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## Appendix 4 – Consultation Feedback

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### **Budget consultation Phase One - Equalities Assessment**

Around 80% of overall questionnaire respondents provided equality monitoring information as set out in the tables below:

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Male	105	53%
Female	93	47%
Prefer to self-describe	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>Age</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Under 18	0	0%
18-24	1	0.5%
25-34	22	10.9%
35-44	33	16.4%
45-54	48	23.9%
55-64	44	21.9%
65-74	41	20.4%
75+	12	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>Disability</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	36	17.9%
No	165	82.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>Religion or Belief</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Christian	113	60.4%
None	69	36.9%
Buddhist	1	0.5%
Hindu	1	0.5%
Jewish	1	0.5%

Religion or Belief	Number	Percent
Omnist	1	0.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>100%</b>

Ethnicity	Number	Percent
White British	180	94.7%
White Non-British	3	1.6%
Mixed Race	3	1.6%
Travelling Community	2	1.1%
Asian or Asian British	1	0.5%
Black or Black British	1	0.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>100%</b>

Sexual orientation	Number	Percent
Heterosexual/straight	164	93.2%
Gay or lesbian	9	5.1%
Bisexual	3	1.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>100%</b>

## **Full Survey Phase One Output - Budget Consultation 2023**

All responses

**Format of response.**

	Frequency	Percent
PC	143	55.6%
Mobile	91	35.4%
Tablet	19	7.4%
Paper	4	1.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Do you agree or disagree with this approach?**

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	25	10.1%

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Agree	78	31.5%
Neither agree nor disagree	58	23.4%
Disagree	39	15.7%
Strongly disagree	48	19.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Please tell us why.**

	<b>Frequency</b>
Agree: Focus on efficiencies and less vulnerable	26
Disagree: Ideas to reduce spend	20
Agree: Durham County News is better online	13
Agree: Protect frontline services	13
Miscellaneous	13
Agree: Increasing fees is better than reducing essential services	12
Need more information on options considered	11
Disagree: Disagree with raising additional fees & charges	10
Disagree: Reduce non-essential services	10
Disagree: School budgets under pressure/need increased funding	10
Disagree: T&PC grant reductions will increase precepts, with poorest parishes impacted most	10
Disagree: CT increase impacts cost of living/increased poverty and support needs	9
Disagree: Durham County News/AI consider digital exclusion	9
Disagree: Reduce senior management/councillor costs	9
Disagree: Fees & charges impact on local businesses/local economy	7
Disagree: Additional waste fees versus increased fly tipping	6
Disagree: Concern about impact of various proposals on older/vulnerable people	6
Disagree: Music service concerns	6
Disagree: Concern about ongoing reduction in services	5
Agree: Support the T&PCs reduction of grants	4
Disagree: Balance the books without CT increase	4
Disagree: More CT for diminished services	4
Disagree: Concern about rural services	3

	<b>Frequency</b>
Disagree: Remove student landlord CT exemption	2
Disagree: Use more council reserves	2
Agree: More frontline service reductions required	1
Agree: T&PCs should administer their own budgets	1
Disagree: CT one of highest in country	1
Disagree: Increase CT so services can continue	1
Disagree: Remove or reduce CTRS	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>229</b>

**What do you feel will be the impact of this approach upon you, your community or those you represent?**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Extremely negative	45	18.5%
Negative	89	36.6%
Neither negative nor positive	96	39.5%
Positive	11	4.5%
Extremely positive	2	0.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Why do you believe this to be the case?**

	<b>Frequency</b>
Negative: Impact on local communities	17
Negative: Passing impacts to others– schools, town/parish councils	17
Negative: Council tax – cost of living pressures/increased poverty and support needs	15
Negative: Changes to services - reduced services, quality, need services maintained	14
Miscellaneous	9
Negative: Council tax – rise is higher than pay increases/targeted at those in employment	8
Negative: Fees & charges - Impact on business/end users/local environment	6
Negative: Changes to services: impact on vulnerable people & older people	5
Negative: Durham County News - older people/digital exclusion	5

	Frequency
Insufficient information	4
Positive: Council tax – can afford to pay	4
Positive: Welcome efficiencies, further reductions needed, stop unnecessary projects	4
Negative: Council tax – highest council tax in the country	3
Negative: Council tax – impact on spend in local economy	3
Positive: Fees & charges - agree with increases as opposed to cuts	3
Negative: Changes to services - prioritise non-essential services/projects for savings	2
Negative: Changes to services - reduced accessibility – face to face/travel/less opportunities	2
Negative: Impact on local investment	2
Negative: Impact on rural areas	2
Negative: Savings do not cover council's expenditure/fear of bankruptcy	2
Negative: Short term savings may result in increased costs long term	2
Positive: Internal changes/little effect outside the council	2
Positive: It's inevitable	2
Negative: Ideas to reduce spend	1
Negative: Lacks vision/needs to encourage growth	1
Positive: Durham County News - agree	1
Positive: Savings - prioritise non-essential services	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>137</b>

**To help us prioritise where to make budget reductions, please select three service areas to target for savings.**

	Frequency	Percent
Culture	129	50.6%
Environment and climate change	75	29.4%
Council tax, benefits and other processing	74	29.0%
Local council tax support	72	28.2%
Planning services	65	25.5%
Local community projects	60	23.5%
Leisure and wellbeing	57	22.4%
Welfare assistance and advice	53	20.8%

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Economic development	38	14.9%
Customer access and customer services	28	11.0%
Housing services	26	10.2%
Community safety and protection	22	8.6%
Street cleaning and grounds maintenance	21	8.2%
Preventative services	16	6.3%
Roads and transport	15	5.9%
Waste collection, disposal and recycling	14	5.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>765</b>	<b>300.0%</b>

**Do you agree or disagree with the proposal that the council protects services by increasing council tax by 4.99% (including 2% towards adult social care) in 2024/25?**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Agree	108	42.5%
Disagree	146	57.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Please select another three service areas to target for savings.**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent*</b>
Customer access and customer services	38	31.9%
Local community projects	28	23.5%
Local council tax support	27	22.7%
Planning services	26	21.8%
Culture	24	20.2%
Council tax, benefits and other processing	23	19.3%
Economic development	23	19.3%
Welfare assistance and advice	22	18.5%
Environment and climate change	21	17.6%
Housing services	21	17.6%
Preventative services	16	13.4%
Street cleaning and grounds maintenance	14	11.8%
Leisure and wellbeing	12	10.1%
Community safety and protection	10	8.4%

	Frequency	Percent*
Waste collection, disposal and recycling	6	5.0%
Roads and transport	5	4.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>265.5%</b>

\*Percentage of those selecting response who answered the question to any extent.

**If we raise council tax by 4.99%, what do you feel would be the impact on you, your community or those you represent?**

	Frequency	Percent
Extremely negative	91	38.6%
Negative	80	33.9%
Neither negative nor positive	51	21.6%
Positive	13	5.5%
Extremely positive	1	0.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Why do you believe this to be the case?**

	Frequency
Negative comments: Cost of living pressures/can't afford CT increase	77
Positive/neutral: Acceptable if essential services are maintained/improved/meet needs	24
Negative comments: Budget better/stop unnecessary projects	19
Negative comments: More money for diminished services	18
Negative comments: CT highest in the country	10
Negative comments: CT targets people in work	10
Negative comments: Impact on the local economy	10
Positive/neutral: Can afford the rise	6
Positive/neutral: Budget solvency	5
Miscellaneous	4
Negative comments: Reduce or charge for non-essential services	4
Positive/neutral: CT reduction scheme helps those who most need it	4
Positive/neutral: Used to the yearly increase/inflation/cost of living getting higher	4
Negative comments: Parish, police and fire precepts, results in higher increase	3

	Frequency
Positive/neutral: Council cannot be expected to foot all inflationary costs	3
Negative comments: Remove or reduce CT reduction scheme	2
Negative comments: Remove student landlord CT exemption	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>205</b>

**Do you have any additional ideas or suggestions as to areas where we can raise further income or become more efficient in the years to come?**

	Frequency
Reduce senior management/councillor salaries/expenses	30
Miscellaneous	27
Review staff roles, pay, productivity, duplication/make self -financing	22
Stop unnecessary investment projects (DLI MAG/regeneration/HQ)	17
Reduce administration buildings/work from home/rent space in buildings/dual purpose	16
Increase parking, libraries, highways, speeding, littering, fly tipping fees/fines	14
Tax/community charge for student accommodation/HMO	13
Procurement: Collective approach, commission, use local businesses	12
Review services/structures to identify efficiencies	12
Events, arts & culture: Reduce, make self-financing	10
Council land/assets: Sell, review commercial rents/rates	9
Local economy/community investment (shops, business, AAPs)	8
CTRS: Proportion of relief should not be 100%	7
Grounds maintenance: More wildflowers, reduce mowing	7
Digital solutions	6
Reduce comms & marketing	6
Address non-payment rates, fraud	5
Housing: Build more affordable/generally to gain council tax	5
AAPs: Reduce funding/change	4
Admin: Reduce mileage, expenses, meetings	4
Continue to lobby/campaign Government	4
Highways/footpaths: Solve flood issues, better maintenance	4
Leisure centres: Reduce, run as trusts/private sector	4



	<b>Frequency</b>
Reduce vehicle fleet	4
Review parish boundaries/remove	4
Benefits: Review/tackle fraud	3
Invest in preventative health and wellbeing service	3
Procurement: Bring services in-house	3
Combined Authority: Opportunities for savings	2
Energy efficiency opportunities	2
Increase leisure centre/swimming pool fees	2
Need more detail on service areas	2
Put case for over 5% rise to trigger referendum	2
Reduce consultancy work	2
Social care: Reduce funding	2
Stricter procurement of H2S transport	2
Theatres: Run as trusts/private sector	2
Transfer service to parish councils/community led	2
Increase planning application fees (HMOs)	1
Increase rubbish collection charges	1
Reduce local business support	1
Review business rates	1
Work more with voluntary sector	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>288</b>

**Are you responding as:**

	<b>Frequency</b>
A resident	223
A Durham County Council employee	17
A business	4
An organisation	6
Other	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>254</b>

**If other or an organisation, please specify.**

	<b>Frequency</b>
County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service	1
Durham Constabulary	1
Ferryhill Town Council	1
Parish Council	1
Weardale Area Action Partnership	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>

**Are you:**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Male	105	53.0%
Female	93	47.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**What is your age?**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
18-24	1	0.5%
25-34	22	10.9%
35-44	33	16.4%
45-54	48	23.9%
55-64	44	21.9%
65-74	41	20.4%
75+	12	6.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	36	17.9%
No	165	82.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### What is your religion or belief?

