Report of the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Personnel Policy

Budget Consultation 2026/27

1. Purpose of Report

   To report the results of the recent 2026/27 budget consultation exercise. This is in accordance with all of the Council's Corporate Priorities.

2. **Recommendation**

   Cabinet is asked to NOTE the outcome of the Budget Consultation and to consider the findings as part of the budget setting process for 2026/27.

3. Detail

   As with previous budget consultation exercises, a web-based survey publicised through social media has been used to consult on the 2026/27 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. There was a question regarding the Council's approach to climate change. 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 1,035 responses were received on the extended survey. Although the response was slightly lower than the 1,290 received in 2024; 1,393 in 2023; and 1,210 received in 2022, it is still significantly higher than those received in 2021 (606), 2020 (277) and 2019 (407). The results are summarised in the **Appendix** along with a summary of the demographic data for the respondents.

   The key highlights to note include:

- Positive improvements in satisfaction levels relating to the way the Council delivers its services (5% increase); the Borough as a place to live (up 3%) and residents feeling that the Council listens to them (4% increase).
- High satisfaction rates for household waste collections (91% household waste and 82% recycling very satisfied or satisfied)
- Capital investment projects such as the work at Bennerley Viaduct, the new Community Pavillion at Hickings Lane, Stapleford and housing capital programme (including retrofit), plus work on climate change and free community events were identified as things the Council has done which have made a positive different to residents.
- Areas for further improvement include garden waste collection, community safety and street cleanliness.

4. Key Decision

This report is not a key decision as defined under Regulation 8 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

5. Updates from Scrutiny

Not applicable.

6. Financial Implications

The comments from the Interim Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer were as follows:

The budget consultation with local residents provides useful feedback to inform the budget setting process that will culminate in the overall budget report being recommended to Council for approval on 4 March 2026.

7. Legal Implications

The comments from the Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal Services were as follows:

Section 65 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 places a duty upon local authorities to consult representatives of non-domestic ratepayers before setting the budget. Whilst there is no specific statutory requirement to consult with residents, local authorities were placed under a general duty to 'inform, consult and involve' representatives of local people when exercising their functions by the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009. This was repealed and replaced by more prescriptive forms of involvement by the Localism Act 2011.

8. Human Resources Implications

   Not applicable.

9. Union Comments

   Not applicable.

10. Climate Change Implications

    The budget consultation exercise included asking how satisfied residents are with the Council's approach to tackling climate change. The outcome is considered in the appendix.

11. Data Protection Compliance Implications

    There are no Data Protection issues in relation to this report.

12. Equality Impact Assessment

    As there is no change to policy an equality impact assessment is not required.

13. Background Papers

    Nil.

Appendix

Budget Consultation 2026/27

Summary of Respondents

The analysis of ethnicity indicates a bias towards White British respondents (88%). A further 5% of respondents indicated they considered themselves to be White Irish or White Other (similar to previous years). Around 7% (75 responses) were received from people who identified as being Asian or Chinese or Black or Mixed race and any other ethnic group categories (decreased from 98 responses, 8% last year but higher than earlier years). The sample of respondents was not considered to be wholly representative of the local communities in Broxtowe.

In terms of gender, 46% of the respondents were male, with 50% female and others being another way or prefer not to say. Around 84% of respondents identified as being over 45 years old with 24% being between 45 and 59 years, 15% between 60 and 64 years, 29% being between 65 and 74 years and 16% over 75. The number of responders being under 45 compared to a similar proportion in the previous year. There was just one response from an under-18.

Around 26% of responders identified themselves as being disabled or with long term health problems limiting daily activity, slightly higher than the previous year.

In terms of geographical location, Beeston residents responded the most (24%), with residents in Stapleford accounting for 14% of respondents and Chilwell accounting for 12% of respondents. Other areas included Bramcote (9%), Eastwood (7%), Kimberley (6%), Nuthall (6%), Newthorpe (5%) and Toton (5%). The splits across each area were broadly similar to previous years. There was at least one respondent from every area, except for Cossall.

A total of 1,004 responders confirmed that they were Council Taxpayers, which at 97% was slightly higher than the previous years.

