Report of the Deputy Chief Executive

BUDGET CONSULTATION 2021/22

1. Purpose of report

To report the results of the 2021/22 budget consultation exercise that took place during October and November 2020.

2. Background

As with the 2020/21 budget consultation exercise, a web-based survey, publicised through social media, has been used to consult on the 2021/22 budget. This included no reference to any specific policy options but sought views on all Council services and indications of satisfaction, or otherwise, with these as well as the way in which they are provided and with the local area generally.

Local people were asked for their preferred approach to balancing the Council's budget and to provide an indication as to which services they thought should have their funding increased, decreased or remain the same.

Residents were asked how frequently they access Council services and how satisfied they were with the way in which this can be done. They were also asked how they prefer to conduct business with the Council and if they would they would consider accessing services in another way. Finally, they were asked if they thought that the Council listened to them.

Respondents were also asked to provide demographic data, including which area of the borough they live in so that any correlation between location and satisfaction levels could be analysed.

A total of 277 responses were received. The number of responses received compared was 130 less than the 407 responses received for the budget consultation 2020/21, The results are summarised in Appendix 1 whilst Appendix 2 summarises the demographic data for the respondents.

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to CONSIDER the report and RESOLVE accordingly.

Background papers
Nil

APPENDIX 1

Summary of Respondents

The sample of respondents is representative of the local communities in Broxtowe, although the analysis of ethnicity indicates a bias towards White British respondents. 93% of respondents indicated they considered themselves to be White British and 3% White/Other. The remaining 4% were split between Asian, Black or Mixed race and any other ethnic group categories.

In terms of gender, 54% of the respondents were male and 43% were female whilst the other 3% of respondents preferred not to stated their gender.

83% of respondents identified as over 45 years old with 24% between 45-59, 15% between 60-64 and 45% over 65. The number of younger respondents was higher than in the previous year with 40% of under 45s responding compared to 26% in 2020/21. This represents an improvement of 14%.

In terms of geographical location, Beeston residents responded the most (22%). However, this represents a decrease of 5% compared with last year. Chilwell accounted for 13.6% of respondents which was a decrease of 1.4% compared to last year. Similarly, Stapleford accounted for 13.6% of respondents which was 2.6% higher than last year. However, as last year, there was at least one respondent from every area except Strelley Village.

A full breakdown of gender, age ranges, ethnicity, disability and location is included in Appendix 2. As a proportion of the total population of Broxtowe, the number of respondents means that the results cannot be taken as statistically significant. It is advisable therefore to only consider the results as indications of local views rather than attempt to draw strategic conclusions from the detailed responses.

