

Your Council Your Say

2008/09
Budget consultation

Making a difference where you live



Durham County Council Budget Consultation 2008/09

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Foreword

This time last year we consulted with as many people as possible on our budget proposals. We found the process very useful and as a result of your comments, our thoughts changed and different decisions were made. The challenges for the County Council to consider increase each year, with potential changes to the structure of local government in County Durham and increasing requirements to deliver efficiencies and make savings. The County Council is the major provider of local authority services in County Durham – services which shape our County and affect the quality of life experienced by the people who live, work or visit here.

As a publicly accountable and democratically elected organisation, we again want to consult people in County Durham on our budget for 2008/09.

At this stage, this document contains only proposals and nothing is set in stone. Before we finalise the budget in February next year, we want to give you an early opportunity to comment on our initial suggestions and key issues, such as where we should invest, where we should cut back and what level of Council Tax increase we should set.

This document summarises the approach we are considering and provides detail on our initial investment and saving options.

Towards the end of the document, we pose a number of questions which you might like to consider to provide us with feedback. We also ask for your views on the priorities we should address in the budget and what level of Council Tax increase we should set next year.

Last year's consultation gave us a number of areas to think about and we were pleased with the level of response. As part of our drive to make the Council's decision-making more responsive, open and transparent, we welcome comments again from residents, businesses, community and voluntary organisations and our partner organisations. In addition, this year we would particularly welcome views from more children and young people, the voluntary and community sector and the County's business sector. We hope you will take this opportunity to help inform our budget decision making process and please let us know your views by 30 November 2007.

Cllr Albert Nugent
Leader of Durham County Council

Mark Lloyd
Chief Executive

November 2007

1.0 The Context

1.1 Haven't I seen this before?

Last year Durham County Council introduced a document like this to try to get views from as many individuals and organisations as possible, in order to help our Councillors decide how to focus spending on services and where to make savings and efficiencies.

We received 167 written responses to the consultation, along with a 2,300-signature petition and 220 completed priority score sheets. Responses came from individuals, associations or groups with a particular interest and a number of other Councils. Many of the written replies focused on one or two specific areas where savings were being proposed. A small number of respondents replied to the specific questions asked and some criticised the process.

Inevitably, much of the background information contained in this document is similar to that of last year, as it is designed to inform new readers about what the County Council does and how it goes about setting its budget.

1.2 What the County Council does

The County Council is an assembly of 63 county councillors, elected by people in County Durham to take decisions, represent their views and ensure that key services are delivered efficiently and effectively.

In many instances, the County Council is the 'statutory authority', the organisation responsible legally for planning and providing particular services which affect the public.

We provide many services direct to the public ourselves, but also 'commission' or hire other organisations to provide services on our behalf.

As an organisation, we have three main service groupings:

- **Adult and Community Services** – providing health and social care services for adults, cultural and leisure services such as libraries and museums and a range of community support services for particular groups of people and the wider community in County Durham.
- **Children and Young People's Services** – providing nursery, primary and secondary education for children and young people, transport to schools and colleges and youth services, education in the community, meeting children and young people's health and social care needs, supporting families, fostering and adoption, Child Protection and Building Schools for the Future (our redevelopment programme for secondary schools).
- **Environment** – looking after the environment of our countryside, towns and villages, controlling and planning development in the County, maintaining and developing the network of roads, cycle ways and footpaths, promoting and developing the use of public transport and disposing of household and commercial waste. Since last year this service has taken on responsibility for economic development and regeneration services.

In addition, we have three management and administrative support services and a commercial trading arm:

- Chief Executive's Office – providing corporate policy, strategy and research for the Council, human resources strategy and personnel services, public relations and management of major initiatives such as the Local Area Agreement and the County Durham Strategic Partnership.
- Corporate Services – providing legal and procurement services for the Council, managing the Council's property and assets, building design services, registration of births, deaths and marriages and democratic services such as support for councillors and the Council's various committees and decision-making bodies.
- County Treasurer – managing the Council's finances, audit and risk and providing specific financial services such as income and payments, payroll and pensions. During this year the service has taken responsibility for design and print, information and communications technology.
- Service Direct – providing highways and bridges maintenance and construction, street lighting, grounds maintenance, building maintenance and building specialist services, catering, cleaning, and vehicle management services for the Council on a contractual basis through open competition and procurement.

To give you an idea of the scale of services we provide and what we do, we:

Adult and Community Services

- help over 35,000 vulnerable people to remain independent in their own home
- care for more than 3,300 people in residential and nursing care
- provide more than 2.5 million hours of home care each year
- protect vulnerable adults from abuse and harm
- provide 39 static and 6 mobile libraries, loaning over 3.5 million library items each year
- provide free internet access in libraries
- run three museums – Binchester Roman Fort, DLI Museum and Art Gallery and Killhope Lead Mining Museum
- receive 3.6 million visits to libraries and attractions
- handle 840,000 information and advice enquiries annually
- raise £9.2 million in 2005/06 in social security benefits for the people of County Durham
- promote safer communities through partnership working

Services for Children and Young People

- improve the opportunities for all our children and young people
- educate almost 75,000 pupils in 292 schools
 - 12 nursery
 - 233 primary
 - 36 secondary
 - 10 special

- 1 Pupil Referral Unit
- provide learning opportunities from three years old
- work to improve levels of pupil attainment
- safeguard and promote the welfare of our children and young people
- protect children and young people from neglect and harm
- support families and prevent family breakdown
- act as 'corporate parent' to care for 'looked after' children

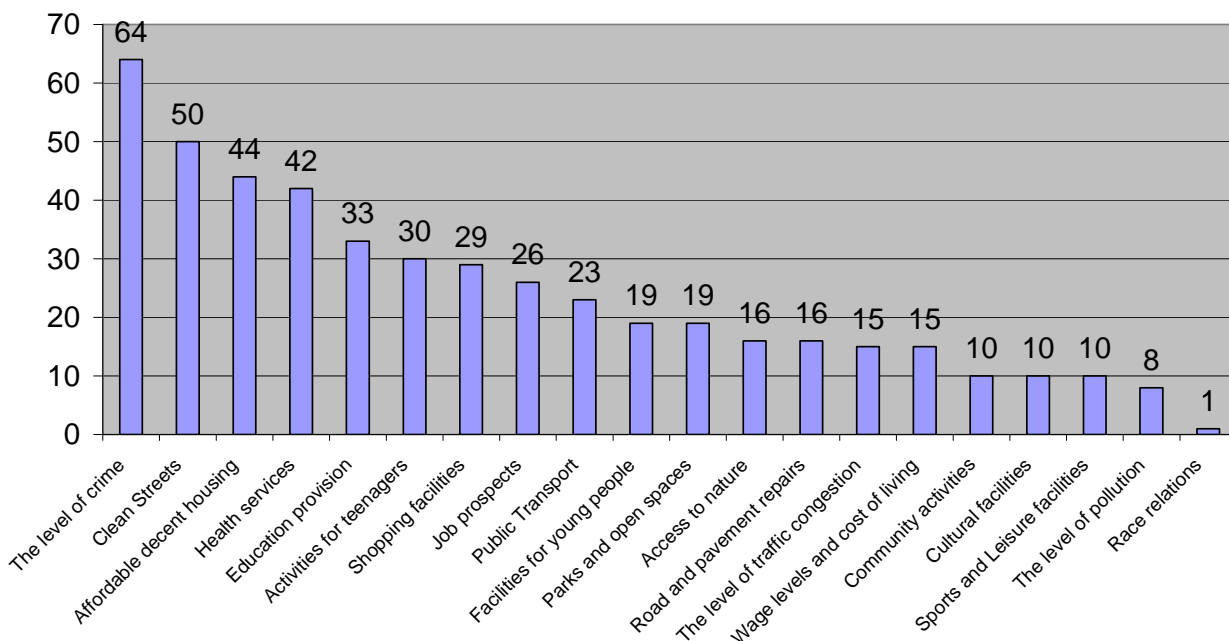
Environment

- maintain 3,699km (2,295 miles) of roads, 3,353km (2,144 miles) of footpaths and bridleways and 304km (189 miles) of railway paths and cycle ways
- improve the transport network and bus services
- maintain 83,000 streetlights and lit signs and 1,144 bridges
- handle 280,000 tonnes of waste annually of which 29% is recycled or composted
- safeguard the environment
- promote a safe and fair trading environment
- Assist businesses to create over 1,261 jobs (2005/06)
- Secure external funding to promote the local economy

