

**Connect**

*monthly*

**February  
2019**



**moray**  
council



# February 2019

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On the cover

Leader of Moray Council, Cllr Graham Leadbitter, and Chief Executive, Roddy Burns.

## Editorial

As we go to press this month it's likely that the Scottish Government's budget has been passed by MSPs.

Along with other councils in Scotland, the measures will mean that Moray Council can levy a maximum Council Tax of 4.79%, which will go some way to towards closing the budget gap, but not all of it. This means that much of the savings flagged up so far in this edition will still need to go ahead.

The car parking levy inserted into the Transport Bill as part of the Scottish Government's budget still has to be fully detailed, but on the face of it would affect Moray Council if it chose to adopt the measure.

The levy is based on a scheme in Nottingham where any company or organisation with more than 12 parking spaces for staff is charged £400 for each one. These are frequently passed on to staff to encourage greater use of public transport. It is proposed that councils can then use that income to improve local bus and cycle networks.

Once details are known it will be a matter for councillors how the scheme is – or isn't – implemented.



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Communications Officer



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# HeadsUp

Rhona Gunn, Corporate Director

## Dear Colleagues

The outlook for Moray Council's finances may look bleak at the moment, but at times like this it's crucial that we don't forget to look ahead and plan for the future or nothing will ever change.

The Council's Improvement and Modernisation Plan is one example of this. Another is investing in the local economy. Economic development is a priority of both the UK and Scottish Government and of every local authority in Scotland. Why? Because the right sort of investment brings new and better jobs, higher productivity and better standards of living for us all to enjoy.

That's why the Moray Growth Deal we have been driving forward is so important, and why it mattered that we had tangible support from the business community, local and national politicians, and partners such as HIE and others. It is not something the council can achieve on its own.

Moray is one of the few areas in Scotland that has yet to benefit from a government-backed growth deal, so there is a real sense among those we are working with it at all levels that we have done the preparatory work

and now our time has come. The recent approval from Chancellor Phillip Hammond for negotiations to start was a big step forward, and we have also opened negotiations with Holyrood. It is a slow process, but we are on the way now to agreeing an investment that will transform the economy in Moray.

Naturally, as a corporate director with a raft of other responsibilities this project has required a lot of my time and attention, but thanks to colleagues in Economic Development and elsewhere in the council we are now ready to negotiate and the 'day job' hasn't suffered too much.

Uppermost in all our minds however, is the budget and the impact it will have on staff and services. These are very difficult times for many of us; implementing decisions that affect colleagues' livelihoods and the services we all take pride in delivering is never easy or desirable. From my experience doing a shift with one of our waste teams and in a school kitchen, I know how much it means to us all when we do a great job, and it will be difficult for many of our frontline teams to see services reduced and standards dropped just because that is the only way we can get close

to balancing our budget. As the date on which councils across Scotland must set their budgets draws closer however, it is clear that Moray is not alone in this.

Nonetheless, as I said at the outset, I believe we must look forward and do what we can to sow seeds for economic change in the future while working together to get through the current financial difficulties.

Best wishes  
Rhona

# BUDGET BLUEPRINT



You won't usually see the budget feature on the cover of *Connect* but, given the current financial situation facing the council, it's vital that you are all kept up-to-date on this rapidly developing scenario. In this article, we've outlined the challenges facing the council in setting its budget, proposals which are under way and put some figures into context.

## The facts and figures

In 2019/20 it will cost £214.5 million to run local government services here on our doorstep, from emptying six million bins to maintaining 1,000 miles of roads, educating thousands pupils in our primary and secondary schools, and everything else in between.

Until the changes in the Scottish Government's proposed budget we were only expecting to bring in £199.7 million from Council Tax, government grants and charging for services, which left us with a £14.8 million shortfall. Work has been taking place all year to identify savings and generate additional income to help us narrow the gap. We already

announced a swathe of service reductions and job losses in December, and later this month councillors will gather to set the Council Tax and agree more measures to balance the budget.

As it currently stands, the figures below indicate the critical financial position we're still in:

- £5.9 million identified savings (phase 1 and 2 savings, reported to councillors in Sept and agreed in Dec 2018)
- £1.5 million Health and Social Care Moray savings (following proposed Scottish Government

budget Dec 2018)

- £2.2 million further savings identified ('phase two' savings, reported to councillors Jan 23 2019)
- £5.2 million still required to be found to balance budget by Feb 27 2019.