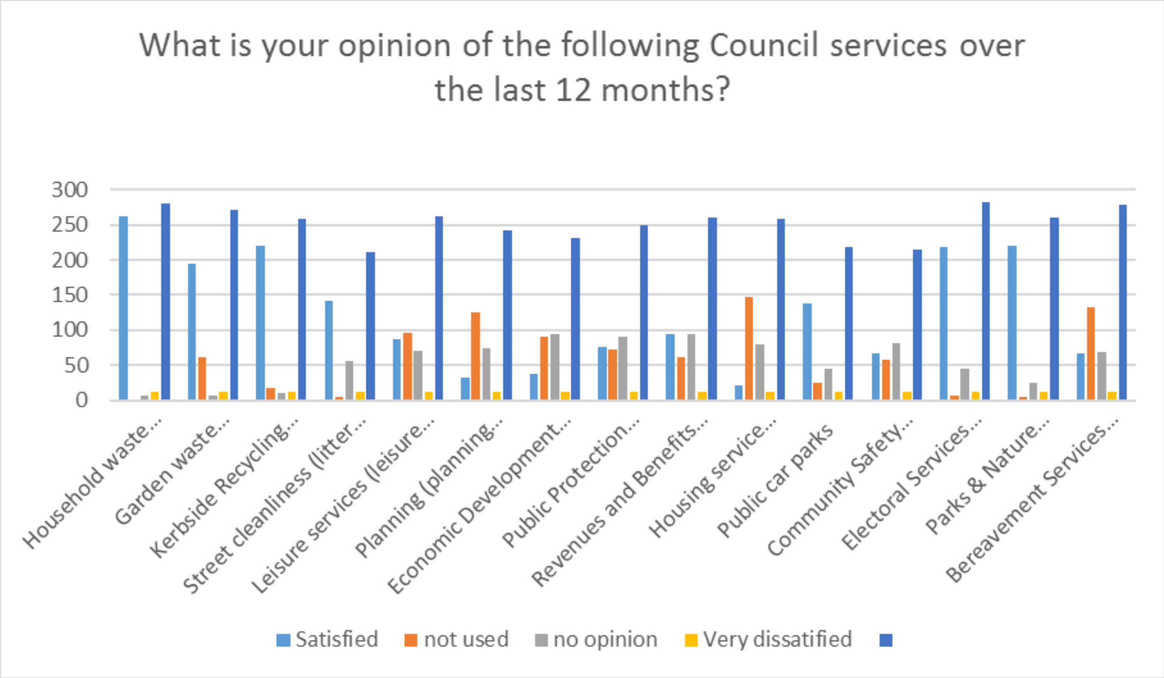
Satisfaction with Services

In overall terms, local people are satisfied with the borough of Broxtowe and the Council's management of it. 73% of people are either 'satisfied' or very 'satisfied' with the area in which they live which is a decrease on the 75% figure in the 2020/21 consultation. 64% are either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the way that the Council delivers services which is the same level as 2020/21 positive response. However, 2% of people are 'very dissatisfied' in both categories which is a decrease on the 3% figure in last year consultation.

Figure 1 analyses the level of satisfaction with individual Council services over the last twelve months. The services with the highest satisfied responses were Household Waste Collection (black lidded bin) with 95% (up from 87% in the previous year) and Kerbside Recycling (green lidded bin, glass bag or red lidded glass bin, textiles) with 70% (down from 77% in the previous year). The services with the highest dissatisfied responses were Street Cleanliness with

28% (down from 30% in 2020/21 and, Community Safety with 25% (down from 29% in 2020/21).

Figure 1



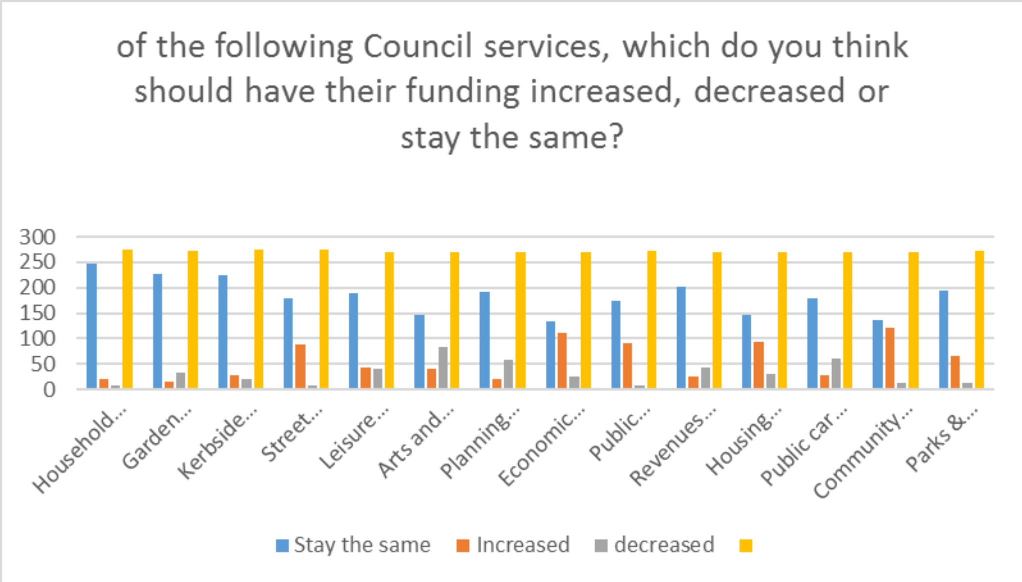
Spending on Services

When asked about whether spending on services should be increased, decreased or stay the same, Community Safety (45%), Economic Development (support to businesses, regeneration, business growth) (41%) and the Housing Service (34%) scored the highest in terms of respondents thinking their funding should be increased. Arts and Culture (31%), public car parks (22%) and Planning (planning applications and planning policy) (21%) scored the highest in terms of respondents thinking their funding should be decreased.