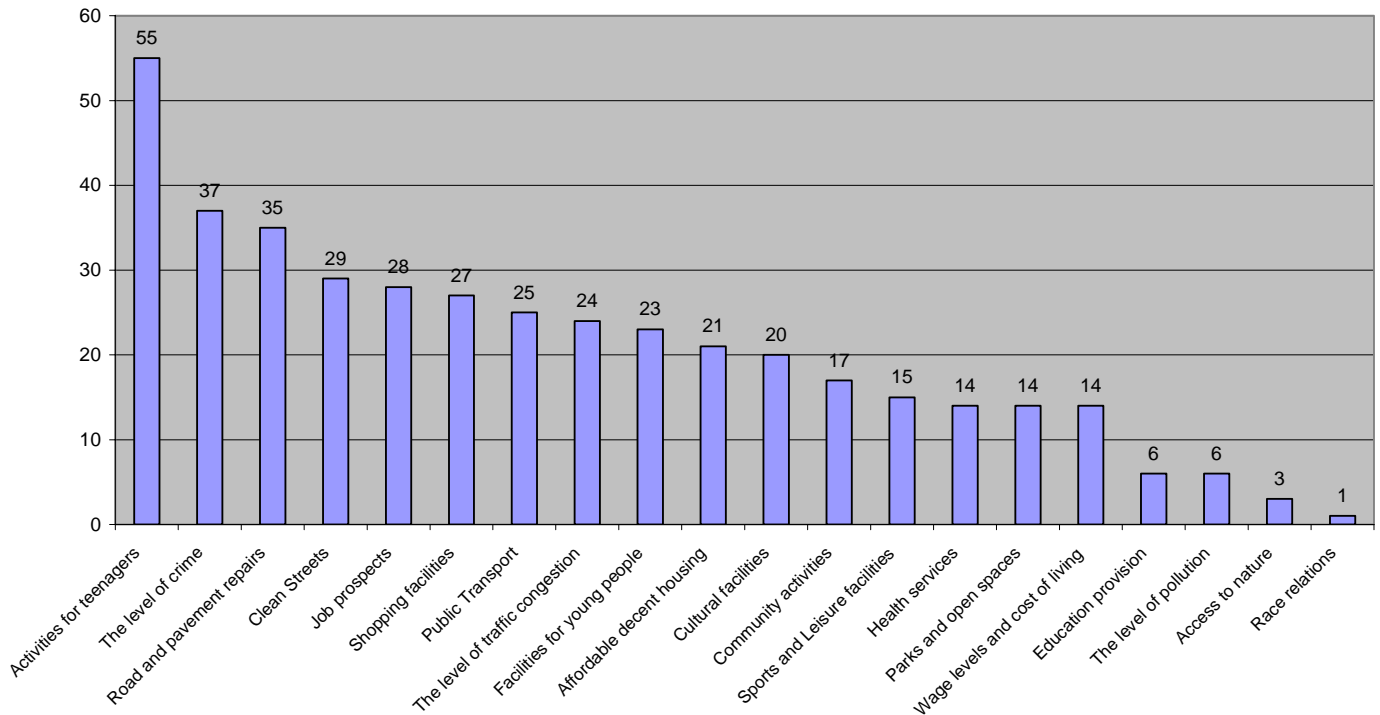
1.3 What people have told us

Every three years we conduct a residents' satisfaction survey to provide a view on satisfaction with council services. The 2006 survey was sent out to 6,000 residents and there were 2,936 responses, a 50% response rate. Respondents were asked to identify five things that make somewhere a good place to live, and similarly five things that they think need most improving. The results are shown below:

Thinking generally, which of the following would you say are most important in making somewhere a good place to live? (respondents could pick up to 5)



**Thinking about this local area, which of the following, if any, do you think most need improving?
(respondents could pick up to 5)**

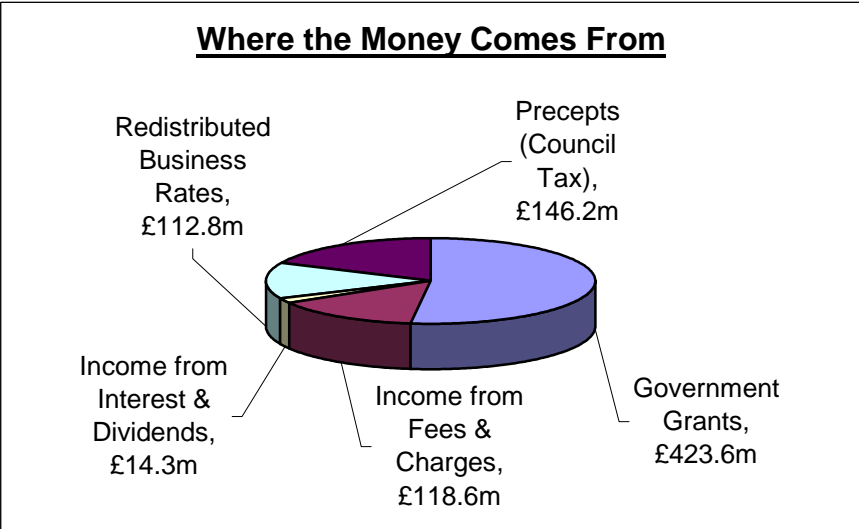
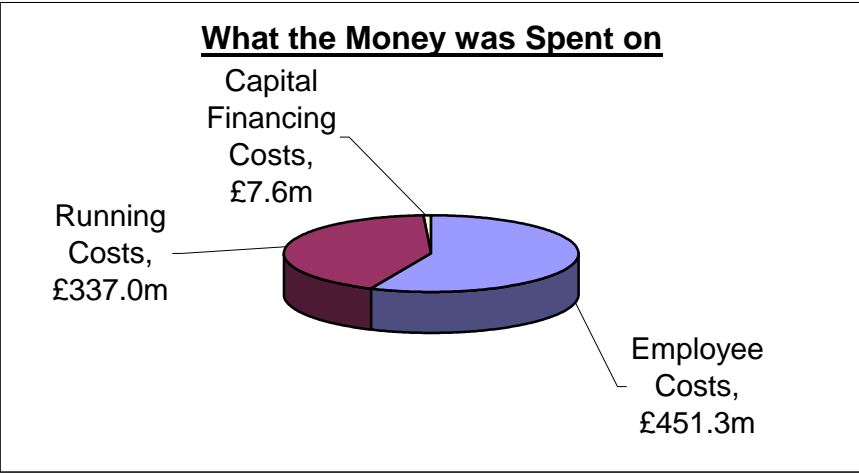
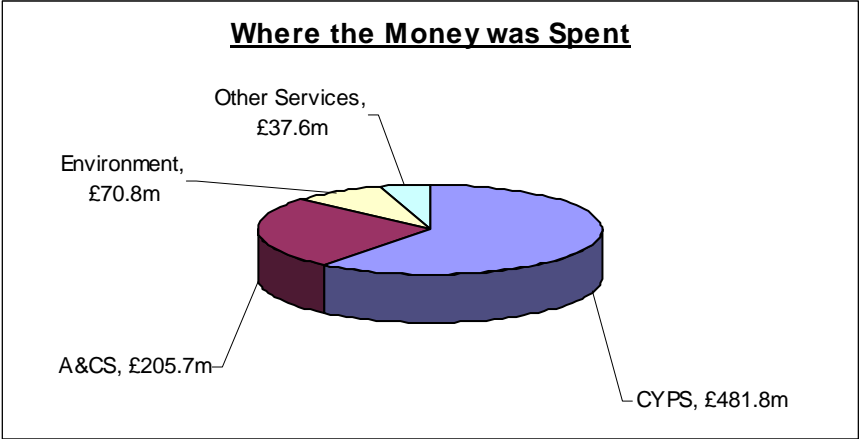