	Frequency	Percent
Christian	113	60.4%
None	69	36.9%
Atheist	1	0.5%
Buddhist	1	0.5%
Hindu	1	0.5%
Jewish	1	0.5%
Omnist	1	0.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### What is your ethnicity?

	Frequency	Percent
White British	180	94.7%
Mixed Race	3	1.6%
White Non-British	3	1.6%
Travelling Community	2	1.1%
Asian or Asian British	1	0.5%
Black or Black British	1	0.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### How would you describe your sexual orientation?

	Frequency	Percent
Heterosexual/straight	164	93.2%
Gay or lesbian	9	5.1%
Bisexual	3	1.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### Resident responses

#### Format of response.

	Frequency	Percent
PC	112	50.2%

	Frequency	Percent
Mobile	89	39.9%
Tablet	19	8.5%
Paper	3	1.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Do you agree or disagree with this approach?**

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	21	9.5%
Agree	70	31.8%
Neither agree nor disagree	51	23.2%
Disagree	33	15.0%
Strongly disagree	45	20.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Please tell us why**

	Frequency
Agree: Focus on efficiencies and less vulnerable	22
Disagree: Ideas to reduce spend (please also highlight)	19
Agree: Durham County News is better online	13
Miscellaneous	12
Agree: Increasing fees is better than reducing essential services	11
Agree: Protect frontline services	11
Need more information on options considered	11
Disagree: Disagree with raising additional fees & charges	10
Disagree: Reduce non-essential services	10
Disagree: School budgets under pressure/need increased funding	10
Disagree: Durham County News/AI consider digital exclusion	9
Disagree: Reduce senior management/councillor costs	9
Disagree: T&PC grant reductions will increase precepts, with poorest parishes impacted most	9
Disagree: CT increase impacts cost of living/increased poverty and support needs	7
Disagree: Fees & charges impact on local businesses/local economy	7
Disagree: Additional waste fees versus increased fly tipping	6

	<b>Frequency</b>
Disagree: Music service concerns	6
Disagree: Concern about impact of various proposals on older/vulnerable people	5
Disagree: Concern about ongoing reduction in services	5
Agree: Support the T&PCs reduction of grants	4
Disagree: Balance the books without CT increase	4
Disagree: More CT for diminished services	4
Disagree: Concern about rural services	3
Disagree: Remove student landlord CT exemption	2
Disagree: Use more council reserves	2
Agree: More frontline service reductions required	1
Agree: T&PCs should administer their own budgets	1
Disagree: CT one of highest in country	1
Disagree: Increase CT so services can continue	1
Disagree: Remove or reduce CTRS	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>216</b>

**What do you feel will be the impact of this approach upon you, your community or those you represent?**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Extremely negative	41	18.9%
Negative	80	36.9%
Neither negative nor positive	86	39.6%
Positive	8	3.7%
Extremely positive	2	0.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Why do you believe this to be the case?**

	<b>Frequency</b>
Negative: Passing impacts to others– schools, town/parish councils	16
Negative: Impact on local communities	15
Negative: Changes to services - reduced services, quality, need services maintained	13

	Frequency
Negative: Council tax – cost of living pressures/increased poverty and support needs	13
Other (miscellaneous)	9
Negative: Council tax – rise is higher than pay increases/targeted at those in employment	8
Negative: Fees & charges - Impact on business/end users/local environment	6
Negative: Changes to services: impact on vulnerable people & older people	5
Negative: Durham County News - older people/digital exclusion	5
Insufficient information	4
Positive: Welcome efficiencies, further reductions needed, stop unnecessary projects	4
Negative: Council tax – highest council tax in the country	3
Negative: Council tax – impact on spend in local economy	3
Positive: Council tax – can afford to pay	3
Negative: Changes to services - prioritise non-essential services/projects for savings	2
Negative: Changes to services - reduced accessibility – face to face/travel/less opportunities	2
Negative: Impact on local investment	2
Negative: Impact on rural areas	2
Negative: Savings do not cover council's expenditure/fear of bankruptcy	2
Negative: Short term savings may result in increased costs long term	2
Positive: Fees & charges - agree with increases as opposed to cuts	2
Positive: Internal changes/little effect outside the council	2
Positive: It's inevitable	2
Negative: Ideas to reduce spend	1
Negative: Lacks vision/needs to encourage growth	1
Positive: Durham County News - agree	1
Positive: Savings - prioritise non-essential services	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>129</b>

**To help us prioritise where to make budget reductions, please select three service areas to target for savings.**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Culture	112	50.7%
Environment and climate change	67	30.3%
Local council tax support	65	29.4%
Council tax, benefits and other processing	61	27.6%
Planning services	55	24.9%
Local community projects	53	24.0%
Welfare assistance and advice	50	22.6%
Leisure and wellbeing	48	21.7%
Economic development	34	15.4%
Customer access and customer services	22	10.0%
Housing services	21	9.5%
Community safety and protection	19	8.6%
Street cleaning and grounds maintenance	19	8.6%
Preventative services	13	5.9%
Roads and transport	12	5.4%
Waste collection, disposal and recycling	12	5.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>663</b>	<b>300.0%</b>

**Do you agree or disagree with the proposal that the council protects services by increasing council tax by 4.99% (including 2% towards adult social care) in 2024/25?**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Agree	92	41.3%
Disagree	131	58.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Please select another three service areas to target for savings.**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Customer access and customer services	36	31.3%
Local community projects	28	24.3%
Local council tax support	26	22.6%
Planning services	25	21.7%
Culture	24	20.9%
Council tax, benefits and other processing	23	20.0%

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Economic development	22	19.1%
Environment and climate change	21	18.3%
Welfare assistance and advice	21	18.3%
Housing services	19	16.5%
Preventative services	16	13.9%
Street cleaning and grounds maintenance	14	12.2%
Leisure and wellbeing	11	9.6%
Community safety and protection	10	8.7%
Roads and transport	5	4.3%
Waste collection, disposal and recycling	5	4.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>306</b>	<b>266.1%</b>

**If we raise council tax by 4.99%, what do you feel would be the impact on you, your community or those you represent?**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Extremely negative	88	39.5%
Negative	75	33.6%
Neither negative nor positive	47	21.1%
Positive	12	5.4%
Extremely positive	1	0.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Why do you believe this to be the case?**

	<b>Frequency</b>
Negative comments: Cost of living pressures/can't afford CT increase	73
Positive/neutral: Acceptable if essential services are maintained/improved/meet needs	23
Negative comments: Budget better/stop unnecessary projects	19
Negative comments: More money for diminished services	18
Negative comments: CT highest in the country	10
Negative comments: CT targets people in work	10
Negative comments: Impact on the local economy	9
Positive/neutral: Budget solvency	5
Positive/neutral: Can afford the rise	5



	Frequency
Miscellaneous	4
Negative comments: Reduce or charge for non-essential services	4
Positive/neutral: Used to the yearly increase/inflation/cost of living getting higher	4
Negative comments: Parish, police and fire precepts, results in higher increase	3
Positive/neutral: Council cannot be expected to foot all inflationary costs	3
Positive/neutral: CT reduction scheme helps those who most need it	3
Negative comments: Remove or reduce CT reduction scheme	2
Negative comments: Remove student landlord CT exemption	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>197</b>

**Do you have any additional ideas or suggestions as to areas where we can raise further income or become more efficient in the years to come?**

	Frequency
Reduce senior management/councillor salaries/expenses	29
Miscellaneous	25
Review staff roles, pay, productivity, duplication/make self-financing	21
Stop unnecessary investment projects (DLI MAG/regeneration/HQ)	16
Reduce administration buildings/work from home/rent space in buildings/dual purpose	15
Increase parking, libraries, highways, speeding, littering, fly tipping fees/fines	13
Tax/community charge for student accommodation/HMO	12
Procurement: Collective approach, commission, use local businesses	11
Review services/structures to identify efficiencies	11
Events, arts & culture: Reduce, make self-financing	10
Council land/assets: Sell, review commercial rents/rates	9
Local economy/community investment (shops, business, AAPs)	8
CTRS: Proportion of relief should not be 100%	7
Grounds maintenance: More wildflowers, reduce mowing	7
Digital solutions	6
Reduce comms & marketing	6
Address non-payment rates, fraud	5