A full breakdown of gender, age ranges, ethnicity, disability and location is included later in the appendix. 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 to only consider the results as indications of local views rather than attempt to draw strategic conclusions from the detailed responses.

Satisfaction with Services

The questionnaire asked residents "how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way in which the Council provides services; and your local area as a place to live".

In overall terms, local people are satisfied with the borough of Broxtowe and the Council's management of it. The results show that 72% of people (724 respondents) were either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the area in which they live which is slightly higher than the 69% positive response in the previous year.

Over 60% are either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the way that the Council delivers services (706 respondents), which again is higher than 55% in the previous year. A further 28% had a neutral stance. However, 2% of people are 'very dissatisfied' with the way that the Council delivers services which is slightly improved on last year's consultation.

The progress with satisfaction rates between years, as part of the Budget Consultation process, can be seen in the following tables:

- Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way in which the Council provides its services?

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Responses	604	1,204	1,377	1,284	1,022
Satisfied or very satisfied	64.7%	65.2%	58.2%	55.0%	60.5%
Neutral	25.0%	25.2%	26.5%	29.0%	27.7%
Dissatisfied or very dissatisfied	10.3%	9.6%	15.3%	16.0%	11.8%

- Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?

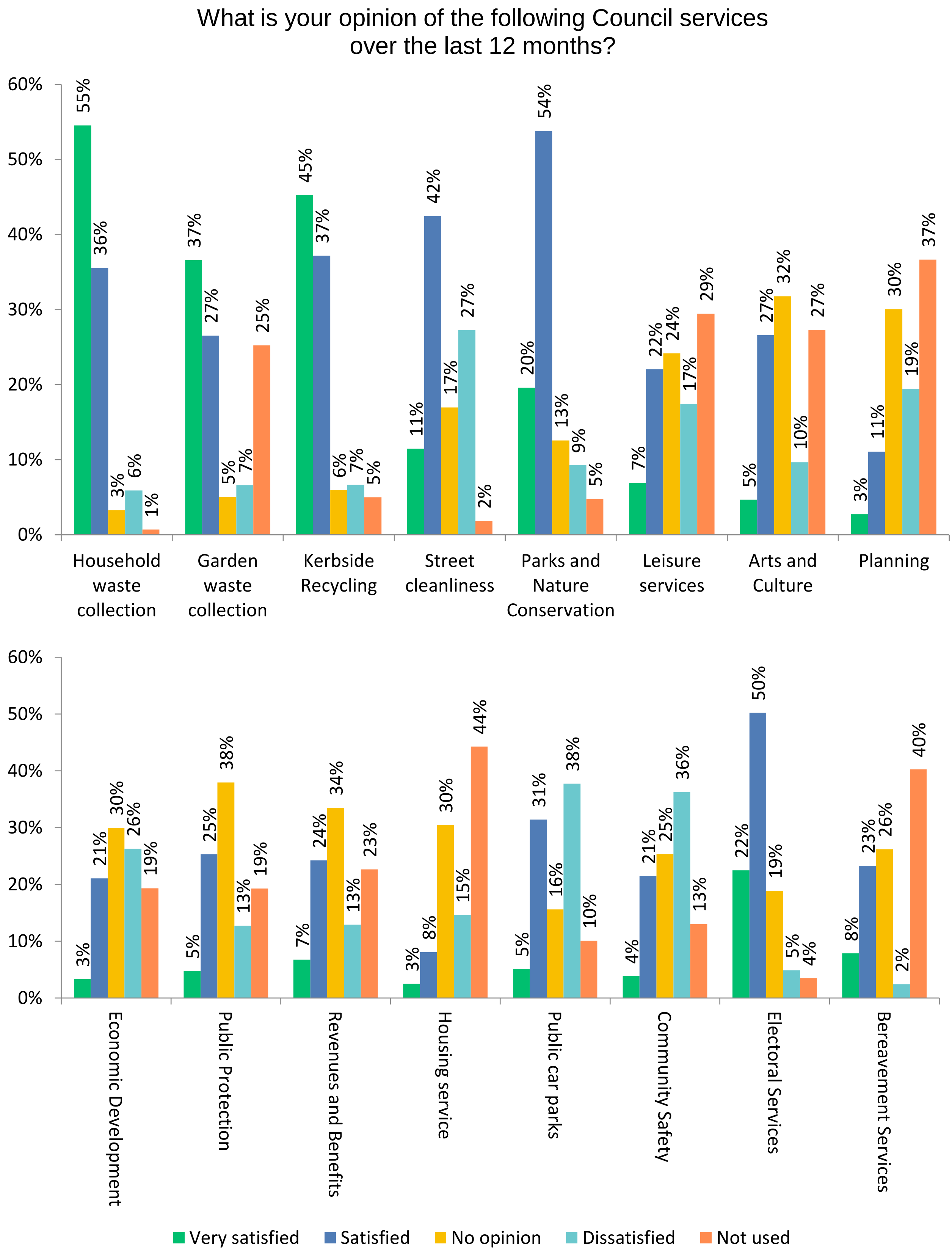
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Responses	602	1,189	1,379	1,268	1,011
Satisfied or very satisfied	76.3%	76.0%	71.1%	68.7%	71.6%
Neutral	13.3%	14.1%	15.8%	15.0%	16.2%
Dissatisfied or very dissatisfied	10.4%	9.9%	13.1%	16.3%	12.2%