Residents were also asked their opinion of council services. Overall satisfaction with the Council was 48%. This represents a drop of four percentage points compared with the last survey in 2003, and compares with a national drop in satisfaction with councils of two percentage points over the same period.

1.4 Developing the budget

The budget sets out what services the Council is planning to provide, how much they will cost and how it intends to pay for them. It takes into account how much funding the Council will receive from the Government and other sources of income and identifies how much money the Council needs to raise from the Council Tax.

The pie-charts based on 2006/07 income and spend below, give you an idea of how we spend our money and where we get it from.



Budgets are prepared each year in the light of what the Council needs to do and the amount of funding available to us. To provide slightly longer term financial planning, the Council also prepares a three-year 'Medium Term Financial Plan' which helps to inform the development of the annual budget. Our current Medium Term Financial Plan covers 2007/08 to 2009/10.

1.5 The approach we take

In developing the budget for consultation this year, our starting point is our current budget and our budget strategy, which is to keep Council Tax increases as low as possible while taking into account:

- County Council priorities;
- demographic changes and inflationary pressures;
- efficiency targets and other efficiency savings;
- Government priorities and guidelines;
- the impact of proposals on service users and Council Tax payers.

We have set out a series of planning assumptions concerning:

- the level of priority the Council should give to different services;
- how much money we expect to receive from the Government and other sources;
- the impact inflation will have on our service costs;
- what we think is a reasonable level of Council Tax increase to start planning around.

We have prepared a 'base budget', which describes how much we think it will cost the Council next year to provide the same levels of service as this year.

In the light of these assumptions, we have identified areas in which we believe we need to invest or spend more to meet unavoidable pressures on services or to develop and improve services further.

To balance these investments, we have looked at how we can reduce costs through efficiency savings, increasing income and in some instances, cuts or reductions in service.

In all of our options, we strive to achieve greater 'value for money', ensuring that wherever possible we improve services whilst keeping costs as low as possible.

In the following pages we set out our assumptions, outline our suggestions for investment and detail how we could save money and reduce costs to better afford the investments we believe we need to make.

1.6 What we have achieved so far

In order to meet the Council's priorities and ambitions the budget process makes us focus on savings and the amount of Council Tax we need to balance the budget. Over a number of years we have tried to protect services and keep Council Tax down. Increases in Council Tax over the last 4 years have all been below the Government target of 5%, while we have delivered efficiency savings as measured under Government guidelines (Gershon Review) of £19.1m with a further £7.2m to come in 2007/08.

1.7 What we want from you

We need to know what you think about our initial budget options. The document should help you form a view on some of these issues we face. We have provided a series of questions that we would like you to comment on in Section 5, page 34. These questions are also available on line at www.durham.gov.uk. This will help us to collect your views, but we have also provided contact details on page 34 where you can write or email us on any issues you may wish to raise relating to this document.

2.0 Our planning assumptions

2.1 What we should prioritise

Improvement Priorities

Currently, the Council has six priority areas for improvement:

- **Protecting and supporting vulnerable children** – focus on children and young people staying safe and reducing the incidence of children at risk.
- **Improving educational attainment/achievement** – focus on achievement at Key Stage 4 (GCSE), attainment of children in care at KS4 and narrowing the gap between boys and girls.
- **Protecting/supporting vulnerable adults** – focus on preventative services for adults with learning disabilities and older people.
- **Improving health** – focus on outcomes where the Council has a direct influence, either as an employer or as a key partner working with others on the health improvement agenda.
- **Promoting economic well-being** – focus on improving economic activity in County Durham reflecting a combination of reducing the number of people claiming incapacity benefit, job creation and focus on the knowledge economy.
- **Quality of the Environment** – focus on waste management, footpaths, our contribution to the climate change agenda and public transport.

Areas for Additional Investment

We aim to improve each of the areas outlined above by managing our existing resources as effectively as possible. However, amongst these six areas, there are five which we believe are so important, that they merit additional investment to develop services further. These are:

- Vulnerable children and young people
- People with learning disabilities
- Older people to retain their independence
- The transport infrastructure and reducing the rate of decline in public transport.
- Building Schools for the Future

2.2 How much Council Tax we should charge

Last year we increased Council Tax by 2.9% for the financial year 2007/08. Taking into account general inflation and the financial pressures which the Council and people face, we are basing our initial suggestions for the budget on a Council Tax increase of 3.9%, which we have used as a planning guideline in our Medium Term Financial Plan and is below the 5% increase which the Government has previously indicated is reasonable.

A 1% increase on Council Tax generates just over £1.5 million, so the 3.9% increase proposed would provide us with around £5.9 million to contribute towards additional costs and any increases in investment.

The 3.9% increase is a planning assumption and we have yet to decide on the actual level to be charged.

2.3 How much money we expect to receive from Government

We are analysing the Comprehensive Spending Review from Government which shows the worst allocation of funding to local government for 10 years and are awaiting the final settlement of funding for local government (due December 2007). All indications are currently that local government will receive an increase in funding which is much lower than in recent years. Local Authorities are being asked to make annual efficiencies of 3% and their funding is likely to be reduced accordingly. Our planning assumption is that government funding for Durham County Council will increase by 2.5% in 2008/09, around £3.5m.

2.4 The impact of inflation and other assumptions

During the course of next year, we expect the Council's budget to have to cope with:

Price inflation	2.0%
Salary cost inflation	2.5%
Pensions contributions increase	4.8%

In addition, we expect the 'Dedicated Schools Grant', which is the money the Government gives us to spend exclusively on schools and pupils, to increase by between 3% and 4%.

2.5 Our base budget or starting point

In the current year, the County Council's 'budget requirement' is £293 million. This is the amount which is met from general Government grants and Council Tax.

The gross expenditure on services however, is around £950 million. The difference is accounted for by specific grants, including the Dedicated Schools Grant, and other income.

