heritage Hub.	34,522	No	-	-
	Delete external artist fees budget	6,300	Yes	6,300	-
	Reduction in library services (Subscriptions)	4,000	Yes	4,000	-
	Stop contribution to Biosphere.	25,000	Yes	-	25,000
	Sell/ rent vacant unit at Carrick St	14,000	Yes	14,000	-
	Reduce Tourism Development Third Party Payments	27,243	Yes	27,243	-
	Remove Signs and Notices Budget.	14,820	No	-	-
	Cancel Burns Humanitarian Awards.	10,000	No	-	-
	Reduce Events Budget by 15%	3,650	Yes	3,650	-
	Withdraw funding from Unified Bowls Event.	38,000	No	-	-
	Withdrawal from the ground floor Grain Exchange.	50,000	No	-	-
ICT Operations					
C&T-04	Service Redesign	267,000	No	-	-
Customer Services and Communications					
C&T-05	Service Redesign	31,430	No	-	-
Corporate Policy, Community Planning and Performance					
CE-01	Deletion of Energy Agency Budget	15,000	Yes	15,000	-
	Deletion of Equalities training budget	5,000	Yes	5,000	-
	Reduce FTE by deleting one L7 post	41,958	No	-	-
	Reduce FTE by deleting one L9 post	52,296	No	-	-

Housing Strategy and Policy					
CE-02	Reduction of Housing support contract budget	86,042	No	-	-
	Reduce core Housing support budget	18,958	No	-	-
	Homeless strategy budget reduction	11,042	No	-	-
	Scheme of Assistant budget reduction	12,000	No	-	-
Education					
ED-01	Instrumental Music Service - delete 0.5 vacant fte admin post supporting fees & charges (£14,815) and reduce music expansion budget (£50,000)	64,815	Yes	64,815	-
ED-02	Removal of Determine to Succeed (DTS) budget	36,000	No	-	-
ED-03	Reduce DSM Short Term Absence Cover budget	171,041	Yes	171,041	-
ED-04	Reduction in Core Curriculum Funding	61,000	No	-	-
ED-05	Removal of EY/ASN/GIRFEC Training Budget	36,000	Yes	36,000	-
ED-06	Reduce Registered Capacity of EY Centres	462,162	Yes	462,162	-
ED-07	Reduce Central, Long Term Absence Cover budget	196,760	Yes	196,760	-
ED-08	Reduction of 1fte Education Support Services and reduction of other centrally managed budgets	80,514	No	-	-
ED-09	Reduction in Central Education equipment and systems budget	60,000	Yes	60,000	-
ED-10	Reduction in Central Education Resource Budgets	76,260	No	-	-
Neighbourhood Services					
HOD-01	Reduce Tree & Woodland management	37,000	Yes	37,000	-
HOD-02	Reduction/ Altered Street Cleansing	60,340	No	-	-
HOD-03	Close Dukes Road depot and relocate services	46,526	Yes	46,526	-
HOD-04	Remove Forestry machinery lease arrangement budget - no longer required	12,678	Yes	12,678	-
HOD-05	Reduce/altered grass pitches maintenance - 3 options provided				
	Option 1 - reduce maintenance to all non-bookable pitches, except education pitches from Grade A to C but keep cutting regime the same	31,681	No	-	-
	Option 2 - maintain all non-bookable pitches to Grade C (except schools) and reduce cutting from weekly to fortnightly during the growing season except for education and bookable pitches	57,552	Yes	57,552	-
	Option 3 - maintain all pitches (bookable and non-bookable) to grade C and to reduce cutting from weekly to fortnightly during the growing season on all pitches	58,230	No	-	-
HOD-06	Reduce/remove bedding plants budget - 4 options provided				