	Frequency
Housing: Build more affordable/generally to gain council tax	5
AAPs: Reduce funding/change	4
Admin: Reduce mileage, expenses, meetings	4
Continue to lobby/campaign Government	4
Highways/footpaths: Solve flood issues, better maintenance	4
Leisure centres: Reduce, run as trusts/private sector	4
Review parish boundaries/remove	4
Benefits: Review/tackle fraud	3
Invest in preventative health and wellbeing service	3
Procurement: Bring services in-house	3
Reduce vehicle fleet	3
Combined Authority: Opportunities for savings	2
Energy efficiency opportunities	2
Increase leisure centre/swimming pool fees	2
Need more detail on service areas	2
Put case for over 5% rise to trigger referendum	2
Reduce consultancy work	2
Social care: Reduce funding	2
Stricter procurement of H2S transport	2
Theatres: Run as trusts/private sector	2
Transfer service to parish councils/community led	2
Increase planning application fees (HMOs)	1
Increase rubbish collection charges	1
Reduce local business support	1
Review business rates	1
Work more with voluntary sector	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>277</b>

### **County council employees' responses**

#### **Format of response.**

	Frequency	Percent
PC	11	64.7%

	Frequency	Percent
Mobile	4	23.5%
Tablet	1	5.9%
Paper	1	5.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Do you agree or disagree with this approach?**

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	1	5.9%
Agree	11	64.7%
Neither agree nor disagree	2	11.8%
Disagree	3	17.6%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Please tell us why.**

	Frequency
Agree: Focus on efficiencies and less vulnerable	2
Agree: Protect frontline services	2
Disagree: Ideas to reduce spend (please also highlight)	2
Agree: Increasing fees is better than reducing essential services	1
Agree: More frontline service reductions required	1
Agree: Support the T&PCs reduction of grants	1
Disagree: CT increase impacts cost of living/increased poverty and support needs	1
Disagree: Durham County News/Al consider digital exclusion	1
Disagree: Reduce non-essential services	1
Disagree: School budgets under pressure/need increased funding	1
Miscellaneous	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>

**What do you feel will be the impact of this approach upon you, your community or those you represent?**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Extremely negative	0	0.0%
Negative	7	43.8%
Neither negative nor positive	9	56.3%
Positive	0	0.0%
Extremely positive	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Why do you believe this to be the case?**

	<b>Frequency</b>
Negative: Council tax – cost of living pressures/increased poverty and support needs	2
Negative: Impact on local communities	1
Negative: Passing impacts to others– schools, town/parish councils	1
Positive: Internal changes/little effect outside the council	1
Positive: Welcome efficiencies, further reductions needed, stop unnecessary projects	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>

**To help us prioritise where to make budget reductions, please select three service areas to target for savings.**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Culture	10	58.8%
Local council tax support	6	35.3%
Environment and climate change	5	29.4%
Planning services	5	29.4%
Council tax, benefits and other processing	4	23.5%
Leisure and wellbeing	4	23.5%
Customer access and customer services	3	17.6%
Housing services	3	17.6%
Local community projects	3	17.6%
Welfare assistance and advice	3	17.6%
Economic development	2	11.8%
Preventative services	1	5.9%
Street cleaning and grounds maintenance	1	5.9%

	Frequency	Percent
Waste collection, disposal and recycling	1	5.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>300.0%</b>

**Do you agree or disagree with the proposal that the council protects services by increasing council tax by 4.99% (including 2% towards adult social care) in 2024/25?**

	Frequency	Percent
Agree	11	64.7
Disagree	6	35.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Please select another three service areas to target for savings.**

	Frequency	Percent
Community safety and protection	2	40.0%
Economic development	2	40.0%
Local community projects	2	40.0%
Council tax, benefits and other processing	1	20.0%
Environment and climate change	1	20.0%
Planning services	1	20.0%
Waste collection, disposal and recycling	1	20.0%
Welfare assistance and advice	1	20.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>220.0%</b>

**If we raise council tax by 4.99%, what do you feel would be the impact on you, your community or those you represent?**

	Frequency	Percent
Extremely negative	2	11.8%
Negative	8	47.1%
Neither negative nor positive	4	23.5%
Positive	3	17.6%
Extremely positive	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Why do you believe this to be the case?**

	Frequency
Negative comments: Cost of living pressures/can't afford CT increase	5
Positive/neutral: Acceptable if essential services are maintained/improved/meet needs	4
Negative comments: More money for diminished services	2
Positive/neutral: CT reduction scheme helps those who most need it	2
Negative comments: Budget better/stop unnecessary projects	1
Negative comments: CT targets people in work	1
Negative comments: Impact on the local economy	1
Positive/neutral: Can afford the rise	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>

**Do you have any additional ideas or suggestions as to areas where we can raise further income or become more efficient in the years to come?**

	Frequency
Reduce administration buildings/work from home/rent space in buildings/dual purpose	4
Stop unnecessary investment projects (DLI MAG/regeneration/HQ)	3
Address non-payment rates, fraud	1
Combined Authority: Opportunities for savings	1
Grounds maintenance: More wildflowers, reduce mowing	1
Increase parking, libraries, highways, speeding, littering, fly tipping fees/fines	1
Local economy/community investment (shops, business, AAPs)	1
Procurement: Collective approach, commission, use local businesses	1
Reduce comms & marketing	1
Reduce senior management/councillor salaries/expenses	1
Reduce vehicle fleet	1
Review services/structures to identify efficiencies	1
Review staff roles, pay, productivity, duplication/make self -financing	1
Tax/community charge for student accommodation/HMO	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>

**Note: 13 of the 17 local authority responses are residents.**

## **Businesses responses**

### **Format of response.**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
PC	2	50.0%
Mobile	2	50.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### **Do you agree or disagree with this approach?**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Strongly agree	1	25.0%
Agree	1	25.0%
Neither agree nor disagree	0	0.0%
Disagree	2	50.0%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### **Please tell us why.**

	<b>Frequency</b>
Agree: Focus on efficiencies and less vulnerable	1
Disagree: Fees & charges impact on local businesses/local economy	1
Miscellaneous	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>

### **What do you feel will be the impact of this approach upon you, your community or those you represent?**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Extremely negative	2	50.0%
Negative	0	0.0%
Neither negative nor positive	1	25.0%
Positive	1	25.0%
Extremely positive	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Why do you believe this to be the case?**

	<b>Frequency</b>
Negative: Changes to services - reduced services, quality, need services maintained	1
Negative: Council tax – impact on spend in local economy	1
Negative: Durham County News - older people/digital exclusion	1
Negative: Impact on local communities	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>

**To help us prioritise where to make budget reductions, please select three service areas to target for savings.**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Culture	3	75.0%
Council tax, benefits and other processing	2	50.0%
Environment and climate change	2	50.0%
Community safety and protection	1	25.0%
Economic development	1	25.0%
Leisure and wellbeing	1	25.0%
Planning services	1	25.0%
Welfare assistance and advice	1	25.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>300.0%</b>

**Do you agree or disagree with the proposal that the council protects services by increasing council tax by 4.99% (including 2% towards adult social care) in 2024/25?**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Agree	2	50.0%
Disagree	2	50.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Please select another three service areas to target for savings.**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Housing services	1	50.0%
Local council tax support	1	50.0%
Preventative services	1	50.0%



	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Roads and transport	1	50.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>200.0%</b>

**If we raise council tax by 4.99%, what do you feel would be the impact on you, your community or those you represent?**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Extremely negative	2	50.0%
Negative	0	0.0%
Neither negative nor positive	2	50.0%
Positive	0	0.0%
Extremely positive	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Why do you believe this to be the case?**

	<b>Frequency</b>
Negative comments: Cost of living pressures/can't afford CT increase	2
Negative comments: CT highest in the country	1
Positive/neutral: Can afford the rise	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>

**Do you have any additional ideas or suggestions as to areas where we can raise further income or become more efficient in the years to come?**

	<b>Frequency</b>
Digital solutions	1
Energy efficiency opportunities	1
Increase parking, libraries, highways, speeding, littering, fly tipping fees/fines	1
Local economy/community investment (shops, business, AAPs)	1
Reduce administration buildings/work from home/rent space in buildings/dual purpose	1
Review services/structures to identify efficiencies	1
Review staff roles, pay, productivity, duplication/make self -financing	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>

## Organisations responses

### Format of response.

	Frequency	Percent
PC	5	83.3%
Mobile	1	16.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### Do you agree or disagree with this approach?

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	1	16.7%
Agree	2	33.3%
Neither agree nor disagree	2	33.3%
Disagree	1	16.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### Please tell us why.