Taking into account existing levels of spending, commitments from decisions we have already made, Government directives and what we currently know about inflation and energy costs, we expect that it will cost us £12.299 million more to provide the same level of service in 2008/09 as in 2007/08.

3.0 Where we want to invest and spend more

We believe that we need to invest and spend more to improve key services, meet our legal obligations and to realise our ambitions and aspirations for County Durham.

In developing suggestions for investment or spending, we have taken into account:

- our legal responsibilities
- growth and changing patterns of demand from the most vulnerable people we need to support and help
- our overall priorities for improving and investing in services

Based on our initial suggestions, we are looking to invest or spend £6.916 million more on services next year. We have outlined our specific suggestions in Section 4.1.

3.1 Risk

In addition to the options we have developed so far, it is likely that we may need to spend more and invest in the following areas:

- Equal Pay and Job Evaluation – to meet the costs of equal pay claims and our programme to develop a fairer pay structure for the Council.
- Redundancies – to meet potential redundancy payments for staff arising from some of our savings options.
- Waste – the costs of waste disposal and the need to recycle is growing driven by UK and EU legislation. We currently believe this will impact after 2009/10.

It is possible that we will still be uncertain about what these areas might cost when we have to make the final decisions about the Budget. We will nevertheless make appropriate provision based on the latest information available at that time.

3.2 How we propose to afford what we want to spend

We have developed options for how we might afford our suggested investments and spending increases.

Taking into account what we expect to receive from Government and other sources, the 3.9% increase in Council Tax we have used as a planning assumption and our priorities for improving services, we have considered how we can:

- make savings and operate more efficiently;
- make more savings in our management and administrative support services, in order to afford spending increases and avoid cuts in our main 'front-line' services;
- maximise the use of grants and other sources of funding;
- reduce levels of service where we think the impact will not be that significant on the public.

Based on our initial calculation of our base budget and suggestions for investment, we are looking to make savings and reduce cost by £7.458 million next year. We have outlined our specific options in Section 4.2.

In addition we are proposing to use the Council's reserves to minimise the need for service reductions so we can continue to provide services. During 2006/07 we received a £10m one off dividend from our investment in Newcastle Airport and underspent on other areas by £5m. Consequently we believe it is prudent and fair to spend this money on delivering services to the people of County Durham during 2008/09. This spending of reserves in 2008/09 amounts to £3.9m, an increase of £1.3m over last year.

3.3 The impact of spending and savings options on the budget

Taking into account the assumptions we have made and our initial spending and savings options, the impact on the Council's budget for 2007/08 would be:

	Increase in available resources from 2007/08	£000	Calculation
A	Government grant increase	3,515	
B	3.9% Council Tax increase	5,875	
C	Use of reserves	1,326	
D	Other income	1,041	
E	Total increase in available resources	11,757	A + B + C + D
	Impact of spending and savings		
F	Increases in base budget	-12,299	
G	Net resources available	-542	E + F
H	Possible savings	7,458	
I	Total amount available for investment	6,916	G + H
J	Investment options	6,916	

This table assumes that all the potential savings in section 4.2 are achieved in full and that all the potential investments in section 4.1 are made. **Adjustments to either will clearly need to be balanced by changes elsewhere in our budget.**

4.0 Our investment and savings options

We must stress that at this stage these are very much preliminary ideas for consideration. When we have a stronger view of our budget proposals we will conduct separate and parallel consultation processes where they involve service and staffing reductions, in order to ensure fair procedures and legal requirements are met.

To help to assess the impact of each of the budget proposals, we have considered what effect they would have on the Council's improvement and investment priorities and our service performance.

This is shown in the tables below where the following abbreviations are used:

Improvement Priority

VA	Protecting and supporting vulnerable adults
EC	Promoting economic wellbeing
QE	Quality of the Environment
EA	Improving educational attainment
IH	Improving health
VC	Protecting and supporting vulnerable children

Areas for Additional Investment

VC	Vulnerable children and young people
PLD	People with learning disabilities
OP	Older people to retain their independence
TI	Transport infrastructure and reducing the rate of decline in public transport
BSF	Building Schools for the Future

Impact

I	Improves performance
M	Maintains current performance
U	Undermines performance

4.1 Summarised spending and investment options

Item	Title	Summary	2008-09 £	Improvement Priority	Areas for Additional Investment	Impact
Adult and Community Services						
1	Supporting people with learning disabilities	To meet the costs of supporting an increased number of people with learning disabilities.	1,200,000	VA	PLD	M
2	'Supporting People' loss of income	To cover the cost of services previously met by grants which have now changed.	550,000	VA	PLD/OP	M
3	Supporting older people (over 65) who care for people with learning disabilities	Providing support to older carers to help them to continue to support their adult children with a learning disability.	500,000	VA	PLD/OP	M
4	Ageing population - additional capacity	Increasing our capacity to provide care and support to enable growing numbers of older people to remain in their own homes.	850,000	VA	OP	I

Item	Title	Summary	2008-09 £	Improvement Priority	Areas for Additional Investment	Impact
5	Learning Disabilities - external care pressures	Increasing costs of caring for an ageing population of people with learning disabilities, alongside increasing need to provide placements for people either moving out of long stay, institutional establishments, being discharged from hospital or whose carers are over 65 and who are no longer able to care for them.	500,000	VA/EC	PLD	M
6	Supporting people with learning disabilities leaving school	Increasing costs of supporting people with learning disabilities who are leaving school. The trend is that the number will increase, as there has been a marked increase in the number of young people diagnosed as being autistic in the last five years.	450,000	VA	PLD/VC	M
7	Reduction in Grants	Compensating for reduced levels of Government Grants for maintaining clients in residential and nursing care.	250,000	VA	OP	M
8	Improving Day Services	The continuation of Day Service Improvements, which meets the individual and diverse needs of people with learning disabilities. The improvements help to meet the Government's 'Valuing People' Agenda and avoid the Council incurring significant capital costs in ensuring that our large older day centres meet Health and Safety requirements.	400,000	VA	PLD	I

Item	Title	Summary	2008-09 £	Improvement Priority	Areas for Additional Investment	Impact
Children and Young People's Service						
9	Direct Payments	To meet the costs of increasing demand for statutory payments to parents who choose to support children with disabilities at home.	80,000	VC	VC	I
10	Transport for Looked After Children to contact visits and school	To meet increased demand for transport for children in care, associated with court orders which require transport to parental visits and school.	40,000	VC	VC	I
11	University Allowances	To meet the increasing demand for the Council to assist children in care to attend university.	30,000	VC	VC	I
12	National Minimum Fostering Allowance	The additional cost of increasing the level of payments paid to foster carers, in line with the Government's proposed minimum levels.	210,000	VC	VC	I

Item	Title	Summary	2008-09 £	Improvement Priority	Areas for Additional Investment	Impact
13	Criminal Records Bureau checks	The additional cost of implementing three yearly 'police checks' on people who have access to children, in line with latest guidance.	20,000	VC	VC	I
14	Building Schools for the Future	Costs of the support team developing the programme to rebuild/redevelop all secondary schools in the County.	176,000	EA	BSF	I
Environment						
15	Inflation in highways maintenance and civil engineering costs	Supplementing the highways maintenance budget, to cope with increasing levels of inflation, which have seen the costs of civil engineering works increase by 31% over the last five years.	386,360	QE/EC	TI	M
16	Minerals and Waste Development Frameworks	Meeting the costs of our statutory requirement to update the Development Plan for Minerals and Waste and hold an Examination of Development Plan documents, in line with Best Value, Government Office and Planning Inspectorate requirements.	130,000	QE/EC	-	M