Household Waste Collection (90%), Garden Waste Collection (brown lidded bin) (83%) and Kerbside Recycling (82%) scored highest in terms of respondents thinking their funding should stay the same. This could be interpreted as indicating a relationship with satisfaction levels as both services secured the highest satisfaction rating. This pattern is reflected in most services with respondents consistently voting more for the funding of services to stay the same.

Figure 2 provides detailed analysis on whether spending on services should be increased, decreased or stay the same across a range of Council activities.

Figure 2



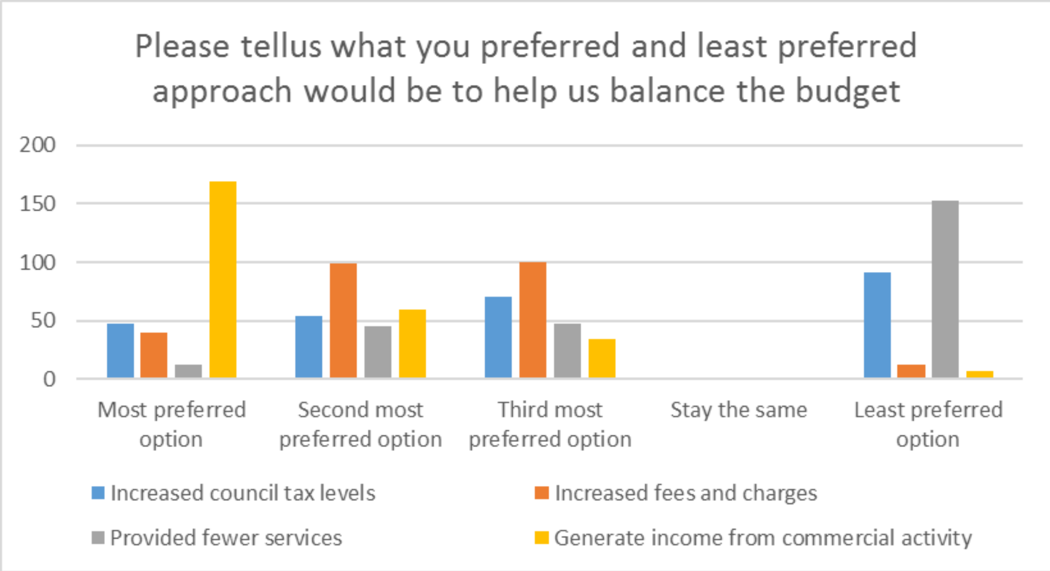
Balancing the Budget

Respondents were asked to state their preferred and least preferred approach to help the Council balance its budget.

By far the post preferred option for balancing the budget with 63% is generating income from commercial activity followed by increasing council tax with 18% and, increased fees & charges with 16%.

The least preferred option for balancing the budget was to provide fewer services with 59% of respondents followed by increasing council tax levels with 35%.