	Frequency
Miscellaneous	3
Agree: Focus on efficiencies and less vulnerable	1
Agree: Increasing fees is better than reducing essential services	1
Agree: Protect frontline services	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>

### What do you feel will be the impact of this approach upon you, your community or those you represent?

	Frequency	Percent
Extremely negative	1	16.7%
Negative	1	16.7%
Neither negative nor positive	3	50.0%
Positive	1	16.7%
Extremely positive	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Why do you believe this to be the case?**

	<b>Frequency</b>
Negative: Council tax – impact on spend in local economy	1
Positive: Council tax – can afford to pay	1
Positive: Fees & charges - agree with increases as opposed to cuts	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>

**To help us prioritise where to make budget reductions, please select three service areas to target for savings.**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Planning services	5	83.3%
Culture	3	50.0%
Roads and transport	3	50.0%
Council tax, benefits and other processing	2	33.3%
Environment and climate change	2	33.3%
Local community projects	2	33.3%
Customer access and customer services	1	16.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>300.0%</b>

**Do you agree or disagree with the proposal that the council protects services by increasing council tax by 4.99% (including 2% towards adult social care) in 2024/25?**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Agree	4	66.7%
Disagree	2	33.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Please select another three service areas to target for savings.**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Customer access and customer services	1	50.0%
Leisure and wellbeing	1	50.0%
Preventative services	1	50.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>150.0%</b>

**If we raise council tax by 4.99%, what do you feel would be the impact on you, your community or those you represent?**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Extremely negative	1	16.7%
Negative	2	33.3%
Neither negative nor positive	3	50.0%
Positive	0	0.0%
Extremely positive	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Why do you believe this to be the case?**

	<b>Frequency</b>
Negative comments: Cost of living pressures/can't afford CT increase	4
Positive/neutral: Acceptable if essential services are maintained/improved/meet needs	1
Positive/neutral: Can afford the rise	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>

**Do you have any additional ideas or suggestions as to areas where we can raise further income or become more efficient in the years to come?**

	<b>Frequency</b>
Admin: Reduce mileage, expenses, meetings	1
Local economy/community investment (shops, business, AAPs)	1
Miscellaneous	1
Review staff roles, pay, productivity, duplication/make self -financing	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>

## **Consultation on our budget proposals for 2024/25 and Medium-Term Financial Plan14 2024/25 to 2027/28**

### **AAP feedback summary, Sept-Oct 2023**

**What is the AAP view on our savings proposals for 2024/25, particularly the £3.7 million of savings derived from back-office savings and efficiencies, income raising and reductions in third party contributions and savings from changes in the way we deliver front-line services?**

Feedback was limited. Appreciation was evident that DCC are facing difficult decisions, dealing with additional pressures including high inflation, minimum wage costs and all associated costs, and it's now virtually impossible to look at achieving savings without having to look at cutting non-essential statutory services.

In respect of this a variety of comments were around the definition and impact of statutory services on income. Questions raised covered whether there is a classical split between what is statutory versus non-statutory and whether this changes significantly year on year. There was also a suggestion that a lot of service provision carried out by DCC is not statutory.

Other comments regarding this question related to concern that some service areas had not been included in the savings proposals for 2024/25 covering NCC and Regeneration and Economic Development. There was also a question as to from the savings already made over the years, what has been the least or most negative savings?

**What do you feel will be the impact of this approach to savings for 2024/25 upon you or those you represent?**

Feedback was limited. Where feedback was given, it mainly related to the need for more information to understand and provide a response regarding impact. Comments covered:

- More needs to be done to inform the public what the impact would be. i.e., moving refuse collection to a 4-weekly cycle, how much would that save?
- Giving the public a list of proposals with the savings would be beneficial.
- How would you assess the impact on the community, if for example Neighbourhood Wardens were highlighted as a saving?

**What is the AAP view on areas where the council should focus to achieve additional savings still needed for 2024/25 of £6.2 million and £43.5 million over the following three years? Please choose three services you would prioritize for funding reductions from the list to provided.**

The majority of the feedback confirmed that there is a view that DCC can find savings in other areas, and solutions could also be sort through working with partners and looking externally.

<b>Additional savings/funding reductions:</b>	<b>Comments:</b>
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do DCC spend on cultural events? Libraries, theatres, how many people use them?</li> <li>• Areas like culture can always have savings.</li> <li>• What is the benefit of Lumiere to the County? - Request for clarification on the cost and benefit of Lumiere.</li> <li>• Has DCC thought about events like Lumiere, cycle events, Brass Festival etc – whilst these are no doubt important and people enjoy them, ultimately, they aren't essential and will possibly have to be looked at.</li> </ul>
Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate change, appreciate this is a global problem, but not specifically a Co. Durham problem - is it that important to residents?</li> </ul>
Area Action Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AAPs cost a lot – which all need to be monitored etc which costs money, is it really needed/statutory?</li> <li>• What cost benefit analysis is done, e.g., in relation to the AAPs, what value do they bring?</li> </ul>
Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cllr budgets need to be monitored which costs money, is it really needed / statutory?</li> <li>• Have you considered the reduction in number of Cllrs?</li> <li>• Some authorities don't have Cllr budgets (NB) why do DCC?</li> </ul>
Neighbourhood Wardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The money used to pay Neighbourhood Wardens would be better spent on Police (as they don't have powers have to stop ASB).</li> </ul>
Roads and Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Savings could be made by switching off streetlights at certain times of the night.</li> <li>• Encourage alternative transport option away from car use to reduce road infrastructure.</li> <li>• fines should be increased for people parking on footpaths.</li> </ul>
Home to school transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large cost - is this being reviewed, particularly in terms of those who move away from their closest school.</li> <li>• Private taxis are taking children with special needs to schools in different locations - surely there must be closer schools?</li> <li>• Concerns regarding the amount of money spent, particularly since Covid-19, where children are travelling in separate taxis rather than together.</li> <li>• The cost of taxi contracts from home to school and back are extortionate, therefore could a parent, for example, ring for a taxi on the day which would be cheaper.</li> </ul>
Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why are we spending so much money on consultation when we have elected Cllrs – could this be an area to make savings?</li> </ul>
CYPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More fostering of children in care could make a saving.</li> <li>• There are a high level of outgoings seems to be around social care/looked after people, e.g., buying properties and having high staffing levels for a small number of children being looked after, and believes this area needs more thought in terms of potential to achieve savings.</li> </ul>

### **Areas to protect:**

It was suggested that towns need to be protected in consideration of budget setting in reference to leisure centre closures having a negative impact.

### **Role of partner organisations:**

Comments on the role and ability of other organisations to support the delivery of services covered feedback that some services are already provided by VCS organisations, e.g., welfare assistance and advice. With better support, VCS services could potentially help support savings as there is a wealth of knowledge within the VCS sector that the council should take advantage. Additionally, it was questioned as to whether back-office functions could be shared with other local authorities and what the implications of a partnering in this way would be on the council.

### **Quality and depth of consultation information:**

Comments also suggested that it is difficult to provide a response based on the information that has been provided including an observation that consultees could consider the savings areas suggested and indicate where to make further savings, but all of these areas are connected. A further comment stated the need to look at each area in more detail with a higher level of information including spend versus achievement.

### **What is the view to the council raising the council tax by the maximum amount of 4.99% to protect service provision and ensure the additional savings required are kept to £6.2 million for 2024/25? If you disagree with the 4.99% increase, go back to the list and please choose a further 3 services to reduce.**

The tone of the feedback suggested an understanding regarding the need to look at this as an option but ultimately caution and distain towards imposing the 4.99% increase, with a significant amount of concern expressed on behalf of residents regarding the impact of this proposed rise, especially on those with lower incomes. There is also feeling that there are opportunities to achieve higher income via council tax from other sources.

### **Impact on residents:**

Concerns regarding the negative impact on lower income residents include comments such as it not being the right time to take such a step given current financial pressures as people who live in poverty are often hit the hardest. A 4.99% increase will affect lower income families who are already struggling with the increased cost of living, this would have a huge impact on deprived areas and increase the number of people needing council tax support and support in other areas such as the use of food banks.

It was also asked if there was a lower increase rate than 4.99% that could be considered to lessen the potential impacts on individuals. **Housing Provider, Livin Housing**, commented that they seeing an increase in 'in work poverty', and that these people often fall through the net, asking what is the impact on these people and has this been considered regarding this council tax increase?

Additionally, a few comments were directed at the council tax reduction scheme regarding how safe this scheme is from cuts, the need to promote this more widely and also considering reviewing its criteria and eligibility.

### **Alternative / additional opportunities to increase council tax income:**

Comments in relation to opportunities to gain additional income from council tax referenced increasing the low tax base, opportunities regarding new housing developments, student and landlord council tax and consideration of an increase above 4.99% as follows:

- Lots of new houses are being built, which will obviously be in higher band rate, at what point are we increasing the low tax base we have?
- Most properties are in a lower band, given there is a lot of house building does this have a significant contribution to additional income?
- Are a lot of the homes being built in the higher council tax bands?
- When was the rate for higher band properties last reviewed? would this bring in more income?
- Do new developments make a difference to the council tax band levels?
- Move away from a Band D structure, where modern land prices/house prices (value) are used to calculate council tax levels.
- The council came up with a figure years ago on how to make money on student accommodation. Landlords are making money through renting but not paying it on council tax.
- The government need to be pressurised to make them pay council tax when in term.
- The public should have their say on whether they wish to increase this amount beyond 4.99% to prevent the closure/reduction of services such as leisure facilities.
- DCC should consider lobbying Government to remove the 4.99% cap to help get through the initial shortfall.

### **Decision making process:**

Comments questioned the decision-making process around this question asking if the majority of consultees said they didn't want a 4.99% council tax rise, would we still implement it? And what percentage of people need to say no to the council tax increase for it not to be applied?

### **Do you have any additional ideas as to where we can raise further income or become more efficient?**

Feedback brought a variety of responses, comments and questions covering:

- Concern for the future in considering the continued pressure on the likes of CYPS.
- Concern for the future in considering other local authorities, contingencies in the event that the deficit cannot be met, with specific mention of Middleborough and Birmingham local authorities and the alarming situation they are currently in.
- The council's spending behaviour regarding high profile areas for example the DLI, emergency events and County Hall.
- Thoughts on central government's position and support.