Item	Title	Summary	2008-09 £	Improvement Priority	Areas for Additional Investment	Impact
17	Public Transport Inflation	Additional increase in bus operator costs	143,750	QE/EC	TI	M
18	Landfill Tax	Cost of increases in the tax levied on putting waste in landfill sites	1,000,000	-	-	M
TOTAL INVESTMENT AND INCREASES IN SPENDING			6,916,110			

4.2 Summarised options for savings, efficiency gains, income and service reductions

Item	Name	Summary	2008-09 £	Impact
Adult and Community Services				
1	In-House Home Care Service	Review of staffing levels to take account of lower levels of current demand.	183,000	M
2	Respite Care eligibility criteria	Ensuring access to respite care on the basis of assessment and annual allocation linked to need.	25,000	M
3	Consistent application of eligibility criteria - Older People	Continued review of clients' needs and provision against published criteria for services.	185,000	M
4	Home Care – shopping	Using internet shopping service for home care clients rather than staff visiting shops.	50,000	M
5	Supported Housing - review of staffing and support	Ensuring that clients are empowered and are able to maximise their independence and where they are, reducing staffing support accordingly.	200,000	M
6	Service Level Agreements (Learning Disabilities Commissioning)	Review of all service level agreements with organisations who commission support for people with learning disabilities to evaluate relevance, usage and value for money	100,000	M
7	Service Level Agreements (Mental Health Commissioning)	Review of all service level agreements with organisations who provide support to people with Mental Health needs to evaluate relevance, usage and value for money	75,000	M

Item	Name	Summary	2008-09 £	Impact
8	Service Level Agreements (Learning Disabilities In-house Provider)	Review of supplementary service level agreements within in-house provider services to evaluate relevance, usage and value for money	40,000	M
9	Independent sector day care	Savings made by regulating the fees charged by independent providers of day care services.	50,000	M
10	Physical Disabilities care	Savings made by regulating the fees charged by independent providers of care services.	10,000	M
11	Learning Disabilities residential care	Savings made by regulating the fees charged by independent providers of residential care services.	25,000	M
12	Handyperson Service Level Agreement	Reduction in services provided through the Home Improvement Agency and Handyperson Services, following a review by the Supporting People Partnership. Assumes a 20% saving from 2007/08.	40,000	M
13	Integrated health, housing and social care teams	Review of management and support costs - assumes saving of contribution to Sedgefield Head of Integration post.	30,000	M
14	Learning Disability Statutory Responsibilities	Consistent application of eligibility criteria to ensure the County Council adheres to and can maintain its statutory responsibilities for people with high level needs.	200,000	M
15	Learning Disability - Care Package Review	Pro-active review of individual clients needs on a regular basis	500,000	M
16	Extending Hired Transport Review (within our remit)	Encouraging independent travel has allowed transport contracts to be renegotiated/terminated	60,000	M

Item	Name	Summary	2008-09 £	Impact
17	Shift from Residential to Domiciliary services	Increased use of domiciliary services in preference to residential care.	42,000	I
18	Coming Home	Project to bring Learning Disabilities clients back to County Durham from care facilities outside the County when appropriate.	100,000	I
19	Mental Health Day Service Provider	Review of in-house provision	50,000	M
20	Section 117 Aftercare (Learning Disabilities)	Ensuring application of charging for people discharged for S117 orders.	30,000	M
21	In-house Provider Efficiency Savings	Reducing car allowance/travelling and reducing Equipment/Furniture/Materials	170,000	M
22	Purchase of Nursing Care	Continued reduction in purchase of nursing care. Assumes reduction of five beds.	82,000	I
23	Welfare Rights - Publications and general office expenses	This will include a switch to free rather than purchased materials.	15,000	M
24	Review of Research Support Services	Potential savings based upon current Service restructure.	6,000	U
25	Social Inclusion Staffing	Review of staffing as part of Service restructure process.	42,000	U
26	Planning and Performance Services Budget	Budget used for specialist training – budget cut.	10,000	U

Item	Name	Summary	2008-09 £	Impact
27	Inter Sector Training Allocation	Reduction in respect of direct costs for training – remaining infrastructure will support strategic development of training programme and attracting inward involvement	51,000	M
28	Training Budget	Cut in training provision to reflect changes in staffing levels.	36,000	U
29	Planning and Performance Staff Reduction	Savings achieved from restructuring.	20,000	M
30	Finance and Business Support Staff	Efficiency savings generated from Service restructure	160,000	M
31	Additional income from Reassessments	Income generated from Invest to Save posts	100,000	M
32	Reduction in budget for General Office Expenses	Reductions in spend – little impact	50,000	M
33	Reduction in budget for telephones	Reductions in spend – little impact	50,000	M
34	Charge developers for Archaeological services	Introduce charge for Archaeology services.	12,000	M
35	DLI Museum and Durham Art Gallery -Review operation of Durham Art Gallery.	Durham Art Gallery to be operated differently. Total review of DLI staffing structure required. May affect accreditation.	35,000	U
36	Marketing – Review service as a result of restructure and improve income generation	Review a number of functions in this section and improve income generation.	14,000	M

Item	Name	Summary	2008-09 £	Impact
37	Information and Community Development.	Review structure, reduce service.	30,000	U
38	CREATE	Review service delivery and serve more user groups, generating income where possible. If income cannot be improved the team may lose posts.	13,000	U
39	Pontop Centre	Removal of set up costs allowed for initial year of day service improvements in Derwentside	160,000	M
Children and Young People's Service				
40	Early Years	Funds previously used on an Early Years database are no longer required	17,300	M
41	SureStart	Specific grant is to be used to meet Support Services costs and accommodation costs	96,000	M
42	Early Years	Foundation Teaching Early Years providers to be met from grant	91,530	M
43	Redundancy costs	Costs associated with school staff redundancy payments to be met from Dedicated Schools Grant	100,000	M
44	Transport	Fewer pupils in schools should reduce transport costs.	55,000	M
45	Integrated Transport Unit	More efficient transport management for pupils and students.	30,000	M
46	Inflation	Cash limit grant funded projects	5,040	M
47	Revenue budget contribution	Reduced contribution to Education and Business Learning Organisation and Continuing Professional Development Infrastructure.	51,640	M
48	Post-16 Transport	Revised post-16 transport policy from September 2006	500,000	M
49	Community Buildings	Removal of resources added as a one year fund in 2007/08	250,000	M

Item	Name	Summary	2008-09 £	Impact
50	Service Management Structure and support functions	More efficient Service Management Structure and support functions	97,150	M
51	Supplies and Services	Reduced spend on Supplies and Services	59,800	M
52	Curriculum Initiatives	Removal of budget as initiatives have ended	49,000	M
53	Secondary School Examination Performance	Provide improvement funding via grant	200,000	M
54	Payment for Skills budget	Reduced demand on Payment for Skills budget	40,000	M
55	Day Nursery Provision	Alternate arrangements for Day Nursery Provision	64,600	M
56	Day Care and Child Minding Provision	Reduced demand on Day Care and Child Minding	50,000	M
57	Staff turnover	Reduced spend due to staff turnover and vacancies	41,880	M
58	Adoption – “Invest to Save”	Savings from alternative provision	350,000	M
59	Woodham prevention of exclusion service to DSG spell out	Woodham prevention of exclusion service funded via grant	22,000	M
60	Investing in Children	Income generation	10,000	M
61	Youth Engagement Service	Rationalised support services	10,000	M
62	Grants	Remove small grants budget	3,300	M
63	Youth Engagement Service	Provision for software costs – no longer required	12,000	M