Figure 1 below 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 90% (down from 91%); Kerbside Recycling *(green lidded bin, glass bag or red lidded glass bin, textiles)* with 82% (up from 78%); Parks and Nature Conservation with 73% (up from 69%); Electoral Services with 73% (down from 76%); and Garden Waste Collection *(brown lidded bin)* with 63% (up from 54%) of responders being satisfied or very satisfied.

The services with the highest levels of dissatisfied responses were Public Car Parks at 38% (improved from 42%); Community Safety *(anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse, alcohol awareness)* with 36% (worsened from 35%); Street Cleanliness *(litter collection, graffiti removal, fly tipping, neighbourhood wardens)* with 27% (improved from 30%); Economic Development *(support to businesses, regeneration, Town Centre Management, business growth)* at 26% (improved from 33%); Planning *(planning applications and planning policy)* with 19% of responders (improved from 22%); and Leisure Services *(leisure centres, sports development)* with 17% of responders (improved from 21%).

These rankings are similar to those seen in previous years.

Figure 1:



What is your opinion of the following Council services over the last 12 months?
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
55%
36%
3%
6%
1%
37%
27%
5%
7%
25%
45%
37%
6%
7%
5%
11%
42%
17%
27%
2%
20%
54%
13%
9%
5%
7%
22%
24%
17%
29%
5%
27%
32%
10%
27%
3%
11%
30%
19%
37%
Household waste collection
Garden waste collection
Kerbside Recycling
Street cleanliness
Parks and Nature Conservation
Leisure services
Arts and Culture
Planning
3%
21%
30%
26%
19%
5%
25%
38%
13%
19%
7%
24%
34%
13%
23%
3%
8%
30%
15%
44%
5%
31%
16%
38%
10%
4%
21%
25%
36%
13%
22%
50%
19%
5%
4%
8%
23%
26%
2%
40%
Economic Development
Public Protection
Revenues and Benefits
Housing service
Public car parks
Community Safety
Electoral Services
Bereavement Services
Very satisfied
Satisfied
No opinion
Dissatisfied
Not used

