

Appendix 10

BUDGET CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

Budget Consultation Feedback 2018-19

- 1.1 The Council's 2018-19 budget consultation with residents, local businesses and other stakeholders ran from the 12th December 2017 to 22nd January 2018.
- 1.2 The budget pack published on the 22nd January 2018 included an analysis of the consultation responses received as at the 18th January 2018.
- 1.3 Now that consultation has concluded an updated position is provided below.
- 1.4 We received a total of 146 responses by close of consultation, the overall summary of responses is as follows:
 - More than half of the respondents agree with the approach of a three year budget as a way of protecting frontline services;
 - Almost half of respondents prefer that the council protects frontline services, rather than continue to invest resources in services that are council priorities, or reduce budgets across all services by the same proportion;
 - More than half of respondents support a 2% increase in council tax in 2018-19 to support adult social care services, and almost half of respondents support the proposal not to implement any additional inflationary increase in council tax above the adult social care precept of 2%.
- 1.5 Below is a detailed summary of responses received against each of the six questions that were asked.

Summary of responses to the consultation (as at close of consultation)

The consultation comprised 6 questions, which are set out below along with an indication of the responses received to date.

1. Do you agree with the approach that the council is taking in 2018-19 and its plans for a three year budget as a way of protecting frontline services

Responses

Just over half of those who responded (55%) said they agree with the council's approach. 29% of respondents disagreed with our approach, and 16% left the question unanswered.

2. In your opinion, which council service(s) have the biggest impact on your life?

Responses

Council services which respondents said have the biggest impact on their lives are:

Environmental & Regulatory Services – 37%
 Highways and Transport – 32%
 Public Health – 30%
 Education – 29%
 Cultural Services – 27%
 Housing – 26%
 Children Social Care – 19%
 Planning and Development – 19%
 Adult Social Care – 17%
 Central and other services – 17%

3. Would you prefer that the council:

- a) Reduces budgets across all services by the same proportion
- b) Continues to invest resources in services that are council priorities
- c) Protects frontline services

Responses

42% stated that they prefer the council to protect frontline services
 33% would like the council to invest in services that are council priorities and
 20% would like the council to reduce budgets across all services by the same proportion.
 5% of people left this answer blank.

4. Do you think the impact of these savings on the borough will mean:

- a) Fewer services will be available
- b) More services will be available
- c) Council will be more efficient
- d) Council will be less efficient

- e) **Service quality will go down**
- f) **Service quality will improve**

Responses

32% of those who responded believe that the impact of savings mean there will be fewer services available.

27% said the impact would mean more efficient services

22% said service quality would go down

5% thought the council would be less efficient

5% thought that more services would be available

5% thought service quality would go up and

4% of people left this question blank.

5. **The government has also said it expects councils to increase their council tax rate by an additional 1.75% every year to cover inflation. It has limited any inflationary increase to a maximum of 1.99%.**

In setting its three year plan last year the council did not propose any inflationary increase to its council tax in 2018-19. We are planning to continue with this approach of not adding anything further for this to the council tax rate.

Do you support the proposal not to implement any additional inflationary increase in council tax above the adult social care precept of 2%?

Responses

48% of respondents support the proposal, and 36% stated that they do not support the proposal. The remaining did not answer/did not know.

6. **Last year the government said councils could add an additional charge for adult social care to support some of the most vulnerable residents in our borough. This could be an increase of up to 6% in council tax over the period 2017-2020.**

In our medium term financial plan we proposed that this should be implemented in the following way: 3% in 2017-18 (which was approved by the council) 2% in 2018-19 and 1% in 2019-20

The proposal for 2018-19 would raise approximately £1.8m and cost the average household 37p per week.

Do you support the 2% increase in council tax to support adult social care services?

Responses

More than half of respondents (54%) support a 2% increase in council tax to support adult social care services, and 34% of respondents said no to a 2% increase in council tax. The remaining did not answer/did not know.