Item	Name	Summary	2008-09 £	Impact
Environment				
64	Landfill Tax	Landfill tax savings arising from increased rates of recycling.	150,000	M
65	Rechargeable works	Increase in income from rechargeable works undertaken on behalf of developers and from statutory undertakings	77,400	M
66	Parking charges	Increased income from parking charges and enforcement of parking restrictions in Durham District	60,000	M
67	Travelling Expenses	Reduction in car mileage	8,850	M
68	Supplies and Services	General efficiency measures	21,500	M
69	Bus Service data monitoring	Improved performance monitoring through introduction of Electronic Ticket Machine (ETM) technology	7,500	M
70	Community Highways Workers	Withdrawal of current service provision	76,000	U
71	Surface Dressing Road Markings	After surface dressing work has been carried out, charge the road marking recovery work to the Capital budget	105,000	U
72	Grass Cutting on Highway Verges	Reduction in the frequency of the grass cutting programme	100,000	U
73	Weed Spraying	Reduction in the extent of the programme	85,000	U
74	Winter Maintenance	Reduction in the number of pre salting routes carried out – exact routes to be determined	200,000	U
75	Street Lighting – painting programme	Reduction in the frequency of street lighting column painting	70,000	U
76	Street Lighting Improvement Programme	Reduction in the programme of street lighting column replacements, improvements and meeting requests	62,000	U
77	Street Lighting	Reduction in street lighting Column Testing Programme	10,000	U

Item	Name	Summary	2008-09 £	Impact
78	School Crossing Patrols	Deletion of existing unfilled posts and service rationalisation	26,500	M
79	Road Safety Information and Publicity	A cut in the service currently provided would be partially offset through redirection of funds from the Specific Road Safety Grant	40,000	M
80	Salaries and Wages	Various staff related restructuring proposals	91,000	M
81	Countryside Service – Sites, Rangers and Ecology	Reduction in works programmes	11,000	U
82	Hardwick Park	Reduction in running costs	6,000	M
83	Countryside Service - Access and Rights of Way	Reduction in Works Programmes	10,000	U
84	Community Forest Project	Removal of financial contribution	21,750	M
85	Trading Standards Service	Reduction in Food Sampling programme	45,000	U
86	Economic Development and Regeneration	Reduction in Supplies and Services budget.	2,000	M

Item	Name	Summary	2008-09 £	Impact
	Chief Executive's Office			
87	Change Programme	Reduction in the Change Programme budget	34,000	M
88	Business Support Division	Rationalisation of staffing.	46,000	M
89	Human Resources	Reduction in travelling expenses and supplies and services.	34,000	M
90	Human Resources	Increased income from Service Level Agreements with outside organisations.	13,500	M
Corporate Services				
91	Staffing	Rationalisation of staffing	59,500	M
92	Legal Services	Increase charges for external work above the rate of inflation.	15,000	M
93	Corporate & Democratic Services	Increase charges for external work above the rate of inflation and additional income generation.	33,500	M
94	Estates	No longer a requirement for the condition survey budget.	88,000	M
95	Estates	Increase income from disposal and capital fees.	32,000	M

Item	Name	Summary	2008-09 £	Impact
96	Estates	Reduce the amount to be spent on repairs and maintenance.	100,000	U
97	Estates	Reduction in supplies and services.	4,500	M
98	Corporate Procurement	Increased income from Service Level Agreements with outside organisations.	3,000	M
99	Registration Service	Increase in non statutory fees above the rate of inflation.	7,000	M
County Treasurer				
100	Staffing	Rationalisation of staffing due to system changes	108,000	M
101	Supplies and Services	Reduction in recruitment of staff budget	25,000	M
102	Customer Services	Reduction in call charges following conversion of sites to VOIP (voice over internet provision).	27,000	M
103	Customer Services	Reduction in ICT maintenance contract which is possible due to recent replacement of PC's and servers.	50,000	M
104	Customer Services	Saving in energy costs due to introduction of new PC's.	73,000	M
105	Customer Services	Rationalisation of staffing.	59,000	M
106	Customer Services	Durham Net – DCC's share of trading surplus on network provider jointly owned with Derwentside District Council.	103,000	M
	Total Savings		7,458,740	

4.3 Additional “one off” investment proposals for 2007/08

These are the one off investment proposals which are under consideration, in the light of the anticipated underspend in our budget for the current year.

Proposal 1

Adult and Community Services

£100,000

Prevention of domestic abuse

Proposed that funding be allocated to support:

- Raising Members' awareness of domestic abuse issues
- Reviewing training opportunities for staff
- Reviewing the effectiveness of publicity materials
- Research about domestic abuse in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Groups and Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities
- Assess the need for perpetrator programmes for women and members of the LGBT community

The proposal is to allocate funding on a ‘one off ‘ basis to purchase training, awareness raising campaigns, research and supporting the development of specialist perpetrator programmes.

Proposal 2

Environment

£40,000

Additional funding for the Parish Paths Partnership.

The Parish Paths Partnership has been running for 15 years, and has been highly successful in involving local communities in the management and improvement of their local public rights of way.

A set of practical guidelines to the Parish Paths Partnership is currently in production, offering practical advice to Parish and Town Councils and community groups on achieving value for money and cost-effective management of paths, including finding other sources of funding. The costs of printing and distributing these guidelines will be **£3,500**.

The Parish Paths Partnership is over-subscribed, and its current budget allocation of £41,000 a year is insufficient. Additional funding of **£36,500** during 2007/08 would enable a much wider range of projects to be undertaken by Parish and Town Councils and community groups across the County, offering excellent value for money and strengthening the relationship with this tier of local government.

Proposal 3

Environment
£50,000

Legal Costs.

It is very likely that during 2007/08 the Authority will face significant and unavoidable legal costs for specialist research, expert advice and legal representation at Public Inquiries. Where the Authority has made a Committee or delegated decision to make a legal Order to modify the Definitive Map, or to divert, extinguish or create a public right of way, there is a duty to present that Order professionally and in full at any Public Inquiry that may result. Some of these cases are extremely complex, and the landowners often have the resources to employ top legal representatives.

Proposal 4

Environment
£80,000

Lime Kiln Gill Improvements/Heritage Coast Support

- Lime Kiln Gill Improvements - The creation of a car park at beach level in Lime Kiln Gill, Horden, to improve access to beach level for older people and those with disabilities and to minimise car break-ins and thefts by ensuring greater visibility of cars parked at beach level to visitors on the foreshore.
- Heritage Coast Support - To maintain the momentum for improvements along the coast that increase the quality of life for residents and develop the tourism potential additional resources are required.

Proposal 5

Children & Young People's Service
£20,000

Academic Mentoring

The Mentoring programme for Looked After Children is delivered in partnership with the University of Durham, Collingwood College. The scheme was established in 2003 and is managed by a Steering Group made up of Officers from Children and Young People's Services, an Elected Member and the Principal and Vice Principal of Collingwood College.

The scheme provides one to one support for looked after children aged between 10-18 years from October through to the end of April. The mentor and mentee meet on a fortnightly basis and undertake activities that are of mutual interest. Some mentors will also provide academic support to help the young person with their school / college work.