	Option 1 - stop spring bulbs, spring bedding, and retain summer hanging baskets, summer bedding and planters	11,337	No	-	-
	Option 2 - stop spring bulbs, spring bedding and summer hanging baskets and retain summer bedding and planters	28,662	No	-	-
	Option 3 - stop spring bulbs, spring bedding, summer hanging baskets and all summer bedding retain only planters	71,030	No	-	-
	Option 4 - stop all floral bedding displays	79,901	Yes		79,901
HOD-07	Stop facilitating Events e.g. Gala days, Presfest etc. - supply and delivery of stalls, tables, chairs, bins etc	20,000	No	-	-
HOD-08	Structure redesign	171,000	No	-	-
Facilities Management					
HOD-09	Reduction in School Crossing Patrol Service	105,103	No	-	-
	Reduction in current cleaning provision across all council premises - resulting in a significantly reduced output specification and the introduction of mobile operative cleaning model	320,914	No	-	-
Ayrshire Roads Alliance					
HOD-10	Reduce Grass Cutting of roadside verges out with 30mph limits	38,000	Yes	38,000	-
HOD-11	Remove non statutory post	41,541	No	-	-
HOD-12	Review Winter Gritting route priorities	80,000	No	-	-
HOD-13	Cease ISO accreditation audit	4,000	No	-	-
HOD-14	Removal of Karbontech software contract	10,500	Yes	10,500	-
HOD-15	Reduce routine maintenance budget by not attending P4 road defects (potholes) on unclassified carriageways, footways & footpaths	78,295	No	-	-
HOD-16	Introduce part night switching of lighting in rural areas - 4 switch regimes provided				
	Switch regime 1 - Off Midnight to 5:00am	26,687	No	-	-
	Switch regime 2 - Off Midnight to 5:30am	28,701	No	-	-
	Switch regime 3 - Off Midnight to 6:00am	30,491	No	-	-
	Switch regime 4 - Off 10:00pm to 6:00am	41,201	No	-	-
Housing Services					
HOD-17	Transfer of Costs from General Services to HRA. Savings to General Services to reflect the level of activity attributed to HRA functions	108,250	Yes	108,250	-
	Transfer of Costs from General Services to HRA - Reduced Sheltered Housing support to reflect the level of activity attributed to HRA functions	19,900	Yes	19,900	-
	Elimination of Anti-social behaviour mediation service	10,000	Yes	10,000	-

	Reduction to Scheme of Assistance Grant in mixed tenure stock	10,000	Yes	10,000	-
HR and Employee Services					
HR-02	Service Redesign	343,095	No	-	-
Trading Standards & Environmental Health					
L&R-01	Review of Consumer and Business Advice	85,000	No	-	-
	Reductions in general budget Lines	17,988	Yes	17,988	-
	Delete 0.1 FTE of a Trading Standards Officer Post vacated through flexible working	5,721	Yes	5,721	-
Total Savings to be applied				1,554,619	104,901

Annex 3

Council Tax bandings

Band	2025-26	2026-27
A	£1,046.27	£1,114.28
B	£1,220.66	£1,300.00
C	£1,395.04	£1,485.72
D	£1,569.41	£1,671.42
E	£2,062.03	£2,196.06
F	£2,550.30	£2,716.07
G	£3,073.43	£3,273.20
H	£3,845.06	£4,094.99

Note that based on an uplift of 6.5% across all banding that additional council tax income of £4.842m will be generated providing £79.675m of total Council Tax income available to fund service expenditure in 2026-27 net of:

- a 3 per cent bad debt provisions for the non-collection of Council Tax; and
- the estimated implications of applying reductions per the Council Tax Reduction Scheme.

Annex 4

Council Budget 2026/27

	Revised budget 2026/27 £m	Amendment			Final budget 2026/27 £m
		Additional investment £m	Savings £m	CT uplift/ use of reserves £m	
Directorate expenditure					
Chief Executive's	24.305	-	(0.044)	-	24.261
Communities & Transformation	25.617	-	(0.170)	-	25.447
Education	167.148	-	(0.991)	-	166.157
Housing, Operation & Development	51.525	-	(0.350)	-	51.175
HSCP	115.232	0.934	-	-	116.166
Miscellaneous Services	15.395	-	-	-	15.395
Total Expenditure	399.222	0.934	(1.555)	-	398.601
Funded by					
Scottish Government funding					
Grant Aided expenditure	(252.896)	-	-	-	(252.896)
Non-Domestic Rates	(56.618)	-	-	-	(56.618)
Specific Grants	(4.412)	-	-	-	(4.412)
Planned use of reserves	(2.000)	-	-	(3.000)	(5.000)
Council Tax	(74.833)	-	-	(4.842)	(79.675)
Total Funding	(390.759)	-	-	(7.842)	(398.601)
Remaining Budget Gap	8.463	0.934	(1.555)	(7.842)	-