

Report of the Interim Deputy Chief Executive

BUDGET CONSULTATION 2019/201. Purpose of report

To report the results of the budget 2019/20 consultation exercise that took place during October and November 2018.

2. Background

For 2014/15 and 2015/16 the Council consulted on the budget through the online system known as 'YouChoose'. This produced a limited number of responses but allowed for an analysis of local views about spending priorities at service level. For 2016/17, the new five year Corporate Plan presented an opportunity to join up public engagement on policy and financial matters and seek views on specific matters to inform the budget for 2016/17 and beyond.

Since 2017/18 a web-based survey, publicised through social media, has been used and this has again been adopted for 2019/20. This included no reference to any specific policy options but sought views on all Council services and indications of satisfaction, or otherwise, with both those services and with the local area generally. Local people were also asked whether they felt that additional income should be derived from council tax or fees and charges, or costs reduced by reductions in services. Finally respondents were asked about what method(s) they used to access Council services, how satisfied they were with them, and also whether they would consider accessing these services by other means.

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 415 responses were received. The amount of responses received (with the comparable web-based survey) compared with last years has reduced by 164 responses from 579 in 18/19, a 28% reduction. The results are summarised in Appendix 1. 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**

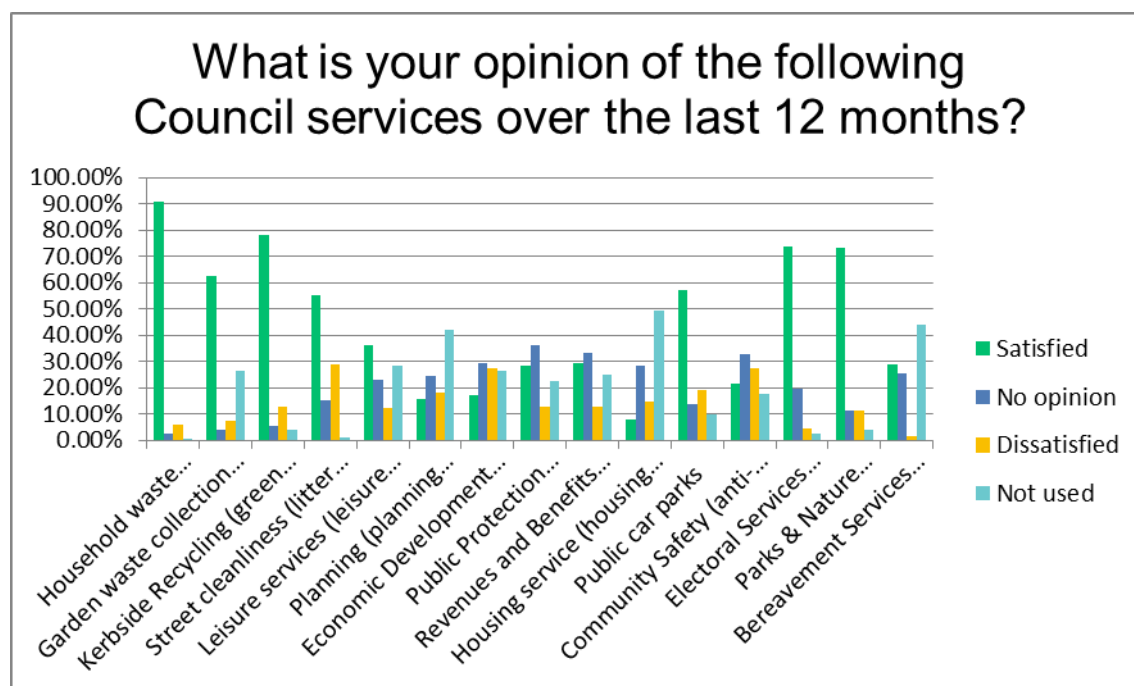
1. The sample of respondents is representative of the local communities in Broxtowe, although the analysis of ethnicity indicates a bias towards White British respondents. 92% of respondents indicated they considered themselves to be White British, 1% White Irish and 3% White/Other. The remaining 4% were split between Asian, Black or Mixed race categories.
2. In terms of gender, 56% of the respondents were male and 44% female.
3. 72% of respondents identified as over 45 years old, with 30% between 45-59 and 28% over 65. The number of younger respondents was higher than in previous years with 28% of under 45s responding compared to 23% in 2018/19. This has been consistently rising year on year since 2016/17 when only 12% of responses were from an age range under 45.
4. In terms of geographical location, Beeston residents responded the most (31%). This represents an increase of 5% compared with last year, followed by Stapleford (15%) and Chilwell (14%). There were fewer respondents in less urban areas. However, as last year, there was at least one respondent from every area. The split of geographical location was very similar to last year.
5. 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

