

APPENDIX 1

BUDGET CONSULTATION1. Approach

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 the service level. For 2016/17, the 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.

For both 2017/18 and this year's exercise, a web-based survey, publicised through social media, has been used. 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 reduction 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. This is a reduction in responses of 28% compared with last year's results of 579 responses.

2. 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 which is in line with previous years. The number of younger respondents was higher than in previous years, with 28% of under 45's responding, compared to 23% in 2018/19.

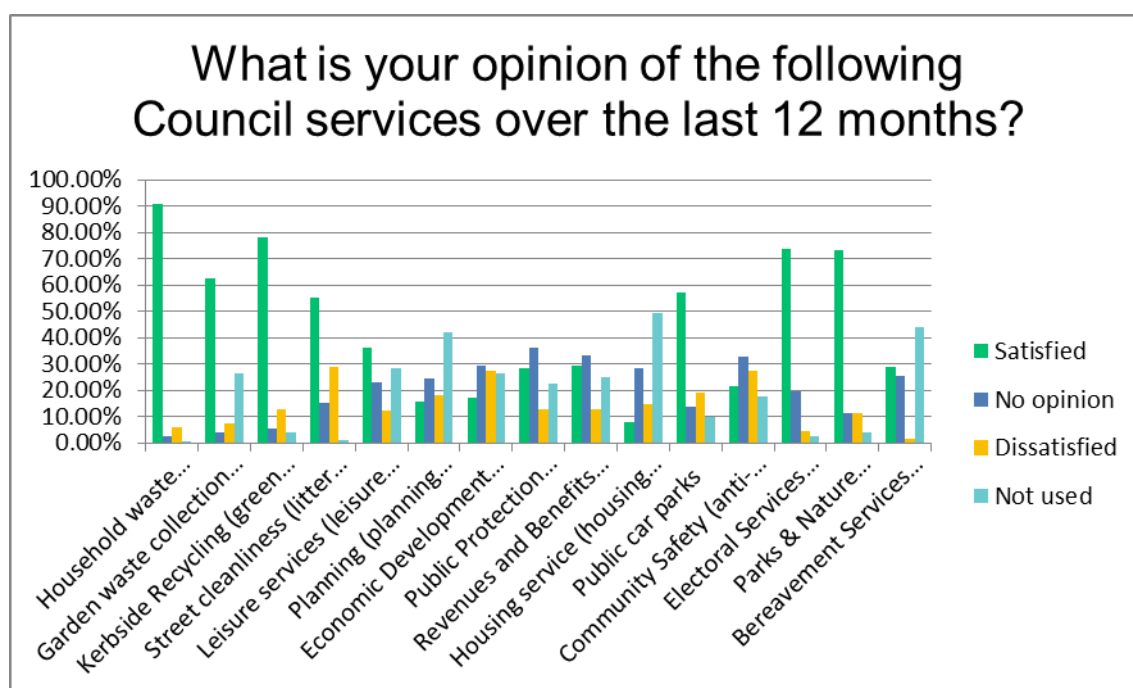
In terms of geographical location, Beeston residents responded the most (31%) followed by Stapleford (15%) and Chilwell (14%). There were fewer respondents in less urban areas with, however, like last year there was at least one respondent from every area. Other than that factor the split of geographical location was very similar to last year.

3. Satisfaction with services

1. 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.

18% of those who used services and expressed a view were 'dissatisfied' with the services they use, with 58% overall expressing satisfaction and 25% not expressing an opinion. Figure 1 shows the breakdown by service.

Figure 1: Satisfaction with services provided



Respondents were also invited to add any comments that they had about specific services. The comments often related to wider issues about the local area or the way that the Council conducts business. A summary of the areas where comments were made is provided in table 1. The table shows the number of comments received in respect of particular services or issues and therefore highlights the areas that are of greatest interest to local people.