Spending on Services

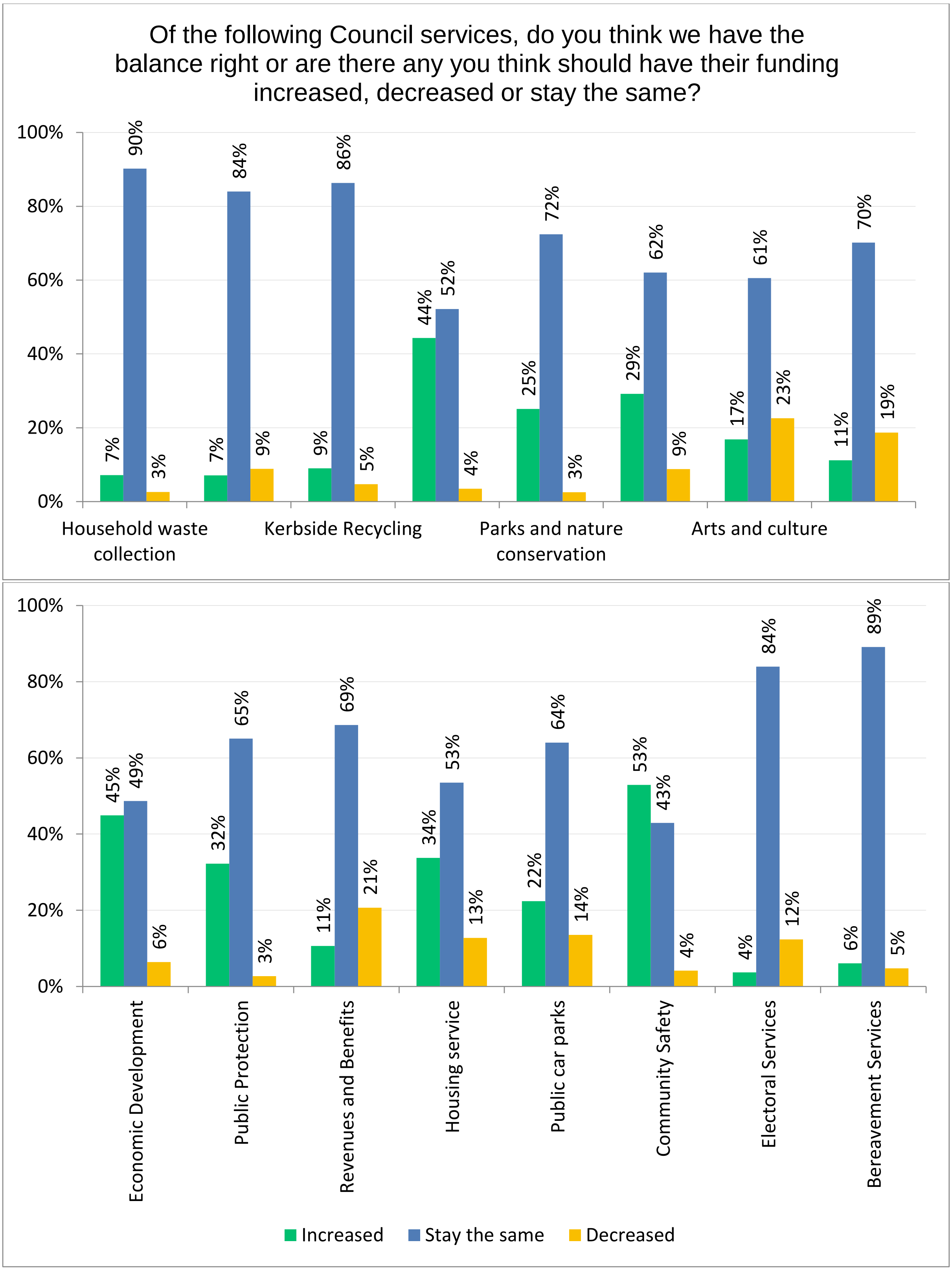
When asked about spending on services and whether the Council has the balance right or are there any services where funding should be increased, decreased or stay the same, Community Safety scored the highest again at 53% (previously 53%) in terms of respondents thinking their funding should be increased. This was followed by Economic Development at 45% (down from 46%); Street Cleanliness at 44% (previously 42%); Housing Service *(housing options advice, homelessness, provision of affordable housing, tenancies)* at 34% (previously 34%); Public Protection (licensing, food hygiene inspections, nuisance complaints) at 32% (previously 32%); Leisure Centres and Sports Development 29% (down from 32%); and Parks and Nature Conservation 25% (down from 27%).

Arts and Culture at 23% (was 25%); Revenues and Benefits *(housing benefit and council tax support payments)* at 21% (was 18%); Planning *(planning applications and planning policy)* at 19% (was 19%); Public Car Parks at 14% (was 20%); Housing Service 13% (was 13%); and Electoral Services (elections, voting) at 12% (was 15%) scored the highest in terms of respondents thinking their funding should be decreased. These are similarly ranked to previous responses although the scores were generally lower.