6. In overall terms, local people are satisfied with the borough of Broxtowe and the Council's management of it. 74% of people are either 'satisfied' or very 'satisfied' with the area in which they live. This figure hasn't changed since the 2018/19 consultation showing continued levels of satisfaction. 59% are either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the way that the Council delivers services. However, this number is a reduction on last year where 73% responded positively. Just 3% of people are 'very dissatisfied' in both categories.
7. When collecting opinions of our services 56% overall expressed a view they were 'satisfied' with the services they use, with 25% not expressing an opinion and 18% 'dissatisfied'. This represents an overall decline compared to last year where 12% were 'dissatisfied' and 58% were 'satisfied'. The number of respondents not expressing an opinion has increased to 25%, from 18% last year. Figure 1 shows the breakdown by service.

8. The services with the highest satisfied responses were Household Waste Collection (black lidded bin; 91%), Kerbside Recycling (green lidded bin, glass bag or red lidded glass bin, textiles; 78%) and Electoral Services (74%). The services with the highest dissatisfied responses were Street Cleanliness (29%), Community safety (28%) and Economic Development (27%).

Figure 1



9. There were a number of comments about specific services which can be broken down broadly into headings. Table 1 below shows the number of responses in each broad category.

Table 1: Text commentary on satisfaction with services

Area of interest	No. of comments
Management/ Budgeting	26
Improve Urban Environment and Street Scene	14
Improvement of Refuse Collection	12
Recycling	10
Improving Community Safety	6
Invest in Businesses/ Communities	5
Garden Waste Collection & Cost	4
Car Parking- Cost & Efficiency	4
Student Accommodation	3

10. 117 comments were received relating to the satisfaction of the services the respondents use. The main themes addressed were:

- Management/Budgeting. Comments were made suggesting ways to change,; stop or increase Council spending, along with comments about the sale of the Town Hall.
- Urban Environment and Street Scene. There were many comments around the cleanliness of streets and disposal of waste from streets and public bins.
- Refuse Collection. Comments were made suggesting changes in frequency and timing of collections.
- Recycling was also another key theme with comments around what can be collected and how we could recycle more.