This shortfall is not the result of poor money-management. In fact, by prudent changes to working practices and improvements, in the last 10 years we've reduced our annual spend by more than £40 million.

**In the last 10 years we've reduced our annual spend by more than £40 million.**



**Costs rise annually for the council [...] which is making the financial squeeze worse than ever.**

### **Budget pressures**

Costs rise annually for the council, and here are some of the pressures we're facing in the coming financial year which is making the financial squeeze worse than ever before:

- pressures for the change to the teachers' pension fund
- increases to health and social care funding
- out-of-area placements
- cost of change (modernisation, improvement and workforce changes)
- potential pay settlements – which have increased from earlier forecasts
- inflationary effect of fuels, energy and contracted-out services

Add to this mix the fact that the grant settlement now expected is less than we need, it's clear what has led us to this situation. As a result, even though we'd planned for further savings to be made, the scale of the budget gap is such that further cost-cutting measures will be needed.

## Every effort has to be made to protect statutory services.

### Savings proposals

Given the significant savings and cuts that have already been approved at meetings in September and December, this leaves a highly undesirable list to be agreed – along with service reductions which will have a major impact on many of our jobs, and on the people of Moray for the long term.

Every effort has to be made to protect statutory services, but there are even reductions savings proposed in statutory areas. Even still, at the moment the total of these savings is not enough to narrow the gap and balance our 2019/20 budget.

The latest round of savings proposals, called phase three, totals £2.2 million and includes the following:

- closing all public toilets
- closing and reducing opening hours of libraries
- increasing charges for harbour users, for burials and music instruction
- removing all school crossing patrollers
- reducing the community warden service, grass and roads maintenance programmes
- charging for out-of-zone school transport
- removing the Active Schools and Essential Skills programmes
- closing Keith and Lossiemouth swimming pools
- reducing street sweeping

More details on these measures are on our main website at this link [www.moray.gov.uk/moray\\_standard/page\\_119975.html](http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_119975.html)

or just type 'Budget 2019' into the search box.

Many of the savings options have implications on our workforce, ranging from changes to jobs and reduced hours, to deleting posts and voluntary redundancies being sought. Support will be offered to affected colleagues. The Transform process will be activated and voluntary early retirement will also be available for eligible staff. Compulsory redundancies will be the last resort.

Leader of Moray Council, Cllr Graham Leadbitter, said final decisions on any outstanding budget matters would be made at the Full Council meeting on 27 February, along with planning for the future.

*"None of us wants to make this level of cuts to services but we have to balance the budget, even in these difficult times.*

*"However, in the midst of this we have not lost sight of our ambition to make the council sustainable in the long term. With the support of senior officers we are looking at an improvement and modernisation programme that will address that."*



Chief Executive, Roddy Burns, acknowledged there is limited scope to vary the savings under consideration.

*"It's likely that any public consultation would raise objection and the content could be anticipated, but given the situation we are in the council would be unable to accommodate these objections.*

*"There should be no doubt that most of the proposals are made on purely financial grounds. In the main they are not efficiency savings and do not represent levels of service that would not normally be suggested.*

*"We know that the impact is severe. Individually and in totality these savings will have long-lasting implications for many of us, for the delivery of both local and national priorities, and for the services that the people of Moray can access in future."*



Employee Development

# Training Calendar

**All About Change**

- ½ day
- 12 Feb, 5 Jun

**Body Language**

- ½ day
- 5 Feb, 21 Aug

**Building Personal Resilience**

- ½ day
- 7 Mar, 24 Sep

**Coaching Skills**

- 2x ½ days
- 23 Feb & 11 Mar, 20 Aug & 6 Sep

**Confident Communications**

- ½ day
- 14 Feb, 10 Oct

**Conflict Management & Mediation**

- ½ day
- 23 May, 27 Nov

**Corporate Induction**

- Can now be found on CLIVE as elearning module – Programme: Corporate Induction

**Customer Excellence**

- ½ day
- 18 Apr, 5 Nov

**Discipline: Practice, Policy & Procedure**

- ½ day
- 28 Mar, 19 Sep

**ERDP Briefing**

- Can now be found on CLIVE as elearning module – Courses for Managers: ERDP briefing