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

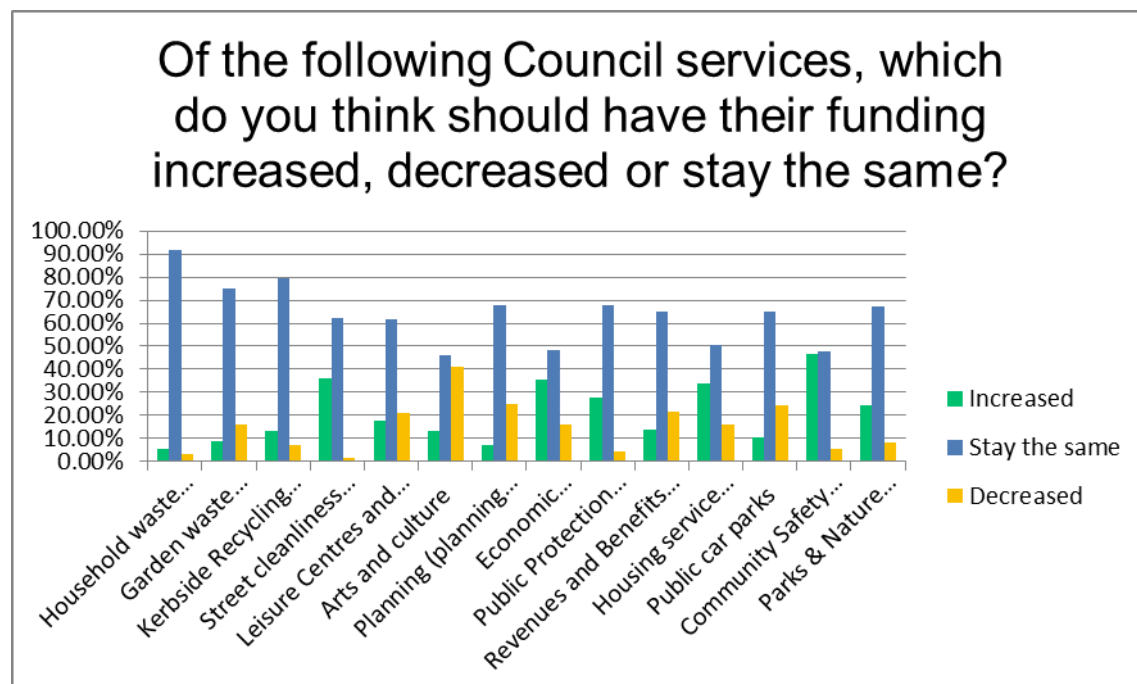
A number of positive comments were made which provided a balanced view and indicated that local people care about their local community and want to see improvements in the street scene and parks and open spaces. People also wish to see investment in local communities and facilities to enhance the Borough as an attractive place for residents, businesses and visitors.

4. Spending on services

When asked about whether spending on services should be increased, decreased or stay the same, the responses showed consistency with satisfaction levels. Of those services which were ranked as the highest for satisfaction, the same services were flagged as one of the highest for maintaining funding. However of those services which were ranked as the highest for dissatisfaction most were flagged as the highest for increased funding (namely Community Safety, Economic Development and Street Cleanliness). The results are shown in Figure 2 overleaf.

A sum of £3.953 Million is available in housing capital receipts for further social housing construction by the Council.

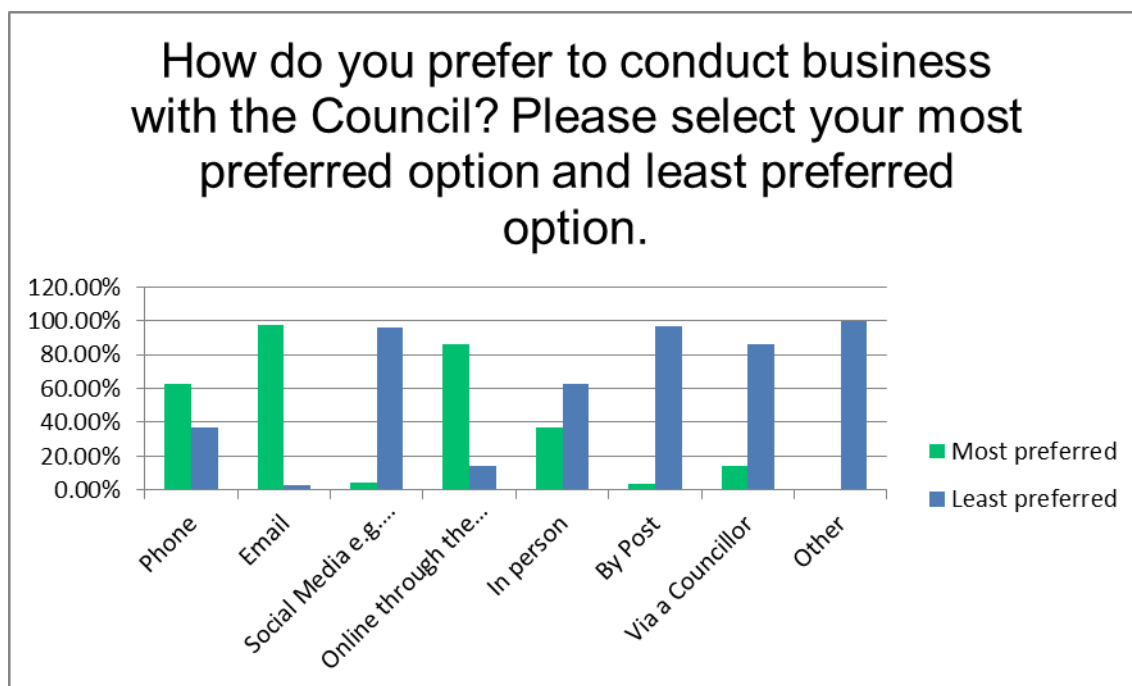
The Council has a Commercial Manager who is leading on taking forward initiative's set out in the Commercial Strategy; these include promoting the availability of space to Businesses looking to expand in the area.

Figure 2: Suggested areas for increasing or decreasing spending

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%).

Respondents were also invited to make suggestions about how the Council could increase income, reduce costs or make savings to support the budget. Suggestions included raising Council housing rents, reducing employee's, merging with other Council's and a main focus of comments around 'efficiency'.

To obtain further information on how to shape services in future, local people were asked about how they find out about 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). Figure 4 outlines the responses for preferred method of communicating with the Council.

Figure 4: Preferred method of communicating with the Council

In terms of what methods of communication local people prefer to use there was clearly a preference for on-line or email contact but 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.