Household Waste Collection at 90% (previously 90%), Bereavement Services (crematorium, cemetaries) at 89% (was 88%); Kerbside Recycling at 86% (was 83%); Garden Waste Collection at 84% (was 81%); and Electoral Services (elections, voting) at 84% (was 83%) 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 these services secured high satisfaction ratings. 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:

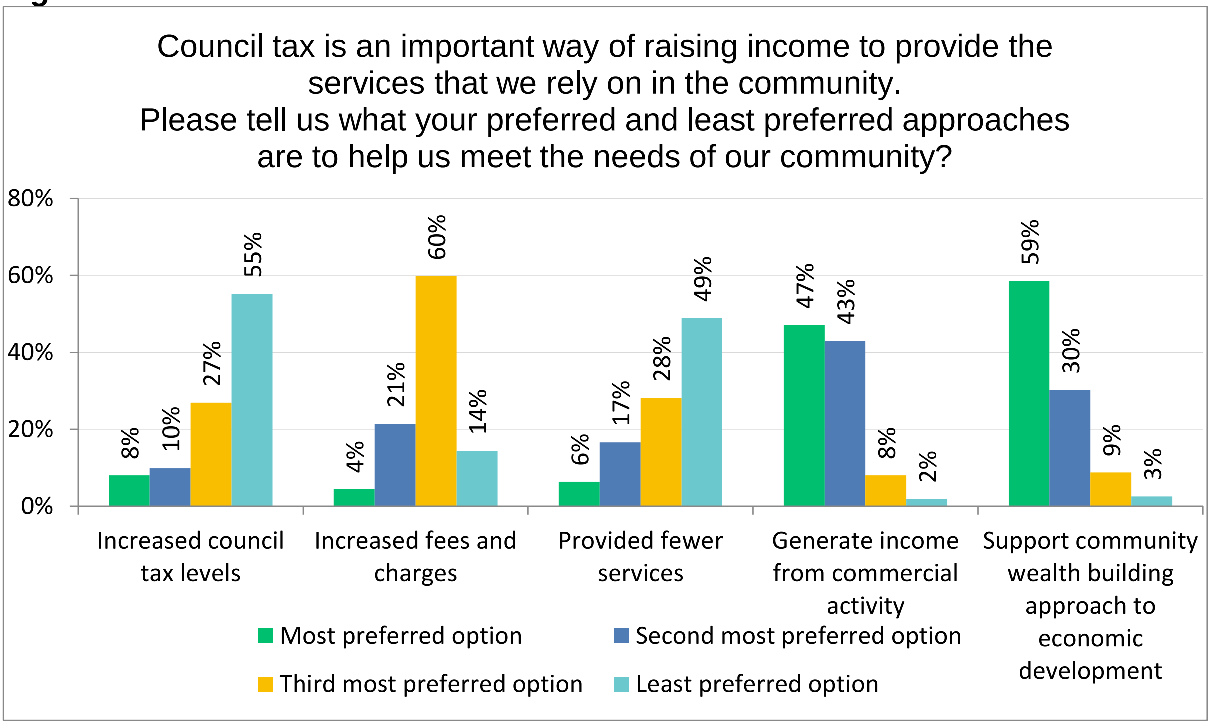

Of the following Council services, do you think we have the balance right or are there any you think should have their funding increased, decreased or stay the same?
100%
80%
60%
40%
20%
0%
Household waste collection
7%
90%
3%
7%
84%
9%
Kerbside Recycling
9%
86%
5%
44%
52%
4%
Parks and nature conservation
25%
72%
3%
29%
62%
9%
Arts and culture
17%
61%
23%
11%
70%
19%
Economic Development
45%
49%
6%
Public Protection
32%
65%
3%
Revenues and Benefits
11%
69%
21%
Housing service
34%
53%
13%
Public car parks
22%
64%
14%
Community Safety
53%
43%
4%
Electoral Services
4%
84%
12%
Bereavement Services
6%
89%
5%
Increased
Stay the same
Decreased

Balancing the Budget

The questionnaire asked that "Council tax is an important way of raising income to provide the services that we rely on in the community. Please tell us what your preferred and least preferred approaches are to help us meet the needs of our community". Respondents were asked to state their preferred and least preferred approaches are to help us meet the needs of our community?