Figure 3



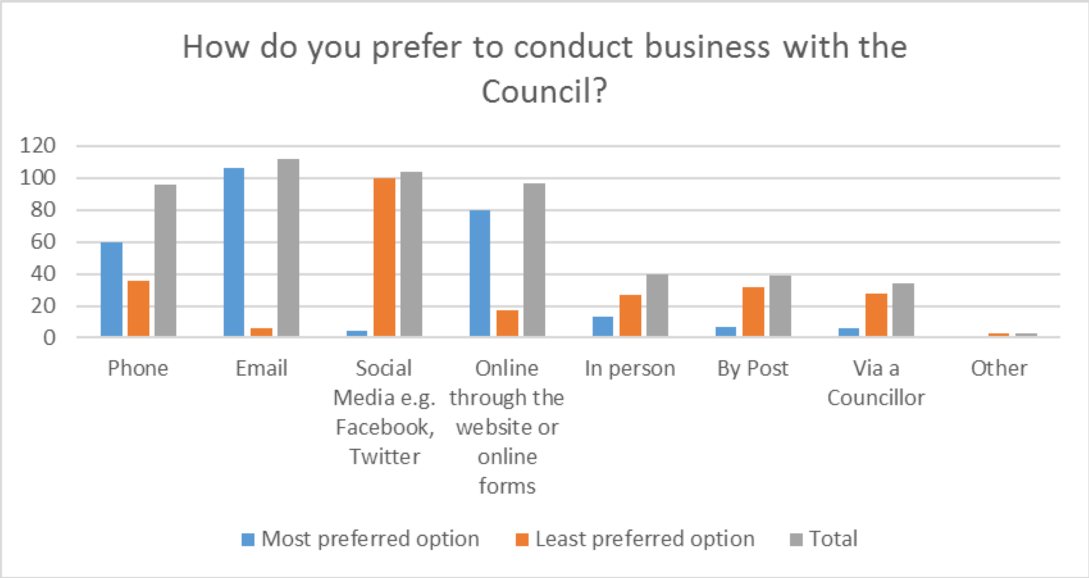
Communicating with the Council

As in 2020/21, respondents were asked a yes/no question as to whether they feel the Council listens to them. The results showed that 54% answered no with 46% answering Yes in the 2021/22 budget consultation. This was a reduction of answer yes by 5% and an increase of answering No by 6% compared to 2020/21 responses.

To obtain further information on how to shape services in future, local people were asked about how satisfied they are with the ways they can access Council services and how they prefer to contact the Council to do business. 70% of respondents were either very satisfied or satisfied with the way they can access Council services which represents an increase of 6% on the figure of 64% in 2020/21. 10% of respondents were either very dissatisfied or dissatisfied with the way in which they can access Council services which is a reduction of 1% on the 11% figure for 2020/21. However, 21% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (i.e. neutral) which is represent a reduction of 4% to the 25% in 2020/21.

In terms of what methods of communication local people prefer to use, there was clearly a preference in the 2021/22 budget consultation for online or email contact which reinforced the results from 2020/21. However, it must be remembered that all respondents were already able to access services online by virtue of them completing this survey. Via Social Media e.g. Facebook, Twitter was the least preferred method of conducting business with the Council followed by via Councillor in second and by post in third place. Further details are set out in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4


How do you prefer to conduct business with the Council?
120
100
80
60
40
20
0
Phone
Email
Social Media e.g. Facebook, Twitter
Online through the website or online forms
In person
By Post
Via a Councillor
Other
Most preferred option
Least preferred option
Total

APPENDIX 2

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

	Number	% of Total
Gender		
Male	147	54%
Female	117	43%
Prefer not to say	8	3%
Age		
Under 18	0	0%
18-24	1	0.4%
25-29	5	2%
30-44	40	15%
45-59	65	24%
60-64	40	15%
65+	123	45%
Ethnic Origin		
White - British	247	93%
White - Irish	0	0%
White - Other Background	9	3%
Asian or Asian British - Indian	2	1%
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0%
Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi	0	0%
Asian or Asian British - Other Background	0	0%
British or Black British - Caribbean	2	1%
British or Black British - African	0	0%
British or Black British - Other Background	0	0%
Mixed - White and Black Caribbean	0	0%
Mixed - White and Black African	0	0%
Mixed - White and Asian	1	0.4%
Mixed - Other Background	0	0%
Chinese	0	0%
Any Other Ethnic Group	5	2%
Disabled or with Long Term Health Problems Limiting Daily Activity		
Yes	58	21%
No	214	79%

Area		
Attenborough	6	2%
Awsworth	5	2%
Beeston	61	22%
Bramcote	27	10%
Brinsley	6	2%
Chilwell	37	13%
Cossall	1	0.4%
Eastwood	23	8%
Greasley	10	4%
Kimberley	8	3%
Newthorpe	13	5%
Nuthall	17	6%
Stapleford	37	14%
Toton	13	5%
Trowell	8	3%