**Get it Write, Right!**

- ½ day
- 15 May, 14 Nov

**Health and Work**

- ½ day
- 17 Apr, 8 Oct

**Leading Effective Meetings**

- ½ day
- 9 May, 12 Sep

**Mental Health Awareness**

- 1 day
- 26 Feb, 29 May, 15 Aug, 30 Oct

**Minute Taking**

- ½ day
- 13 Mar, 17 Sep

**Planning for the Future**

- 7 Feb, 9 May, 24 Sep, 28 Nov

**Presentation Skills**

- Delivered on demand – must have a minimum of 6 participants

**Project Management**

- ½ day
- 19 Feb, 21 Nov

**Interview Skills and Selection**

- ½ days
- 29 Jan, 25 Apr, 13 Jun, 29 Aug, 2 Oct

**Responding to Aggression & Violence**

- ½ days
- 19 Feb, 31 Sep

**Self-harm Awareness**

- ½ days
- 22 Jan, 26 Sep

# 2019

JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
1 TH	1 TH	1 SU	1 TU	1 FR	1 SU
2 FR	2 FR	2 MO	2 WE	2 SA	2 MO
3 SA	3 SA	3 TU	3 TH	3 SU	3 TU
4 SU	4 SU	4 WE	4 FR	4 MO	4 WE
5 MO	5 MO	5 TH	5 SA	5 TU	5 TH
6 TU	6 TU	6 SU	6 MO	6 FR	6 FR
7 WE	7 WE	7 TU	7 WE	7 SA	7 SA
8 TH	8 TH	8 WE	8 TH	8 SU	8 SU
9 FR	9 FR	9 TH	9 FR	9 MO	9 MO
10 SA	10 SA	10 TU	10 WE	10 TU	10 TU
11 SU	11 SU	11 WE	11 TH	11 WE	11 WE
12 MO	12 MO	12 TH	12 FR	12 TH	12 TH
13 TU	13 TU	13 SU	13 MO	13 FR	13 FR
14 WE	14 WE	14 TU	14 WE	14 SA	14 SA
15 TH	15 TH	15 WE	15 TH	15 SU	15 SU
16 FR	16 FR	16 TH	16 FR	16 MO	16 MO
17 SA	17 SA	17 TU	17 WE	17 TU	17 TU
18 SU	18 SU	18 WE	18 TH	18 WE	18 WE
19 MO	19 MO	19 TH	19 FR	18 MO	19 TH
20 TU	20 TU	20 SU	20 MO	20 TU	20 FR
21 WE	21 WE	21 TU	21 WE	21 TH	21 SA
22 TH	22 TH	22 WE	22 TH	22 FR	22 SU
23 FR	23 FR	23 TH	23 FR	23 SA	23 MO
24 SA	24 SA	24 TU	24 TH	24 SU	24 TU
25 SU	25 SU	25 WE	25 FR	25 MO	25 WE
26 MO	26 MO	26 TH	26 SA	26 TU	26 TH
27 TU	27 TU	27 FR	27 SA	27 WE	27 FR
28 WE	28 WE	28 SA	28 MO	28 TH	28 SA
29 TH	29 TH	29 SU	29 TU	29 FR	29 SU
30 FR	30 FR	30 MO	30 WE	30 SA	30 MO
31 SA	31 SA	31 TU	31 TH	31 SU	31 TU

Our varied corporate training programme covers everything from customer service for frontline staff to coaching skills for managers. The table below provides information on the training courses running in 2019 with further information on courses, dates, venues and how to book available on the Interchange. Each course details who should attend, what will be covered in the course and other courses you may want to consider.

## Speed Reading

- Delivered on demand – must have a minimum of 6 participants

## Stress Management

- 27 Mar, 20 Jun

## Supporting Individual Performance

- 23 Apr, 11 Sep

## Time Management

- Can now be found on CLIVE as elearning module – CPD: Time Management

## Train the Trainer

- Delivered on demand – must have a minimum of 6 participants

## Corporate Management & Governance

- 24 Apr, 12 Nov

## Service Planning & Strategy: Training for Managers

- 2 May, 26 Nov

## Performance Management

- 12 Mar, 3 Oct

## Financial Management

- 14 Feb, 10 Sep

## People Management

- 14 May, 19 Nov

## Health & Safety: Training for Managers

- 20 Feb, 9 Oct

## Risk Management

- 28 Feb, 25 Sep

## Equalities: Training for Managers

- 6 Mar, 4 Dec

## Information Assurance: Training for Managers

- 21 Feb, 14 Aug

## Procurement: Training for Managers

- 14 Feb, 10 Sep

## Customer Care: Training for Managers

- 21 Mar, 27 Nov

*Book your place on the interchange*

# HR Noticeboard

## Put a spring in your step

You may be familiar with Healthy Working Lives Wee Winter Walk Challenge to walk 10,000 steps per day with a team of four. The winners of this challenge were the team who reached a set target of steps in the shortest time.