11. Positive comments were also made such as:

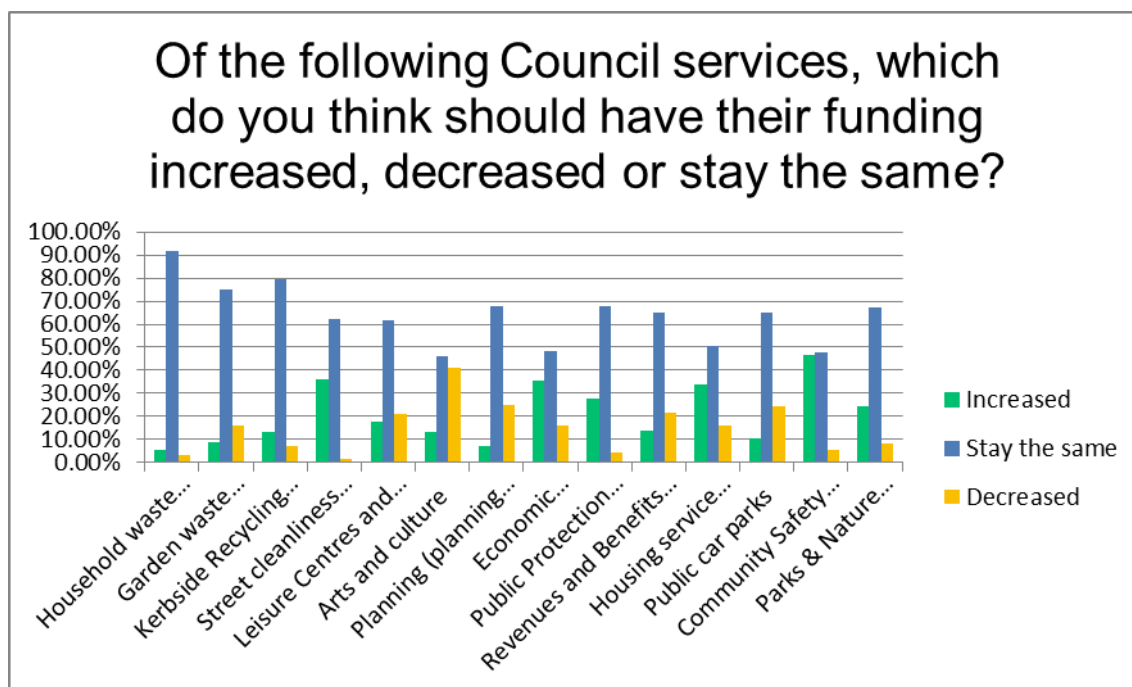
- Generally, I believe that Broxtowe have cared for our community better than other areas. When compares to the City Council we receive a much better service.
- Very happy with Broxtowe Borough Council.
- Local amenities continue to be a strength in this area.
- Superb face to face at the Beeston council office reception to assist me and my disabled father.

Spending on services

12. When asked about whether spending on services should be increased, decreased or stay the same, the responses showed inconsistency with satisfaction levels. Refuse collection, although being ranked the highest in satisfaction, received a result of 92% for the funding to remain. This pattern is reflected in most services, people have consistently voted more for the funding of the services to stay the same.

13. Community Safety (47%), Economic Development (36%) and Street Cleanliness (36%) were the services with the highest responses for increased funding. Services that are viewed as more discretionary, such as Arts and Culture (41%) and Planning (25%) were the services with the highest responses for decreased funding.

Figure 2



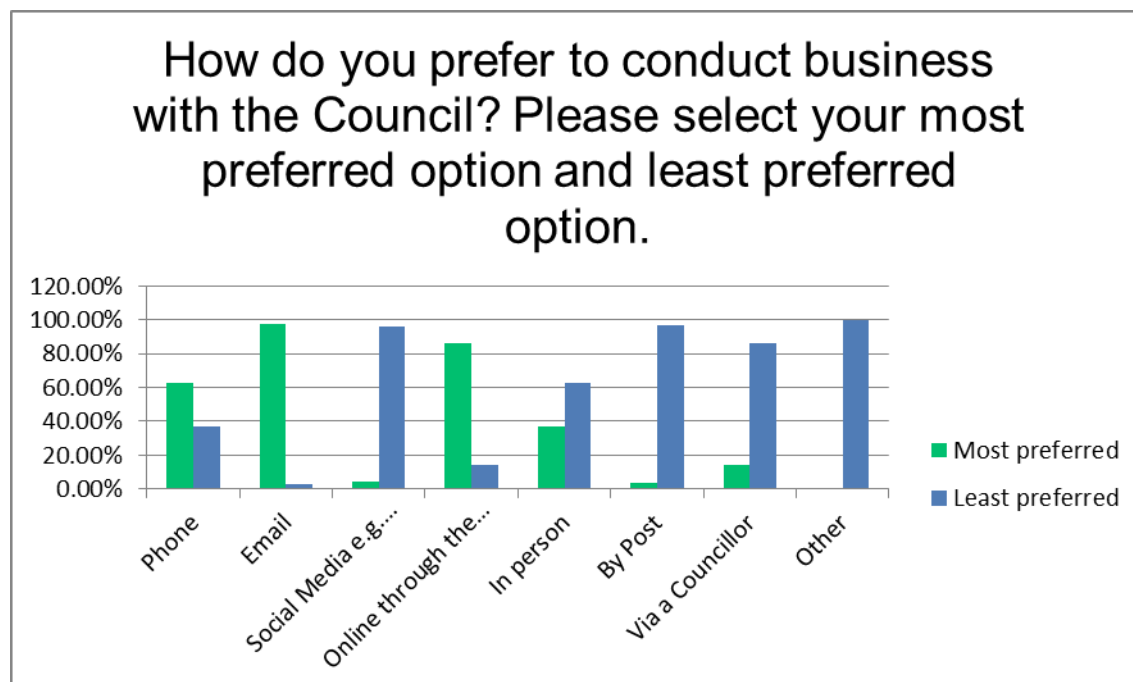
14. Overall the balance was in favour of increasing spending (21%) rather than decreasing spending (15%). However the majority view was to keep spending the same (64%).
15. Respondents were also invited to make suggestions about how the Council could increase income, reduce costs or make savings to support the budget.