### **Pressures on CYPS:**

Concern for the future in considering the continued pressure on the likes of CYP services cover:

- the increase in number of children requiring SEN support.
- unfilled staff vacancies.



- the need to investigate why there is an alarming rise in the number of looked after children.
- consideration to bringing children care homes back in house.
- the perceived unnecessary process of building and adapting Childrens' homes locally where only a small number of children using them.

### **Spending behaviour questions and concerns:**

- **County Hall:**
  - Where does CH fit into this?
  - Did DCC lose money on selling CH?
  - It is difficult when money has been perceived to have been wasted (e.g., the abandonment of the plan to move County Hall) to think about savings in areas where the money is needed.
- **DLI Museum:**
  - Is it true the cost of reopening the DLI museum as an arts centre is £15M?
  - Is that not somewhere we should be saving money?
- **Regeneration schemes:**
  - There are two large schemes taking place in Bishop Auckland (new bus station and improvements to Newgate Street) - has consideration been given to the funding of these schemes?
- **RAAC:**
  - Do we know what pressures there will be due to RAAC?
  - Could this affect other public buildings / DCC owned community builds too?
  - Have asset transferred buildings been surveyed? Will buildings be aware and/or liable?
  - Will this affect our requirements for capital for repairs to buildings that have the concrete panels?
  - Are you expecting extra support from Government for schools dealing with RAAC crisis?
- **Emergency spending needs:**
  - Regarding reserves earmarked for unexpected weather events and emergencies it is recognised that requirements on this will increase with acceleration in extreme weather events.
- **Energy prices:**
  - Understand historically that DCC have made three-year fixed price payments for energy - is that correct?
- **Use of consultants:**
  - The amount of consultants employed by the Council is staggering; they cost a lot of money and we would like to see a ban on their use.

### **Central Government for role and support:**

It was questioned as to whether DCC are expecting any more than the projected £25 million. Comments around the role of central government covered frustration at the perceived view that the Northeast does not receive the correct amount of money from Government as a deprived area asking what challenge DCC is mounting regarding continuing austerity, as action (which has been lacking over the past 4 years) is needed on a national level.

It was also suggested that simply asking the Government to provide more funding is not a solution as the funding has to come from somewhere. It was also questioned if DCC didn't set a balanced budget would it be better to let the Government set it?



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**Ideas and questions as to where we can raise funds  
came mainly from:**

- Business rate income opportunities, including huge warehouses such as Amazon.
- Doing things more centrally to save money.
- The role of the selective licensing fee to generate income.
- Utilising the sale of assets and disposal of land to generate income.
- Reduce Recycling Bin contamination costs



# **Budget Consultation Report**

## **October 2023**

**Consultation led by Durham Youth Council**  
**Report written by (if applicable)**

**Durham Youth Council**

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**Tel- 03000 262719**

Stanley Education Centre  
Stanley  
DH9 0HQ

[www.durham.gov.uk/youthvoice](http://www.durham.gov.uk/youthvoice)  
[youthvoice@durham.gov.uk](mailto:youthvoice@durham.gov.uk)

## Contents

Background	01
Overview	01
Goals	01
Process	02
Results/Feedback	03
Conclusion	04
Contact Information	05

**Disclaimer: percentages have been rounded to one decimal place for easy of understanding, this does not mean that they have been altered in any way and a results table is given at the bottom of each question that is multiple choice which can be referred to for total accuracy.**

## Background:

### **Durham Youth Council:**

Durham Youth Council are a group of Young People aging from 11-19 based across County Durham.

The Youth Council are supported by our Participation and Engagement Officer within the Education Department of Durham County Council.

Its purpose is to give Children and Young People a 'collective voice' that is listened to and acted upon by the important decision makers. We want Young People to be more involved in making decisions about issues and services that affect Young People and we want to support Young People in making positive changes.

Youth Council members come from a range of different schools, colleges and youth provisions. Our Young People come from a range of different areas and backgrounds and we pride ourselves on being a diverse, accepting group.

Our Council Members are expected to develop different ways of gathering the voices of Young People across the County, exploring the things that matter to them. They're responsible for helping develop new projects, events or campaigns to gather opinions, raise awareness and support with key issues impacting on Children and Young People.

The Youth Council also support the elected members of the Youth Parliament to campaign on issues affecting Young People both locally and nationally.

The Youth Council are also given the opportunity to work with other organisations to explore what's available for Young People to access and how these services could be made better and best work for Young People.

### **Overview:**

Durham Youth Council met with representatives from Durham's Consultation team, and Finance Team, in September to discuss Durham's budgets and forecasts, as part of a County wide public consultation to gather opinions of where money can be saved.

### **Goals of Consultancy:**

- To gather young people's opinions on where money could be saved.

## **Process**

Purpose and aims of the consultation were discussed with Libby Ward. The Youth Council were given their task to be carried out internally.

The consultation was carried out over the period of three weeks, starting from 20<sup>th</sup> September and a discussion was had between Youth Councillors to produce this document.

*Durham Youth Council were asked to look at a list of 16 front line services that could potentially have their budget cuts, or ways of delivering programs changed, to find the savings Durham County Council needs to balance their budget.*

*This was following a session with representatives from consultation and finance who explain to the youth council what the Durham County Council budget was, what the forecasts were, where income came from, where money had already been saved and what cuts had already been made and what the budget is spent on.*

*The Youth Council had the opportunity to discuss these things with the representatives and ask any questions before being told about the 16 areas. The Youth Council were then asked to take some time looking at the 16 areas and the types of things those areas cover to determine what areas would areas could be appropriate to make savings or changes in.*

*The Youth Council members discussed it and decided to poll the list and select 3 areas that they believed should not be altered, and not used to make savings, they also identified why they've chosen these areas based on the impact this will have on young people.*

*The 16 areas were:*

- 1. Community safety and protection – environmental health, trading standards, taxis and events, neighbourhood wardens, emergency planning, road safety and school crossing patrol services.*
- 2. Council tax, benefits, and other processing – processing of House Benefit, Council Tax Benefit and other Council Tax and Business Rates account changes etc.*
- 3. Culture – council owned museums and theatres, libraries, and support to cultural events.*
- 4. Customer access and customer services – customer access points, call handling and contact arrangements to report issues or access services.*
- 5. Economic development – support for businesses, projects, and support services to improve the county's economy, creating jobs and wealth.*
- 6. Environment and climate change – reduction of carbon emissions for the council, residents, and business to tackle pollution and nature conservation.*
- 7. Housing services – homelessness, home adaptations for vulnerable people and housing advice.*
- 8. Leisure and wellbeing – leisure centres, parks, lay areas, playing pitches and allotments and associated activity programmes.*
- 9. Local community projects – support for community development including AAP and the voluntary sector.*

10. *Local council tax support – provided working age people. We could not or cut current levels of support in future years.*
11. *Planning services – provision of planning and building control services.*
12. *Preventative services – community-based Early intervention support for people with their mental and physical wellbeing to maintain their quality of life and live independently, this helping to reduce future statutory social care spending.*
13. *Roads and transport – road and footpath maintenance, pothole repair, gully cleaning, street lighting, winter maintenance, parking services, subsidised transport e.g., bus routes and bus passes.*
14. *Street cleaning and grounds maintenance – including parks, cemeteries and open spaces, litter picking, fly tipping, dog fouling, grass cutting, flower beds and trees.*
15. *Waste collections, disposal, and recycling – household and business bin collections and recycling centres.*
16. *Welfare assistance and advice – advice and financial support provided to vulnerable people to help address poverty especially during the cost-of-living crisis.*

Of the 16 areas, the youth councillors agreed the following 3 needed to be considered most impactful for young people currently.

Local community projects – the projects our local communities run is important to young people, what's left of our youth service, relies on grant money and support from the council, charities and AAPs, without that money they would struggle to maintain anything close to what is needed. These projects also tend to be based around local needs, and so, a one size fits all approach does not work across different areas, which is why the money used to support them is so important. Many young people access these projects for support, somewhere safe to go, to learn and be provided with opportunities they won't get anywhere else. These services need more support, not less and if they are cut any more, young people will suffer and in turn, more communities will suffer, anti-social behaviour is already high, it will get higher and it will be harder to resolve the problem.

Roads & Transport – young people find it incredibly difficult to travel around County. It was only recently introduced that young people can access subsidised fares across public services, which has been incredible, and so many more young people can access public transport. However, the recent bus strikes, have left young people devastated, with many unable to get to school, college, work, or out to see their friends and family. After the devastation of Covid, and being locked indoors and isolated, these connections are so important to young people. This needs to continue to happen. Roads are already damaged, and are in constant repair, with some not being repaired at all. This causes damage to vehicles, public and private, and is also very dangerous, causing accidents, injury and even death.

Waste collections, disposal, and recycling – Durham Youth Council supports Durham County Council's Single Use Plastic Pledge and has done a lot of work around waste collection, recycling and disposal already. Young people are worried about the frequency that bins are emptied, the unclarity of what can and can't be recycled, the difficulty of recycling items that can't be put in household bins and need to be taken elsewhere (which a lot of people, adults



included, just can't do). The time between bins being emptied means that some general waste bins are left 2 whole weeks between emptying, causing the bins, especially in bigger families, to overflow, attracting rats and other wildlife, which can lead to injury and illness and, high levels of animal abuse and cruelty. Our current waste collection, disposal and recycling offer isn't good enough, cutting budgets and reducing services is just not an option. We need to do better.

This next one was discussed in depth, and although it was originally on our top 3 list, we've didn't select it, however, we'd still like to voice an opinion on the point.

