

THURSDAY, 2 NOVEMBER 2017

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

BUDGET CONSULTATION 2018/19

EXEMPT INFORMATION

There is no exempt information

PURPOSE

To inform Cabinet of the outcomes arising from consultation undertaken with residents, businesses and the voluntary sector in accordance with the corporate budget setting process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet endorse the report and take account of the findings along with other sources of information when setting the 2018/19 Budget.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**The vision and priorities**

- Living a quality life in Tamworth

All ambitions under this strategic priority were seen as important by more than half of respondents, the most important being 'people will feel safer and less fearful of crime and anti-social behaviour'. The ambition 'more people will live longer; healthier lives' was seen as the second most important.

- Growing strong together in Tamworth

The ambition with the highest rating under this strategic priority was 'Tamworth Town centre will be regenerated and complement the outstanding retail and leisure offer'. This was closely followed by the ambition that Tamworth will be a 'great place to live'.

- Delivering quality services in Tamworth

All ambitions under this strategic priority were seen as important by more than half of respondents, the most important being 'access to all Council services will be improved'. This was closely followed by the ambition that 'the Council will set and maintain service standards that will be consistent, accessible and delivered by skilled staff'.

What makes Tamworth a better place to live and prosper

'Low levels of crime' and 'good health services' were clearly the two areas considered important in making somewhere a good place to live by residents. These areas were also regarded as ones that need to improve.

Businesses chose a 'reduction in business rates and charges' as their main area for improvement followed by 'reducing the number of empty business premises'.

Spend on services

Most respondents would prefer the level of spend in most service areas to remain the same. Like last year, the most popular service area to maintain spend was 'refuse and recycling' (75%). Spend on 'tackling anti-social behaviour' was again an area where respondents (60%) would like to see an increase on spend.

The areas where respondents wanted to see less spend were 'housing', 'business support and advice', 'grants for voluntary organisations and charities' and 'improved access to customer services'.

The reduction in car parking charges is an area where the majority of respondents (81%) would still like to see a reduction

Council Tax increase

The largest proportion of residents (55%) opted for the smallest increase of 0.6%

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no resource implications arising from this report

LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND

It is a statutory duty to consult before the development of the budget. Budget consultation ensures our compliance with this.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

As part of an annual process Tamworth Borough Council reviews its Council Tax and Charges strategy for the development of the budget. This process ensures that funding is put into areas of highest priority. An important element of this process is to understand the views of residents, businesses, and local voluntary groups on what these priorities are.

REPORT AUTHOR

John Day.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

APPENDICES

Budget Consultation 2018/19 – Full report.