By far the most preferred option for balancing the budget was a new option to "support community wealth building approach to economic development, which redirects wealth back into the local economy and places control and benefits into the hands of local people" at 59% (previously 51%). The next most preferred option was to "generate income from commercial activity" at 47% (previously 47%), followed by "increased council tax levels at 8% (previously 10%), "provider fewer services" at 6% (previously 5%) and "increased fees and charges" at 4% (previously 11%). The least preferred option for balancing the budget was increasing council tax levels with 55% (previously 56%) followed by to provide fewer services with 49% of respondents (previously 49%). The responses are provided in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3:



Communicating with the Council

Respondents were asked whether they feel the Council listens to them. Almost 25% of responders agreed or strongly agreed with the statement (was previously 24%) whilst 45% were neutral. Around 30% of responders disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement (was 34%). This is a slightly improved position from the previous consultation.

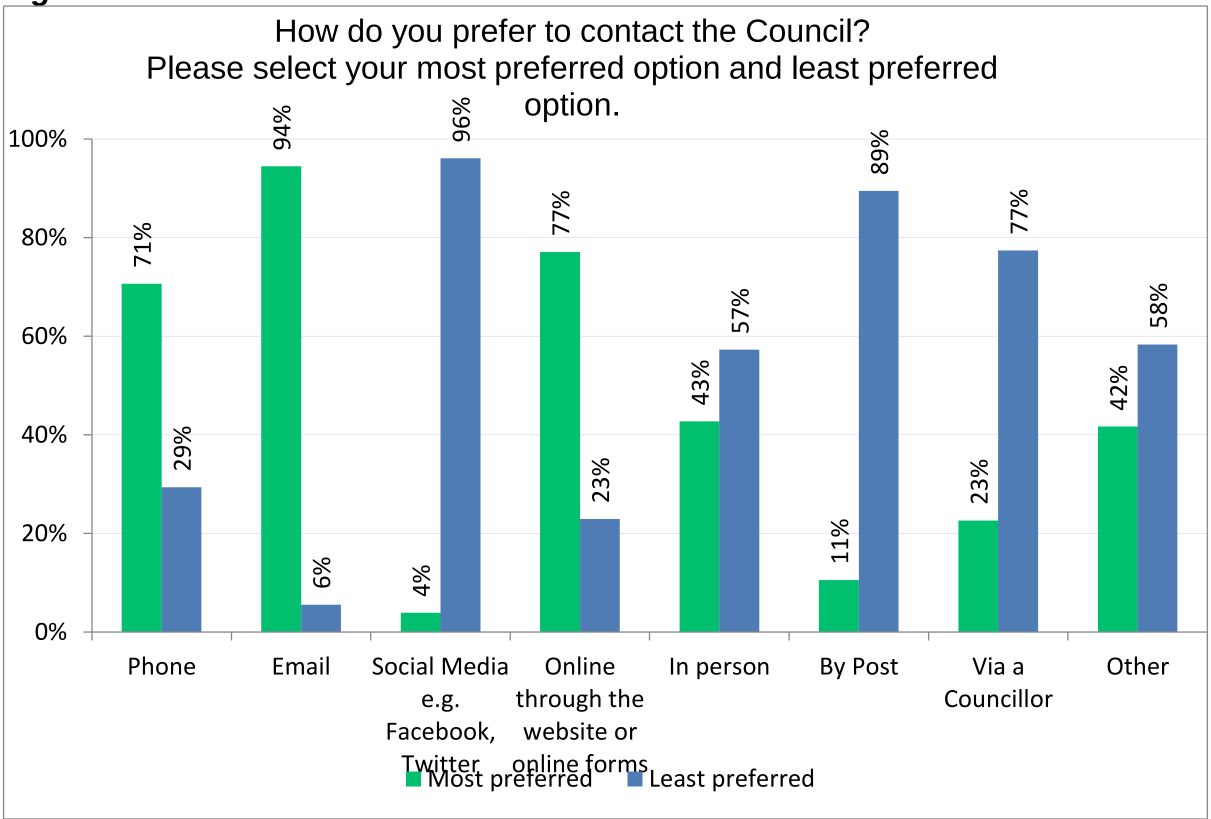
To obtain further information on how to shape services in future, local people were asked about how satisfied they are with the ways they can access Council services and how they prefer to contact the Council to do business. Almost 54% of respondents were either very satisfied or satisfied with the way they can access Council services (previously 51%). Around 14% of respondents were either very dissatisfied or dissatisfied with the way in which they can access Council services (was 16%). However, 32% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (i.e. neutral) which is similar to previous years.