The mentoring relationship provides the young person with an opportunity to build a relationship with another young person involved in higher education and to undertake new experiences that promote their personal and social development.

The Scheme has been subject to an external evaluation together with annual feedback from participants. Conclusions stated that the Scheme contributes to the overall personal development of the young person and provides an opportunity for looked after children to build a trusting relationship with another young person who is not part of their care planning team and also presents as a positive role model.

Students from the University are recruited in May and undertake a comprehensive training programme before they are matched with a mentee. They are also subject to an Enhanced CRB check and references.

During 2006/07 there were 42 successful mentoring relationships.

Although interest in the Scheme continues to grow, particularly with younger children aged 11 years and above, continued development is limited by financial constraints. The additional funding of £20,000 will provide financial support for 30 additional mentoring relationships.

Proposal 6

Children & Young People's Service
£60,000

Priorities for Post 16 Learning

To develop procedures/strategies for identification of priorities for improving Post 16 curriculum and teaching and learning. The additional funding will enable a contract of prioritised support to schools which will mirror the current Key Stage 4 (Secondary) Beyond Expectations Team.

Proposal 7

Children & Young People's Service
£30,000

IT Impact Centres

Impact is a key Stage 4 alternative education programme for 180 young people. The programme is delivered across seven centres across the County, many of which are community-based buildings.

The young people attending Impact currently have the opportunity to study 6.5 GCSE equivalent courses, increasing to a minimum of 9.5 GCSEs from September. The young people attending the programme are referred by their school and span the full ability range.

Currently, six of the seven centres do not have access to a network of computers with Internet access. The young people rely on lap top computers for IT work within specific lessons only and travel to libraries and other public amenities if they need to research work on the Internet. Many of the young people do not have access to a PC at home and therefore depend on their time within education to use office type computer packages.

The lack of ICT provision is undoubtedly having a limiting effect on the ability of the young people to gain the skills required to be competent in computer use, but also to use the internet as a tool to enrich their studies rather than play games.

Impact has the opportunity to get involved in further curriculum developments which are to be piloted from September 2007 including E learning and web based curriculum tests such as ALAN (Adult Literacy and Numeracy) and Key Skills. However this will be problematic unless we can ensure access to high quality ICT resources.

The long term plan to increase ICT facilities for Impact involves establishing fully equipped IT suites in three Impact bases, the locations of which will allow for easy access by all Impact centres:

- New Murton Nursery base to serve the centres in the East
- E Café Ferryhill to serve the mid and south west Durham centres
- Stanley to serve the two Stanley centres

The decision to develop suites in accessible geographical areas rather than within each centre will ensure that financial resources can be used to equip them to a higher standard. The suites will provide:

- 10-15 networked computers with printers
- Broadband access to the Internet

The Murton base will be established as a Centre of Excellence as it provides the highest standard of facilities used by Impact. In order to maximise the use of this centre it will also be used as a venue to deliver out of hours education programmes to groups of young people including looked after children.

Proposal 8

Children & Young People's Service
£50,000

E Learning Pilot

To identify a cohort of young people across the Local Authority who are at risk of not achieving their expected Key Stage 4 (secondary examination age) outcomes for a variety of social and health reasons and to provide on line teaching and qualifications to supplement the excellent current provision by broadening the curriculum offer.

5.0 Providing us with your views

In order to give us time to consider your comments before we make our final budget decisions early next year, we need to know what you think by **Friday, 30 November 2007**.

We have split the questions we are asking into a number of areas. We would ask that you try and answer all the questions in areas 5.1 to 5.4. These questions are available on line at www.durham.gov.uk and we would prefer you to respond in that way although we are happy to accept your responses in writing or by email as well.

In addition you are welcome to comment on any aspect of our budget consultation process by writing to:

County Treasurer
Durham County Council
County Hall
Durham
DH1 5UE

e-mail: treasurers@durham.gov.uk

5.1 The following questions help us to analyse responses:

	Yes	No
About You		
Do you Live in County Durham?		
Are you responsible or partly responsible for the Council Tax in your household?		
Are you a Business Rate Payer		
Are you aged below 25?		
Are you aged between 25 and 60?		
Are you aged over 60?		

		Yes	No
About Our Services			
Do you or your household use any of the following services?	Museums and Cultural Events		
	Libraries		
	Social Work for older people and those with physical disability		
	Residential and nursing care for older people and those with physical and or learning disabilities		

		Yes	No
About Our Services			
Do you or your household use any of the following services?	Home care for older people and those with physical disability		
	Respite care for older people and those with physical and or learning disabilities		
	Day Care for older people and those with physical and or learning disabilities		
	Residential Care		
	Fostering and Adoption		
	Services to children with disability		
	Preventative and family support services		
	Home to School and College transport		
	Community Associations		
	Schools		
	Youth Services		
	Public Transport		
	Countryside – Country Park and Picnic Sites, rights of way, cycleways and bridleways		
Do you think Durham County Council is a well managed Council?			
Do you think Durham County Council Makes good use of its resources?			
Do you find consultation exercises like this useful?			

5.2

The following questions are a guide to help you to develop your response to “Have Your Say”

	Yes	No
Section 2.1 Page 12 – Do you agree that we have chosen the right improvement priorities as below? If not, please let us know your thoughts and why you do not agree. Please tick		
Protecting and Supporting Vulnerable Children		
Improving Educational Attainment/Achievement		
Protecting/Supporting Vulnerable Adults		
Improving Health		
Promoting Economic Wellbeing		
Quality of the Environment		

Thoughts		
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	Yes	No
Section 2.1 Page 13 – Do you agree that we have chosen the right areas for additional investment? If not, please let us know your thoughts and why you do not agree.		
Vulnerable Children and Young People		
People with Learning Disabilities		
Older People to Retain their independence		
A transport infrastructure and reducing the rate of decline in public transport		
Building Schools for the Future		
Thoughts		

Section 4.1 Page 15 – Do you agree with our suggested areas for specific investment? If not, please let us know your thoughts and why you do not agree.		
Thoughts		
Section 4.2 Page 20 – Do you agree with our suggested areas for making savings? If not, please let us know your thoughts and why you do not agree.		
Thoughts		
Section 4.3 Page 30 – Do you think that the proposals for one off investment should be implemented now, in future years or not at all? (a form is provided to respond to this question)		
Thoughts		
Section 2.2 Page 1 – Do you think that the proposed Council Tax increase is reasonable?		