We're changing it a bit this year and holding it in April after the Easter break, so those of you who aren't so keen on the winter weather may fancy taking part in when it's warmer.

We are also going to include a challenge for the cyclists among us too.

Keep an eye out in March for some more info on what the challenges are and how you can enter.

## Employee Discount

Buying a gift or treating yourself?

Remember that council employees can get discounts from retailers and restaurants to make your money go that little bit further.

We've got offerings from jewellers, hoteliers and even a furniture and carpet store so be savvy with your spending and check where you can receive a discount locally before you part with your hard-earned cash.

What's on offer can be viewed on the interchange: [interchange.moray.gov.uk/int\\_standard/Page\\_107629.html](http://interchange.moray.gov.uk/int_standard/Page_107629.html)



email [connectnews@moray.gov.uk](mailto:connectnews@moray.gov.uk) to get Connect emailed to your personal email address, every month.

apply for your  
garden waste collection  
permit by 28 February  
for guaranteed delivery  
by 1 April

# Garden waste

Free kerbside collections of garden waste are ending. From 1 April 2019, a chargeable service will be introduced in Moray. Given the council's budget deficit we've got to think of new ways to make savings and generate income, and this is one of them.

We're asking householders to pay an annual upfront fee of £36 per brown bin for garden waste collections. You won't have to pay if you're using your brown bin just for food waste.

We've sent out letters to all householders in Moray over the course of January with more information about how to apply.

To make sure you receive your garden waste collection permit before 1 April 2019, you must apply and pay for it no later than 28 February 2019.

From 1 April we will only collect your garden waste if you put it in your brown bin, and the brown bin displays a valid permit.

We'll continue to collect your brown bin on your normal collection day. You can download a collection calendar for your property online at [bindayfinder.moray.gov.uk](http://bindayfinder.moray.gov.uk).

We've got much more info online at [www.moray.gov.uk](http://www.moray.gov.uk), including how to compost your garden waste and what materials are accepted in your brown bin.



[www.moray.gov.uk/gardenwaste](http://www.moray.gov.uk/gardenwaste)



## Councillor's Spotlight

**We know and appreciate all the hard work the staff do day-to-day, often above and beyond what's required or expected.**

**I**t's been a long time coming, but I've finally been asked to introduce myself to you all.

I'm David Bremner, Councillor for Ward 4 Fochabers & Lhanbryde; the ward with the best beaches in Moray, and which I'm honoured and humbled to represent.

Born and brought up in Glasgow, holidaying in Moray frequently with family, I never imagined then I'd be an elected member of the council – but life often takes strange turns to keep things interesting.

As the current chair the Planning & Regulatory Service Committees, which I'm thoroughly enjoying, it's satisfying to be able to pull on previous life experience.

Starting off from school in forestry, I completed a degree in Timber Technology, a broad-based degree essentially encompassing everything that happens with wood after it leaves the forest. Part of this was timber engineering which gained me my first post-degree job with a timber frame construction company in Bristol, designing and building homes, care homes, and hospitals.

Moving on during the property crash in the early 90s, I took on the role of accountant for a large farming estate in Wiltshire, running nearly 40 enterprises including several hundred acres of diverse forestry and a large rented housing stock. It was this career path that brought me to Moray in 1994, when I accepted a post with a local estate doing the same, and which also gave me my first contact with the Moray Local Plan.

The late 90s gave me my first experience of licensing, as I sat in abject terror in the court as deliberations were made whether to grant me an off-sales licence for my home, as I set up what's thought to be the world's first fully-licensed e-commerce store.

And so to the present, where I'm loving being involved in formulating the direction of the council, and Moray generally through the planning committee. It really is fabulous to have the opportunity to have such an input, and to be able to work with the talented and dedicated team here, and indeed in all the other departments as well.

