

'Local councils can no longer rely on the funds they receive from central government and should limit themselves to providing the most basic and essential services.'

How far do you agree with this view?

- Give reasons for your opinion, showing that you have considered different views on the topic.

In your answer you could consider:
councils and the services they provide
taxation and government spending.

Local councils are democratically elected by their community as the government of their area and to provide services for electors. They have certain statutory duties set by Parliament but can also provide other services as each council chooses. It can be argued that electors vote for those councillors who they think will provide the services they want. All services cost money and the financial resources of councils are finite.

Council funding comes from government grants, council tax, business rates and charges for sales and services. The main contributor is the government. This means the government is in a strong position to influence local government spending. A basic economic principle is that spending should be within the resources available.

One view put forward by the current government is that many councils are wasteful, inefficient and spend on projects that are not essential. Following the economic crisis of 2008, David Cameron's coalition government introduced a policy of austerity, and introduced severe cuts on government grants to councils. This forced council to review spending plans. and focus on what was essential by making efficiency savings and cutting inessentials. The government has argued that councils must live within their means.

Some might argue that since most of a council's income comes from the government, the government is entitled to have a say about spending plans. The government doesn't have money of its own. It redistributes money taken from taxpayers. Austerity has hit taxpayers hard, and many have suffered from rising costs and no simultaneous rise in income. Is it fair that tax paid by taxpayers in areas where the council is careful should be used by the government to give money to extravagant council?

A different view is that councils are elected democratically to obey their voters and not the government. Each council knows what its area needs and should be allowed to spend money on the services that are needed. If the government won't give the money, councils should be allowed to borrow or increase council tax. If the electors don't like this, they will vote them out of office.

A third view is that different areas of the country have different social and economic structures. Some areas are affluent but other areas are deprived and need more spent on essentials. Those that would most benefit from a wider range of services are those least able to afford them.

Wealthier areas are less likely to need them, and will probably have money to spend on other things Government grants should be distributed in a way that takes account of different needs.

We should remember that the purpose of local councils is to look after and provide for the needs of their community. Local people are better placed to decide what those needs are. The government should try to reduce waste and inefficiency, but it shouldn't harm local communities. Local authorities should be given sufficient resources to provide the services their constituents need. If the public don't agree with the council's priorities, they can always vote them out of office. If the government has to save money, it could cut some 'vanity projects' like H52, aircraft carriers, Trident and overseas aid, and give that money to local authorities for services that people need.

15/15

Why is this argument strong & why does it get 15/15?



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Why is this argument strong & why does it get 15/15?

The question asks "How Far"	The student successfully gave their own opinion and stood by it firmly
Familiarity with key words & concepts	
Knowledge of functions	
In support (agrees with statement)	Gives reasons and supports "How Far"
Not in support (disagrees with statement)	Gives reasons and supports "How Far"
Considers a different view point	
Recognises both sides can present a strong case but explains why one is stronger than the other.	