Culture - the youth council agreed is important to young people, and being able to access things like the theatre, libraires and museums is very important to the development of young people. However, after further discussion, the youth council agreed that few young people actually access the current things DCC have to offer, the theatres don't show many young people friendly productions, so they tend to visit larger venues like The Royal Theatre. Libraries are open at inconvenient timings so young people are unable to attend and young people don't think the museums are used as much as they could be. Introducing subsidised costs or fees, or shortening opening hours will not impact on young people as much as we initially thought.

## **Conclusion**

All the potential areas for development or budget reviews are important, and in some ways, all impact on young people and their families. We could talk at length about all 16 points, but too much time is spent discussing. The young people at Durham Youth Council understand that difficult decisions need to be made, but we also know that they impact on young people, and the futures of children need to be considered.

**Contact information**

**Catharine Harwood**

Participation & Engagement Officer

Tel 03000 262719 / 07795020054

[catharine.harwood@durham.gov.uk](mailto:catharine.harwood@durham.gov.uk)

**Sarah Blakeman**

Senior Professional Learning Advisor

Tel 03000 265453

[sarah.blakeman@durham.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.blakeman@durham.gov.uk)

**Company Information**

Durham Youth Council

Stanley Education Centre

Stanley

DH9 0HQ

Email: [youthvoice@durham.gov.uk](mailto:youthvoice@durham.gov.uk)

Facebook: County Durham Youth Council

## **Budget consultation Phase Two - Equalities Assessment**

Around 70% of overall questionnaire respondents provided equality monitoring information as set out in the tables below:

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Male	41	52.6%
Female	37	47.4%
Prefer to self-describe	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>Age</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Under 18	1	1.3%
18-24	1	1.3%
25-34	7	8.9%
35-44	11	13.9%
45-54	17	21.5%
55-64	20	25.3%
65-74	18	22.8%
75+	4	5.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>Disability</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	12	15.2%
No	67	84.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>Religion or Belief</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Christian	41	53.2%
None	34	44.2%
Hindu	1	1.3%
Jewish	1	1.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
White British	70	95.9%

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
White Non-British	1	1.4%
Arab or Middle Eastern	1	1.4%
Travelling Community	1	1.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>Sexual orientation</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Heterosexual/straight	65	97.0%
Bisexual	2	3.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

## **Full Survey Phase Two Output - Budget Consultation 2023**

### **All responses**

#### **Format of response.**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
PC	61	55.5%
Mobile	43	39.1%
Tablet	4	3.6%
Paper	2	1.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

#### **Do you agree or disagree with this approach (to balance the budget further)?**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Strongly agree	6	5.5%
Agree	17	15.6%
Neither agree nor disagree	18	16.5%
Disagree	28	25.7%
Strongly disagree	40	36.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

#### **Please tell us why.**

	<b>Frequency</b>
Disagree: Raising additional income and considering third party contributions: Parking charges general	30
Disagree: Changes to front line service delivery: Early years/nursery provision	16
Agree: Balanced/least impact	10
Disagree: Suggest alternatives	8
Agree: Increase in parking charges	7
Disagree: Changes to front line service delivery: AAP budgets	7
Disagree: Raising additional income and considering third party contributions: Seaham parking charges	5
Disagree: Raising additional income and considering third party contributions: Durham parking charges	5
Need more information on options considered	5
Agree: Supportive of back-office savings	3
Disagree: Changes to front line service delivery: Allotments	3
Disagree: Changes to front line service delivery: Impact on communities especially poorer/vulnerable/rural	3
Disagree: Changes to front line service delivery: Neighbourhood protection	3
Disagree: Cost of living	3
Disagree: Impact on those affected	3
Disagree: Changes to front line service delivery: Essential services/staff	2
Disagree: Savings from back office/efficiencies: Concern about ongoing reduction in services	2
Agree: Supportive of AAP changes	1
Disagree: Changes to front line service delivery: Impact on voluntary sector	1
Miscellaneous	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>

**What do you feel will be the impact of this approach upon you, your community or those you represent?**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Extremely positive	0	0.0%
Positive	2	1.8%
Neither negative nor positive	22	20.2%

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Negative	44	40.4%
Extremely negative	41	37.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Why do you believe this to be the case?**

	<b>Frequency</b>
Raising additional income and considering third party contributions: Parking charges in general	23
Changes to front line service delivery: Early year/nursery provision	8
Changes to front line service delivery: Impact on communities especially poorer/vulnerable/rural	8
Changes to front line service delivery: Service changes in general	8
Non-specific/general negative: Cost of living	7
Savings from back office/efficiencies: Impact on services	7
Raising additional income and considering third party contributions: Seaham parking charges	5
Changes to front line service delivery: AAP budgets	4
Changes to front line service delivery: Essential services/staff	4
Insufficient information	4
Raising additional income and considering third party contributions: Durham parking charges	4
Changes to front line service delivery: Neighbourhood protection: ASB rise	3
Changes to front line service delivery: Allotments	2
Changes to front line service delivery: Impact on voluntary sector	2
Neither agree/disagree: Proposals will have no impact	2
Non-specific/general negative: Too much. Services/communities already struggling	2
Positive: Parking charges in general	2
Raising additional income and considering third party contributions: Raising income in general	2
Non-specific/general negative: Suggest alternatives	1
Positive: Durham car parking	1
Miscellaneous	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>102</b>

**Do you have any additional ideas or suggestions as to areas where we can raise further income or become more efficient in the years to come?**

	<b>Frequency</b>
Rationalise/manage council assets/buildings and land/more efficient buildings/change use	14
Councillor/senior officer pay/expenses	9
Review staff/councillor structures	9
Review grounds maintenance services	8
Review processes: Business/admin	8
Review procurement services/funding for public/private partnerships	6
Reduce events programme, such as Lumiere, bonfire night	5
Review rubbish collection services/fees	5
Ideas outside authority control	4
Local economy investment	4
Review council tax on empty properties/reduction scheme	4
Review university/student contribution to local economy	4
Stop Durham County News/reduce comms/marketing and advertising	4
Digital solutions	3
Highways infringement/speeding fines	3
Increase environmental fines	3
Road maintenance	3
Stop new buildings projects such as DLI/HQ	3
Charging for library services	2
Invest in volunteering/community-based support	2
More working from home	2
Seasonal/tiered parking charges	2
Advertising income opportunities	1
Better partnership working to achieve efficiencies	1
Commercial income in venues	1
Invest in family services to save elsewhere	1
Invest in youth services to save elsewhere	1
Licensing fees	1
Need more information on options considered	1
Public transport review	1



	<b>Frequency</b>
Recycling services: Profit generation	1
Reduce layers of government: T&P/DCC	1
Reduce/stop councillors neighbourhood budgets	1
Tackle fraud	1
Talk to and record staff ideas	1
Miscellaneous	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>128</b>

**Are you responding as:**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
A resident	90	81.8%
A Durham County Council employee	10	9.1%
A business	6	5.5%
An organisation	8	7.3%
Other	10	9.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>112.7%</b>

**If other, please specify.**

	<b>Frequency</b>
Durham Youth Council Member	7
Former resident	1
Visitor	1
Volunteer	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>

**If an organisation, please specify.**

	<b>Frequency</b>
Blackhall Community Centre	1
Believe housing	1
Community Association	1
Parish Council	1
Startforth Parish Council	1
YMCA	1

	Frequency
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>

Are you:

	Frequency	Percent
Male	41	52.6%
Female	37	47.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

What is your age?

	Frequency	Percent
Under 18	1	1.3%
18-24	1	1.3%
25-34	7	8.9%
35-44	11	13.9%
45-54	17	21.5%
55-64	20	25.3%
65-74	18	22.8%
75+	4	5.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	12	15.2%
No	67	84.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

What is your religion or belief?

	Frequency	Percent
Christian	41	53.2%
None	34	44.2%
Hindu	1	1.3%
Jewish	1	1.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### What is your ethnicity?

	Frequency	Percent
White British	70	95.9%
Arab or Middle Eastern	1	1.4%
Travelling Community	1	1.4%
White Non-British	1	1.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### How would you describe your sexual orientation?

	Frequency	Percent
Heterosexual/straight	65	97.0%
Bisexual	2	3.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### Residents (90 responses)

### Do you agree or disagree with this approach (to balance the budget further)?

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	6	6.7%
Agree	13	14.4%
Neither agree nor disagree	14	15.6%
Disagree	21	23.3%
Strongly disagree	36	40.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### Please tell us why.