Communicating with the Council

16. This year respondents were asked a yes/no question as to whether they feel the Council listens to them. The results showed that 59% answered no with 41% answering yes.
17. 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. 67% of respondents were either very satisfied or satisfied with the way they can access Council services. Only 7% were either very dissatisfied or dissatisfied. However, 26% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (i.e. neutral).

18. In terms of what methods of communication local people prefer to use, there was clearly a preference for online or email contact. However, it must be remembered that all respondents were already able to access services online by virtue of them completing this survey. Social media was by far the least preferred method of communication with post the second least.

Figure 4



19. In terms of accessing services by alternative means the highest responses were by means of email and online which were both the highest responses for most preferred means of communications.
20. An important part of the Council's economic development plans is the Beeston town centre regeneration (Phase 2) project. The planned development aims to provide additional housing and leisure services, and stimulate the evening economy.
21. As part of the 2019/20 budget proposals, the Council is planning to invest an further £250,000 in addition to that in 2018/19 to enhance and improve play areas and parks/open spaces across the borough.

APPENDIX 2

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

	Number	% of Total
Gender		
Male	222	55.92%
Female	174	43.83%
Non-Binary	1	0.25%
Age		
Under 18	1	0.25%
18-24	7	1.73%
25-29	20	4.95%
30-44	84	20.79%
45-59	119	29.46%
60-64	59	14.60%
65+	114	28.22%
Ethnic Origin		
White- British	366	92.19%
White- Irish	5	1.26%
White- other background	12	3.02%
Asian or Asian British- Indian	2	0.50%
Asian or Asian British- Pakistani	0	0.00%
Asian or Asian British- Bangladeshi	0	0.00%
Asian or Asian British- other background	0	0.00%
Black or Black British- Caribbean	1	0.25%
Black or Black British- African	1	0.25%
Black or Black British- other background	0	0.00%
Mixed- White and Black Caribbean	0	0.00%
Mixed- White and Black African	0	0.00%
Mixed- White and Asian	2	0.50%
Mixed- other background	1	0.25%
Chinese	0	0.00%
Any other ethnic group	7	1.76%
Disabled or with long term health needs		
Yes	77	19.11%
No	326	80.89%
Area		
Attenborough	6	1.47%
Awsworth	3	0.73%
Beeston	128	31.30%
Bramcote	44	10.76%
Brinsley	8	1.96%
Chilwell	57	13.94%
Cossall	2	0.49%
Eastwood	21	5.13%
Greasley	16	3.91%
Kimberley	13	3.18%
Nuthall	18	4.40%
Stapleford	59	14.43%
Toton	18	4.40%
Trowell	9	2.20%
Newthorpe	7	1.71%