If you have answered "No" to the last question would you complete the following two questions

	Higher	Lower
If "No" do you think Council Tax should be higher or lower than 3.9%		
Where do you think we should make additional savings or spend additional resources?		
Answer		

5.3 From the following list of our key services, please indicate how important each of the services is to you by ticking the appropriate box

Service	Very important	Important	Less Important	Not important	Don't know
Adults and Community Services – Budget £205m					
Museums and Cultural Events					
Libraries					
Services for older people and those with physical disability including:-					
Residential and nursing care for older people and those with physical and or learning disabilities					
Home care for older people and those with physical disability					
Respite care for older people and those with physical and or learning disabilities					
Welfare Rights					
Community Safety					
Community Support					
Day Care for older people and those with physical and or learning disabilities					
Children's' & Young People's Services – Budget £205m (excluding schools)					
Residential Care					
Fostering and Adoption					
School Improvement (tests and exams)					
Services to children with disability					
Preventative and family support services					
Home to School and College transport					
Support to Community Associations					
Youth Services					
Environment Services– Budget £71m					
Highways and Footpath maintenance					
Street Lighting					
Public Transport					
Traffic Management - accident investigation and prevention, Road Safety and Safer Routes to Schools					
Countryside – Country Park and Picnic Site maintenance. Rights of Way, cycleway and bridleway maintenance					
Waste Disposal					
Trading Standards					
Economic Development and Regeneration					

5.4

Do you think that the proposals for one off investment should be implemented now, in future years or not at all? (For details see section 4.3)

Proposal	Description	Value £	Now	Future	Not at all
1	Prevention of domestic abuse	100,000			
2	Funding for parish paths partnership	40,000			
3	Legal Costs	50,000			
4	Heritage Coast	80,000			
5	Academic Monitoring	20,000			
6	Post 16 Learning	60,000			
7	IT Impact Centres	30,000			
8	E Learning Pilot	50,000			

6.0 Glossary of terms

Base budget	The base budget is the previous year's budget increased for inflation and adjusted for existing commitments – inescapable, contractual or statutory obligations – and known reductions or savings.
BREEAM	Building Research Establishment Environmental Method is an assessment of the sustainable credentials of new buildings. .
Budget Requirement	The approved expenditure of the County Council, net of estimated income and use of reserves, to be met from Revenue Support Grant, re-distributed Business rates and council tax.
Building Schools for the Future	A Department for Education and Skills capital programme which aims to rebuild or renew every secondary school in England over a 10-15 year period.
Capital Programme	Our plan of future spending on capital projects such as buying land, buildings, vehicles and equipment.
Collection Fund	A fund managed by each district council, separately from its own accounts to receive Business Rates income and Council Tax income.
'Coming Home'	An initiative to accommodate adults with learning disabilities who are currently in placements outside of County Durham in placements within the County.
Community Placement Officers	Officers working within learning disabilities day services locating clients in appropriate placements within the community.
CPA – Comprehensive Performance Assessment	A process used by the Audit Commission to assess how well authorities are performing.
Corporate and Democratic Core	The costs of activities in which a local authority engages because they are elected multi-purpose authorities including all aspects of members' activities, as well as the provision of information for public accountability.
Council Tax	A tax charged on domestic householders based on their property band.
County Durham Development Company	A Company wholly owned by the County Council to promote, encourage and secure economic development in the County.

County Durham Strategic Partnership	The local strategic partnership for County Durham, which brings organisations from the public, private, community and voluntary sectors organisations together to identify what needs to be done to improve quality of life in an area and to coordinate efforts between different organisations to do so.
CREATE	Is a mobile service which carries out recreational and activity programmes developed to help keep older people and people with a disability mentally and physically active. CREATE is an abbreviation of the activities carried out: Craft and art, Reminiscence, Exhibitions, Activities, Training, Exercise.
Day Service Improvement Model	Re-provision of day care services for adults with learning disabilities in the community in response to 'Valuing People'.
Dedicated Schools Grant	A Department for Children, Schools and Families (Central Government) specific ring fenced grant which provides funding for schools and other services for pupils managed by the Local Authority.
DCSF	Department for Children, Schools and Families, a Central Government Department
Direct Payments	Payments to clients or their guardians, with an assessed need, who have exercised their right to make their own care arrangements.
Driver Improvement Scheme	A training scheme, operated in partnership with the Police, for drivers with minor driving offences. The scheme is paid for by the drivers and offers them an alternative to the Court process.
Durham Learning Resources	A specialist library and museums service for schools in County Durham and Darlington.
Efficiency Targets	The Government requires the County Council to achieve a cumulative efficiency target measured in cash terms, of 2.5% per annum of its revenue budget over the years 2005/06 to 2007/08. At least 50% of this total must relate to cashable efficiency gains.
Enterprise Resource Planning System	An Enterprise Resource Planning System is an integrated business wide information system covering all financial, payroll and human resources processes with a clear integration into Customer Relationship Management.
Fair Access to Service criteria	Guidance from the Department of Health to local authorities on eligibility criteria for adult social care services, based upon evaluation of individuals; assessed needs and likely risks.

‘Fair Cost of Care’	A methodology agreed between the County Council and care home providers for identifying fees which give residential and nursing care home providers a fair return.
Fines Park	Formerly a County Council residential home for adults with learning disabilities latterly used as an office base for in-house learning disabilities services management staff.
Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy Service	Advocacy service to provide independent advice to mentally impaired, incapacitated service users specified by the statutory guidance to the Mental Capacity Act.
Job Evaluation	The method the Council is using to review its pay structures to ensure that staff receive equal pay for work of equal value.
Local Area Agreement	An agreement between central Government and key partners in a local area, which allows local partners to decide how central Government funding should be spent in an area, to address local service improvement priorities.
Looked After Children	Young people who are either living in Children's Homes, in foster care, or at home subject to a care order.
Medium Term Financial Plan	Our three year plan for spending on the day to day running of services and our assumptions of likely resources available.
Mineral and Waste Development Frameworks	A set of planning documents which have to be produced by Planning Authorities as a requirement under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act.
Preventative Support	Services to support vulnerable adults at home and delay or prevent admissions to hospital or residential/nursing care.
Reserves	Sums set aside with the agreement of the Auditor to finance future spending for purposes falling outside the definition of a 'provision'. Reserves set aside for stated purposes are referred to as 'earmarked reserves'.
Sensory impairments	Hearing or sight problems.
Service Level Agreement	A type of contract between a contractor and a service provider. It details what services are to be provided and to what quality level.
Substance Misuse	Service for dealing with clients abusing drugs, alcohol or other volatile substances (e.g. solvents).
Supporting People	Funding stream provided by the central government Department for Local Government and Communities for housing related support services for vulnerable people.

Urban and Rural Renaissance	The Urban and Rural Renaissance programme is a programme of measures to regenerate and revitalise the centres of many of the County's towns and villages through physical improvements to the public realm and streetscape.
Valuing People Agenda	Government White Paper designed to improve support for people with learning disabilities and their families.
Walking Routes to School	Where a walking route to the nearest school is designated unsafe the Local Authority assesses what, if any, measures need to be put in place to provide a safe walking route, or provides free travel.
WorkAble Solutions	A service to assist adults with disabilities to find paid employment and provide ongoing support to help them remain in employment.

If you need this information summarised in another language or format such as Braille or talking tape, please call the number below.

إذا اردت معرفت ملخص هذه المعلومات باللغة العربية اتصل علي الرقم التالي
Arabic

আকারে এই তথ্যটি পেতে নিচের নম্বরে ফোন করুন:
Bengali


假如您需要這份資料的中文摘要，請致電下面的號碼。
Chinese

यदि आप यह जानकारी का संक्षेप हिन्दी में चाहते हैं, तो कृपया निचे दिए हुए नम्बर में सम्पर्क करें।
Hindi

Jezeli potrzebujesz streszczenia tych informacji w jezyku polskim zadzwon prosze na ponizszy numer
Polish

ਜਾਂ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹੁ ਖ਼ਬਰ ਦਾ ਨਿਚੋੜ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਥੱਲੇ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਹੋਏ ਨੰਬਰ ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।
Punjabi

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات اردو میں درکار ہیں تو اس نمبر پر کال کیجیے۔
Urdu

 (0191) 383 3520