	Frequency
Disagree: Raising additional income and considering third party contributions: Parking charges general	26
Disagree: Changes to front line service delivery: Early years/nursery provision	11
Disagree: Suggest alternatives	8
Agree: Balanced/least impact	7

	<b>Frequency</b>
Agree: Increase in parking charges	5
Disagree: Raising additional income and considering third party contributions: Durham parking charges	5
Disagree: Changes to front line service delivery: AAP budgets	4
Disagree: Raising additional income and considering third party contributions: Seaham parking charges	4
Disagree: Changes to front line service delivery: Allotments	3
Need more information on options considered	3
Agree: Supportive of back-office savings	2
Disagree: Changes to front line service delivery: Impact on communities especially poorer/vulnerable/rural	2
Disagree: Changes to front line service delivery: Neighbourhood protection	2
Disagree: Cost of living	2
Disagree: Impact on those affected	2
Disagree: Savings from back office/efficiencies: Concern about ongoing reduction in services	2
Agree: Supportive of AAP changes	1
Disagree: Changes to front line service delivery: Essential services/staff	1
Disagree: Changes to front line service delivery: Impact on voluntary sector	1
Miscellaneous	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>93</b>

**What do you feel will be the impact of this approach upon you, your community or those you represent?**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Extremely positive	0	0.0%
Positive	2	2.2%
Neither negative nor positive	15	16.7%
Negative	36	40.0%
Extremely negative	37	41.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Why do you believe this to be the case?**

	<b>Frequency</b>
Raising additional income and considering third party contributions: Parking charges in general	18
Changes to front line service delivery: Impact on communities especially poorer/vulnerable/rural	7
Changes to front line service delivery: Service changes in general	7
Savings from back office/efficiencies: Impact on services	7
Changes to front line service delivery: Early year/nursery provision	6
Non-specific/general negative: Cost of living	5
Insufficient information	4
Raising additional income and considering third party contributions: Seaham parking charges	4
Raising additional income and considering third party contributions: Durham parking charges	4
Changes to front line service delivery: Neighbourhood protection: ASB rise	3
Changes to front line service delivery: AAP budgets	2
Changes to front line service delivery: Allotments	2
Non-specific/general negative: Too much. Services/communities already struggling	2
Raising additional income and considering third party contributions: Raising income in general	2
Changes to front line service delivery: Essential services/staff	1
Changes to front line service delivery: Impact on voluntary sector	1
Non-specific/general negative: Suggest alternatives	1
Positive: Durham car parking	1
Positive: Parking charges in general	1
Other (miscellaneous)	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>81</b>

**Do you have any additional ideas or suggestions as to areas where we can raise further income or become more efficient in the years to come?**

	<b>Frequency</b>
Rationalise/manage council assets/buildings and land/more efficient buildings/change use	13
Review staff/councillor structures	9
Councillor/senior officer pay/expenses	8
Review grounds maintenance services	7
Review processes: Business/admin	6
Review procurement services/funding for public/private partnerships	6
Ideas outside authority control	4
Local economy investment	4
Reduce events programme, such as Lumiere, bonfire night	4

	Frequency
Review council tax on empty properties/reduction scheme	4
Review rubbish collection services/fees	4
Review university/student contribution to local economy	4
Highways infringement/speeding fines	3
Stop Durham County News/reduce comms/marketing and advertising	3
Stop new buildings projects such as DLI/HQ	3
Charging for library services	2
Digital solutions	2
Increase environmental fines	2
Invest in volunteering/community-based support	2
More working from home	2
Road maintenance	2
Advertising income opportunities	1
Commercial income in venues	1
Invest in family services to save elsewhere	1
Invest in youth services to save elsewhere	1
Licensing fees	1
Need more information on options considered	1
Public transport review	1
Recycling services: Profit generation	1
Reduce/stop councillors neighbourhood budgets	1
Seasonal/tiered parking charges	1
Tackle fraud	1
Miscellaneous	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>111</b>

### **County council employees (10 responses)**

**Do you agree or disagree with this approach (to balance the budget further)?**

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	1	11.1%
Agree	1	11.1%

	Frequency	Percent
Neither agree nor disagree	2	22.2%
Disagree	4	44.4%
Strongly disagree	1	11.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Please tell us why**

	Frequency
Disagree: Changes to front line service delivery: Early years/nursery provision	3
Agree: Increase in parking charges	2
Agree: Balanced/least impact	1
Disagree: Changes to front line service delivery: AAP budgets	1
Disagree: Changes to front line service delivery: Essential services/staff	1
Disagree: Changes to front line service delivery: Neighbourhood protection	1
Disagree: Raising additional income and considering third party contributions: Seaham parking charges	1
Disagree: Savings from back office/efficiencies: Concern about ongoing reduction in services	1
Miscellaneous	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>

**What do you feel will be the impact of this approach upon you, your community or those you represent?**

	Frequency	Percent
Extremely positive	0	0.0%
Positive	0	0.0%
Neither negative nor positive	4	44.4%
Negative	4	44.4%
Extremely negative	1	11.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Why do you believe this to be the case?**

	Frequency
Changes to front line service delivery: Early year/nursery provision	2
Changes to front line service delivery: Essential services/staff	2
Positive: Parking charges in general	2
Changes to front line service delivery: AAP budgets	1
Changes to front line service delivery: Service changes in general	1
Insufficient information	1
Raising additional income and considering third party contributions: Seaham parking charges	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>

**Do you have any additional ideas or suggestions as to areas where we can raise further income or become more efficient in the years to come?**

	Frequency
Digital solutions	1
Increase environmental fines	1
Rationalise/manage council assets/buildings and land/more efficient buildings/change use	1
Reduce events programme, such as Lumiere, bonfire night	1
Reduce layers of government: T&P/DCC	1
Review grounds maintenance services	1
Review processes: Business/admin	1
Review procurement services/funding for public/private partnerships	1
Stop Durham County News/reduce comms/marketing and advertising	1
Talk to and record staff ideas	1
Miscellaneous	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>

Of the ten responses from county council employees, four identified themselves as County Durham residents.

Businesses (6 responses)

**Do you agree or disagree with this approach (to balance the budget further)?**

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	0	0.0%



	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Agree	0	0.0%
Neither agree nor disagree	0	0.0%
Disagree	3	50.0%
Strongly disagree	3	50.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Please tell us why.**

	<b>Frequency</b>
Disagree: Raising additional income and considering third party contributions: Parking charges general	3
Disagree: Changes to front line service delivery: AAP budgets	1
Disagree: Changes to front line service delivery: Early years/nursery provision	1
Disagree: Changes to front line service delivery: Impact on communities especially poorer/vulnerable/rural	1
Disagree: Cost of living	1
Disagree: Raising additional income and considering third party contributions: Seaham parking charges	1
Disagree: Suggest alternatives	1
Need more information on options considered	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>

**What do you feel will be the impact of this approach upon you, your community or those you represent?**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Extremely positive	0	0.0%
Positive	0	0.0%
Neither negative nor positive	0	0.0%
Negative	3	50.0%
Extremely negative	3	50.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Why do you believe this to be the case?**

	Frequency
Raising additional income and considering third party contributions: Parking charges in general	2
Changes to front line service delivery: AAP budgets	1
Changes to front line service delivery: Early year/nursery provision	1
Changes to front line service delivery: Impact on communities especially poorer/vulnerable/rural	1
Changes to front line service delivery: Service changes in general	1
Non-specific/general negative: Cost of living	1
Raising additional income and considering third party contributions: Raising income in general	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>

**Do you have any additional ideas or suggestions as to areas where we can raise further income or become more efficient in the years to come?**

	Frequency
Review council tax on empty properties/reduction scheme	2
Better partnership working to achieve efficiencies	1
Councillor/senior officer pay/expenses	1
Invest in youth services to save elsewhere	1
Public transport review	1
Review rubbish collection services/fees	1
Road maintenance	1
Other	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>

Three of the six businesses were residents.

### **Organisations (8 responses)**

**Do you agree or disagree with this approach (to balance the budget further)?**

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	0	0.0%
Agree	1	12.5%
Neither agree nor disagree	1	12.5%
Disagree	3	37.5%

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Strongly disagree	3	37.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Please tell us why.**

	<b>Frequency</b>
Disagree: Raising additional income and considering third party contributions: Parking charges general	3
Disagree: Changes to front line service delivery: AAP budgets	2
Agree: Balanced/least impact	1
Agree: Increase in parking charges	1
Disagree: Changes to front line service delivery: Allotments	1
Disagree: Changes to front line service delivery: Early years/nursery provision	1
Disagree: Changes to front line service delivery: Impact on communities especially poorer/vulnerable/rural	1
Disagree: Changes to front line service delivery: Impact on voluntary sector	1
Disagree: Suggest alternatives	1
Need more information on options considered	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>

**What do you feel will be the impact of this approach upon you, your community or those you represent?**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Extremely positive	0	0.0%
Positive	0	0.0%
Neither negative nor positive	1	12.5%
Negative	4	50.0%
Extremely negative	3	37.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Why do you believe this to be the case?**

	<b>Frequency</b>
Raising additional income and considering third party contributions: Parking charges in general	2

	Frequency
Changes to front line service delivery: AAP budgets	1
Changes to front line service delivery: Early year/nursery provision	1
Changes to front line service delivery: Essential services/staff	1
Changes to front line service delivery: Impact on communities especially poorer/vulnerable/rural	1
Changes to front line service delivery: Impact on voluntary sector	1
Changes to front line service delivery: Service changes in general	1
Non-specific/general negative: Cost of living	1
Raising additional income and considering third party contributions: Durham parking charges	1
Raising additional income and considering third party contributions: Raising income in general	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>

**Do you have any additional ideas or suggestions as to areas where we can raise further income or become more efficient in the years to come?**

	Frequency
Better partnership working to achieve efficiencies	1
Councillor/senior officer pay/expenses	1
Invest in youth services to save elsewhere	1
Local economy investment	1
Review processes: Business/admin	1
Review rubbish collection services/fees	1
Road maintenance	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>

**Durham Youth Council members (7 responses)**

**Do you agree or disagree with this approach (to balance the budget further)?**

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	0	0.0%
Agree	4	57.1%
Neither agree nor disagree	2	28.6%
Disagree	1	14.3%