The large majority of responders at 80% only contacted the Council 'a few times a year" (up from 78%), with 10% of responders stating that they contact the Council on a weekly or daily basis (down from 20%).

In terms of what methods of communication local people prefer to use, there was again clearly a preference in the budget consultation for email contact (392 'positive' responses being 94%) and online which reinforced the results from recent years. It must be remembered however that all respondents were already able to access services online by virtue of them completing this survey.

Communicating via social media e.g. Facebook and Twitter was again the least preferred method of conducting business with the Council (293 responses) followed by 'post' (136) and by 'phone' (130). Further details are set out in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4:



Climate Change

The questionnaire referred to the Council being committed to tackling the climate crisis and being recognised nationally for its trailblazing approach, with the goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2027 through the Climate Change and Green Futures Programme. The questionnaire asked “how satisfied are you with the Council's approach to tackling climate change?”.

Overall, 39% of responders were either very satisfied or satisfied with the Council’s approach (up from 33% previously), with a further 47% providing a neutral response (was 55%). The remaining 14% were either very dissatisfied or dissatisfied with the approach (previously 12%).

<u>Demographic Data</u>

Gender	**Reponses**	**2025 %**	**2024 %**
Male	465	46.2	48.9
Female	501	49.8	47.6
Another Way	6	0.6	0.7
Prefer not to say	35	3.5	2.8
Not stated – 28	1,007		

Age	**Reponses**	**2025 %**	**2024 %**
Under 18	1	0.1	0.2
18 – 24	8	0.8	0.9
25 – 29	25	2.5	1.3
30 – 44	131	13.0	13.9
45 – 59	240	23.9	23.1
60 – 64	152	15.1	13.6
65 – 74	291	29.0	30.9
Over 75	157	15.6	16.1
Not stated – 30	1,005		

Ethnicity	**Reponses**	**2025 %**	**2024 %**
White – British	874	87.6	87.0
White – Irish	9	0.9	1.4
White – Other	40	4.0	3.8
Asian or Asian British – Indian	12	1.2	1.1
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	8	0.8	0.8
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	-	-	0.2
Asian or Asian British – Other background	5	0.5	0.8
British or Black British – Caribbean	4	0.4	0.6

Ethnicity	Reponses	2025 %	2024 %
British or Black British – African	8	0.8	0.7
British or Black British – Other background	3	0.3	0.1
Mixed - White and Black Caribbean	7	0.7	0.3
Mixed - White and Black African	1	0.1	-
Mixed - White and Asian	2	0.2	0.5
Mixed - Other background	2	0.2	0.6
Chinese	8	0.8	0.6
Any other ethnic group	15	1.5	1.5
Not stated – 37	998		

Do you consider yourself as disabled or have any long-term health problems that limit daily activity?	Reponses	2025 %	2024 %
Yes	265	26.4	24.5
No	738	73.6	75.5
Not stated – 32	1,003		

Which of the following areas do you live in?	Reponses	2025 %	2024 %
Attenborough	23	2.3	2.9
Awsworth	14	1.4	1.1
Beeston	246	24.4	24.7
Bramcote	86	8.5	10.4
Brinsley	19	1.9	1.7
Chilwell	118	11.7	12.3
Cossall	-	-	0.2
Eastwood	70	6.9	7.4
Greasley	33	3.3	3.0
Kimberley	57	5.7	5.1
Newthorpe	46	4.6	2.8
Nuthall	64	6.4	5.3
Stapleford	137	13.6	12.9
Strelley	2	0.2	1.0
Toton	45	4.5	5.0
Trowell	26	2.6	2.5
Watnall	22	2.2	1.9
Not stated – 27	1,008		