Finally it would be remiss of me in this edition not to mention the budget since it's uppermost in everyone's minds. As Councillors we're responsible for the direction and strategy of the council, and in so doing we are all acutely aware of the anxiety the, often very difficult and challenging decisions we are having to take can cause.

We're working hard across all the political divides to mitigate its impact as far as we possibly can. We will get through this and see better days in the future.

I'll end by saying, on behalf of all the Councillors, that we know and appreciate all the hard work the staff do day-to-day, often above and beyond what's required or expected, and we thank you for this.

# Energy from Waste

**O**ur waste services have recently undergone a significant number of changes and will continue to do so.

In June 2018 non-recyclable (residual) waste in the green bin changed from two-weekly to three-weekly collections. A full assessment was done before the change of the composition of our waste in Moray and this showed that most green bins still contained significant amounts of recyclable material. The shift to a three-weekly collection not only delivered savings on collection costs of £100,000 but should also encourage greater recycling in order to free up space in green bins and so save on landfill tax costs.

In April 2019 the council will introduce a charge for garden waste. While the Council has a statutory duty to collect household waste free of charge which includes food waste it does not have to collect garden waste. Therefore in line with a growing trend of councils and in light of our need to generate

additional income to help to balance our budget, an annual charge will be applied to the brown bin if the householder wishes to have their garden waste collected along with their food waste. This could potentially deliver an income of £700,000 assuming a 50 per cent uptake. No charge will be made if only food waste is placed in the brown bin.

The Government has introduced legislation that will ban biodegradable waste from landfill from the 1 January 2021. This will effectively mean that the contents of the green bin will no longer be able to be landfilled and will have to be treated through a thermal treatment process such as incineration. Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray councils have entered into a partnership agreement to build an 'Energy from Waste' plant in Aberdeen that will burn the waste, with energy recovered in the form of electricity sold to the national grid and heat recovery that will feed into a district heating network to provide hot water to properties adjacent to the plant.

## **The contents of the green bin will no longer be able to be landfilled.**

The Energy from Waste plant will not be completed until 18 months after the ban is in place, which means that the Council will need to either send this to landfill in England, where the ban does not apply, or to Energy from Waste markets elsewhere in Europe where there is sufficient capacity. At the time of the ban there will not be sufficient Energy from Waste capacity in Scotland to treat this waste.

In preparation for the transfer of waste out of Moray when the ban comes into place we have had to extend our existing facility at Moycroft Industrial Estate. In addition we'll move our refuse collection operations from Brumley Brae and sorting facility in Lossiemouth to the upgraded facility in Moycroft. Work has now started and is due for completion at the end of 2019; meantime the sorting and storing operations in Elgin has been closed, and transferred to Dallachy.



# Safer Internet Day 2019

Tuesday 5 February

[www.saferinternetday.org.uk](http://www.saferinternetday.org.uk)

## **An increased focus on raising security awareness across the authority this year.**

Safer Internet Day 2019 (SID19) will be celebrated globally on Tuesday 5 February. Co-ordinated by the UK Safer Internet Centre, it sees hundreds of organisations get involved and join a national conversation about using technology responsibly and respectfully. This year the focus is consent online.

Our Learning Technologists, Ashleigh and Glen, have been working with schools to promote the day and to encourage them to participate through various activities. However, parents and carers have their part to play as well and can also access the resources available on the UK Safer Internet Centre's website: [www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre)

The day offers the opportunity to highlight positive uses of technology and to explore the role we all play in helping to create a better and safer online community. It calls upon young people, parents, carers, teachers, social workers, and wider, to join together and help to create a better internet.

Although SID19 has a particular focus each year, this is an ideal opportunity to remind you of the wider context of Internet Safety and ICT Security. Our ICT teams are currently working towards implementing the Scottish Government's Cyber Resilience Strategy. This aims to improve the public sector's ability to defend against cyber attacks. As a result, there will be an increased focus on raising security awareness across the authority this year, so look out for more information in the coming months.

In the meantime, it's worth highlighting that one of the most prominent threats comes from fraudulent (phishing) emails – why not try this quiz to test your ability to spot these: [phishingquiz.withgoogle.com/](http://phishingquiz.withgoogle.com/)

If you've got kids at school between Primary 5 and S4, chances are they'll soon be asked to take part in a pupil wellbeing survey.

It's part of the Scottish Government's 'Realigning Children's Services' programme, looking at how young people feel about their lives. The answers given will help community planning partners like us, the NHS and emergency services meet their needs and provide early support to help avoid bigger concerns or problems developing.