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Please tell us why.**

	Frequency
Agree: Balanced/least impact	3
Disagree: Changes to front line service delivery: Early years/nursery provision	3
Agree: Increase in parking charges	2
Agree: Supportive of back-office savings	1
Disagree: Changes to front line service delivery: AAP budgets	1
Disagree: Impact on those affected	1
Disagree: Raising additional income and considering third party contributions: Parking charges general	1
Need more information on options considered	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>

**What do you feel will be the impact of this approach upon you, your community or those you represent?**

	Frequency	Percent
Extremely positive	0	0.0%
Positive	0	0.0%
Neither negative nor positive	4	57.1%
Negative	3	42.9%
Extremely negative	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Why do you believe this to be the case?**

	Frequency
Neither agree/disagree: Proposals will have no impact	2
Raising additional income and considering third party contributions: Parking charges in general	2
Changes to front line service delivery: AAP budgets	1
Changes to front line service delivery: Early year/nursery provision	1

	<b>Frequency</b>
Changes to front line service delivery: Essential services/staff	1
Non-specific/general negative: Cost of living	1
Positive: Parking charges in general	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>

**Do you have any additional ideas or suggestions as to areas where we can raise further income or become more efficient in the years to come?**

	<b>Frequency</b>
Councillor/senior officer pay/expenses	1
Review grounds maintenance services	1
Seasonal/tiered parking charges	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>

## **Consultation on further proposals to balance the Council budget – October 2023 savings plan**

### **AAP feedback summary, November 2023**

**Our proposed approach to balance the budget further has identified additional savings of £1.9 million in 2024/25 and £2.9 million across the four-year period from savings from back office and making efficiencies, raising additional income and changes to delivering frontline services – what is the AAP view on this approach?**

There is a general tone of understanding and appreciation with regards to the Council's financial situation. One AAP commented, in respect of this, that it would be *reasonable to suppose and expect that senior managers review the Councils budget with a view to making significant savings and that all savings should reflect the demographic make-up and needs of the local population.*

**(a) Back-office savings and efficiencies:** Three AAPs raised concerns covering this category. Concerns were raised around the efficiency of the Council regarding further staff cuts. Concern pointed towards “*good staff*” being lost due to these increased costs, problems with recruitment and not having enough staff to deliver services. Concerns were also raised regarding staff working arrangements asking whether an assessment of the council buildings had been carried out following the move to hybrid working with questions raised around the negative side of hybrid working and also the costs of being relocated to different parts of the county.

#### **(b) Raising additional income:**

**Parking charges:** The majority of AAPs (Nine) mentioned parking charges proposals. A number of concerns and questions were raised regarding these proposals covering:

- unfairness that staff parking at CH/other council premises isn't included in the proposals.
- is the £1.3 million saving quoted an actual saving - had the costs of introduction and monitoring of this been taken into account?
- re-assurance that charges would not increase to an exorbitant amount.
- a number of impacts this proposal could have (see question 2)

#### **(c) Changes to delivering front-line services:**

**Nursery provision proposals:** One AAP commented regarding nursery provision proposals covered our social responsibility and reducing local nursery provision would not be beneficial. It was questioned with concern as to whether proposals would lead to increased charges.

**AAP proposals:** One AAP requested that if the Council consolidate/reform the APPs that they do so in a thoughtful way, *keeping kindred communities grouped together not clumping different groups together because they are within the same geographical area.* One AAP also noted regarding Neighbourhood Budgets and the *capital/revenue split that is applied to the budget, the rules around capital/revenue split are restrictive and there should be some flexibility.*

Although not included in the October savings plan One AAP raised concern with the potential loss of the County Durham News. (Covered in July savings plan)

**What do you feel will be the impact of this approach upon you, your communities or those you represent? – why do you believe this would be the case?**

***Impact on local providers, community groups and small organisations:***

Five AAP commented in respect of this impact. One APP commented on the impact of the savings proposals on other providers, in respect of demand for services not being met by further efficiencies and cuts and local providers *having to pick up the backlog*.

Additional concerns regarding the impact on other providers were very much intertwined with the savings proposals regarding AAPs.

In respect of savings proposals covering AAPs six commented specifically that the removal of revenue funding from AAPs will *result in local community groups (who rely on revenue to keep going will) suffering*. Reducing this element will *seriously damage small organisation's ability to function in the community*. *Building improvements and capital projects are usually less important to organisations. Revenue projects will suffer which will impact smaller groups*.

The importance of the AAPs within the community and the support and funding provided to local organisations was stressed urging for the AAP budgets not to be cut with fears expressed about the potential impact on further cuts and the *ability to cope*.

It was commented on that from a VCS perspective they are all being asked to do more, with increased demand with less funding. The AAPs provide so much funding support to the small, local service providers so from an AAP point of view, if their budgets are reduced, *who will be there to support the smaller communities, e.g., Chilton, Cornforth, Ferryhill*.

***Impact on residents:***

One AAP commented specifically on the impact on the AAP proposals for local residents commenting the proposal to cut £10k from each AAP's Area Budget will have a negative impact on communities. This funding is used to support the most vulnerable in our communities, and the impact going forward may in fact *increase costs for DCC picking up the pieces, I see this as a really negative move. We need to make sure we can spend money locally, we as an AAP know the local issues, and in my view, it would be beneficial for us to retain that funding as an AAP*.

***AAP staff:***

It was commented on by One AAP that savings proposals focused on the AAPs could result in loss of staff as building projects and capital projects are less important to small groups for example in the Stanley area.

***Impact on rural areas:***

One AAP commented that the rural areas can be perceived as a quick win for budget reduction the reality is it *creates wider and longer lasting repercussions which disproportionately has an adverse effect*.

***Impacts regarding parking charges specially:***



Out of the nine AAPs that commented on the parking charges proposals five discussed the impact the proposal would have covering the following:

- visitor numbers (concerning coastal destinations)
- public health and wellbeing
- local businesses when we are trying to improve our economy
- local residents e.g., in the event that visitors would move to park in local residential streets to avoid parking charges.
- town centres – specifically regarding the removal of the free parking after 2pm initiative

### ***Impact on Town and Parish Councils:***

One AAP mentioned the impact of the savings proposals may have on small Parish Councils who have very low budgets to provide services, meaning a lot will have to *cut back on what they can do*. It was also noted that Service Level Agreements with Parish Councils are being removed and potentially going out to private companies potentially taking work away from the local workforce.

From a GAMP point of view, in relation to the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme it was commented that the Council are proposing to reduce funding to local T&PCs. *From a Great Aycliffe Town Council perspective this means we would lose £100k in finance from the Council and will have to raise council tax as a Town Council by at least 3%, over and above the expected 2.5%. which will greatly impact on local residents. Rather than doing that why don't the Council raise their Council Tax across the board to achieve similar income but from a larger pot.*

**Do you have any additional ideas or suggestions as to areas where we can raise further income or become more efficient in the years to come?**

### ***Making best use of funds / resources / investments and not being wasteful in the first instance: (Five APPs)***

- What happens to County Hall 'asset' once it's been cleared, will there be any revenue from it?
- Did the Council make any profit from the sale of the HQ building at the Sands?
- Empty buildings/properties: for example:
  - 1 AAP commented that there was an empty school building in the area, costing a lot of money in terms of resources from the Fire Service, Police and Council - Can we ensure that what resources there are, are better used?
  - Durham City Centre: The Council is stalling on the sign off on Durham City Centre developments. They are wasting money paying for security to manage empty/complete buildings. Surely the Council as losing rent income as a result that could help the current budget situation?
- Student Accommodation: linked to the delayed City Centre developments - has income been lost?
- Concern with the level of returns on the investments: the investment in Eldon and Coundon Grange area was highlighted. Concerns with outcomes not been met and suggested recursive action be taken with investors.
- Lumiere: £800k spent on Lumiere, how essential is this and could not supporting this be considered as an alternative to increasing parking charges?

- Regeneration schemes: example Newton Aycliffe village, cycle path scheme, around 1 mile in length and cost £300k+, but it's not really being used.

***Working in partnership: (Two AAPs)***

- Has the Council thought about working in partnership with a private enterprise rather than trying to continue to offer services within the budget they have?
- We have a strong VCS within County Durham, great organisations who are working in communities who are linked to AAPs and who are keen to work in partnership. If the Council can't operate these services, can the VCS operate them on their behalf?

***Additional income from parking related fees and charges: (Two AAPs)***

- Parking charges generated from Council staff car parks and Park and Ride parking.
- Speed / traffic cameras: A lot of places e.g., Newcastle City Centre, probably generate income from speeding fines, but DCC appear to have abandoned that?
- Fining poorly parked vehicles especially outside of schools, this could be a potential income generator. As an example, Edinburgh Council are now fining motorists who park on pavements.

***Catering service: (One AAP)***

- Could DCC Catering be used to also make money externally for functions, events, conferences?

***Resident initiative: (One AAP)***

- Homeless people collecting plastic and metal for a weigh in to earn money - is this something we can do in County Durham? This is a cost saving in terms of collection and saves the service.

***Additional council tax income: (One AAP)***

- As there are around 40k households in County Durham that pay no council tax, it was suggested charging these households £100 per year to generate around £4m in revenue.
- The public should be given the opportunity to have their say on whether they would support a small increase in their council tax above 4.99% - they accept an additional extra 1%, to prevent the closure/reduction of services. Information could be included in the yearly council tax notifications.

***Generating income from providing homes and services for asylum seekers: (One AAP)***

- What might there be in the way of opportunities to generate income which is going to make a difference quickly for example get empty homes back into use again - funding could be raised by providing homes and services for asylum seekers.