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Difficult financial position now made worse, says council convener

Moray Council is set to receive £5m less from the Scottish Government for its day-to-day spending in the coming financial year.

On top of £6.2m of required savings that have already been identified, it means that the annual spend will now have to come down by £11m.

Council convener Allan Wright said: “This budget has just made our difficult financial position even more difficult to the tune of £5m. Over the months ahead, we will be talking with the people of Moray about just how those savings and efficiencies can be achieved. We will listen to and hear their views - but there has to be a realisation that priorities will have to be refined and that some services will be much reduced.

“The Scottish Government has issued figures for every council without explaining that they include capital allocations. Hence, the quoted figure for Moray of £164m appears to include £8m for capital, resulting in a budget reduction of about £5m for the day-to-day running of council services.”

Councillor Wright continued: “When we get the accurate revenue allocation, officers and councillors will consider the options available to us to cope with this latest funding pressure. But I can say that we will not be following the proposed route of some other councils with a voluntary redundancy scheme. Quite frankly, we cannot afford the associated payments. However, we will be looking very closely at every vacancy as it arises.”

To add to the council’s financial pressure, it also stands to incur a penalty of £150,000 for failing one of the government’s tests on teacher numbers.

“Our teacher/pupil ratios were acceptable, but we had slightly fewer teachers than last year and as a consequence it seems that we will suffer a significant financial penalty,” said Councillor Wright.

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 92,500 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.

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