

Responses to Public Engagement relating to the 2017/18 Budget

There were four key questions included in the Public Engagement . The questions are reproduced below along with summarised responses. There were 223 responses

Q1. Do you agree with the direction of this budget strategy, which is aimed at protecting investment in public services?

60% of respondents agreed with the direction of the Budget Strategy

Q2: Please identify your top three priority services that you would want to protect:

The top three were:

Schools and education	18%
Adult Social Care	15%
Roads and Transport	13%

Q3: Please identify your top three priority services that you would be prepared to reduce:

The top three were:

Parking	17%
Planning and Building control	15%
Council Tax Support	13%

Q4: Central Government has indicated that local authorities may increase their council tax by up to 4.99% (by up to 1.99% for general services and up to 3% for adult social care). An increase above this amount would require a local referendum. How do you think the Council should respond in setting its council tax for 2017/18?

The answers to the above question have been grouped together in broad categories below which provide a general indication of opinion. The question was designed to enable respondents to provide their own comments rather than a simple yes/no response. Responses have therefore been grouped to reflect the key messages from the responses received and are intended as a guide to the decision process.

Theme of comment	Number of comments	
Request more Government funding	7	3%
Have referendum on matter	18	8%
No clear answer	6	3%
No referendum on matter	2	1%
Not supportive of increase	66	30%
Staff/councillors reduction	11	5%
Supportive of increase (less than 4.99%)	51	23%
Supportive of Increase of 4.99%	62	28%
Total	223	100%

Key points

51% of respondents agreed that a Council Tax increase is necessary (of which 28% were supportive of the maximum increase of 4.99%)

3% of respondents felt that the Council should lobby central Government for more funding whilst 8% recommended a referendum.

30% of respondents were not in support of any increase.

5% felt that further cuts in staffing or Councillors expenses should be made.

The answers are broadly consistent with Q1 relating to the Budget strategy.