Questions include different aspects of emotional and physical wellbeing such as family life, friendships, school play and health. All answers are confidential and there's no right or wrong answer.

Moray is one of three Scottish councils piloting the survey, alongside Dumfries & Galloway, and South Ayrshire.

Schools taking part will send letters and leaflets to families, detailing how you can opt out for your child if you wish.

For more info about the programme, visit [transformingchildrensfutures.scot](http://transformingchildrensfutures.scot).

# Realigning Children's Services

**Moray is one of three Scottish councils piloting the survey, alongside Dumfries & Galloway, and South Ayrshire.**

**Health and social care colleagues are invited to attend a skills-building course.**

## Change for Health

Health and social care colleagues are invited to attend a skills-building course called 'Helping People Change for Health'.

It's being held on 8 and 21 March from 9:15am – 4:30pm at Moray College in Elgin, with a follow-up session on 2 May from 9:30 – 11:30am.

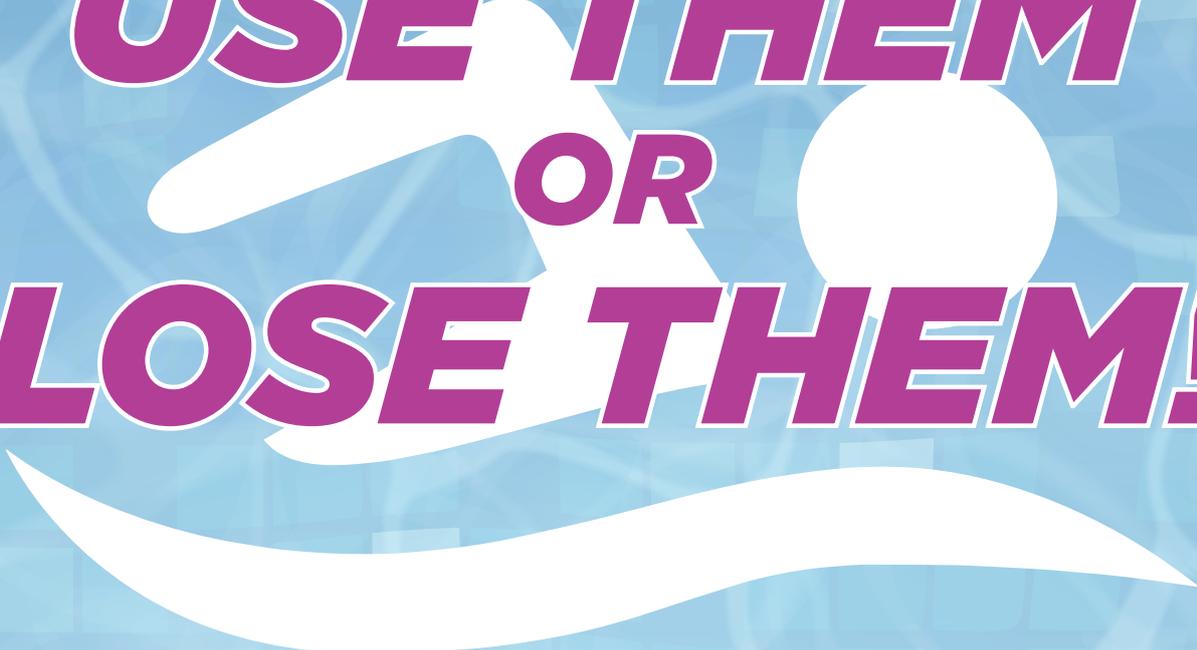
The course is free to practitioners working face-to-face with clients, and is aimed at those with a role in improving health, who want to gain confidence and skills to support health behaviour change.

'Health behaviour change' relates to approaches in helping people to change behaviours such as smoking, alcohol consumption, diet and physical activity.

Free refreshments will be provided, but you'll need to bring your own lunch or use the canteen facilities on site.

For more info, or to book, contact [sheila.robertson@nhs.net](mailto:sheila.robertson@nhs.net).

# USE THEM OR LOSE THEM!



Your swimming pools are under threat.

We need **300** more memberships  
by **20 Feb**, to secure their future.

Join **FIT LIFE?** **NOW!**  
at your leisure centre

**Great value!**

**from £21 per month** (individual)

**from £27 per month** (family)

