

## Tamworth Borough Council 2021 Budget Consultation

### Background

As part of a regular 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, tenants, businesses, and local voluntary groups on what these priorities are.

### Overview

Consultation on the key issues affecting the 2022/23 budget consultation will be carried out through three surveys;

- A residents survey – on line and postal, promoted using social networking/media sites and through email contact databases,
- A business survey – on line, promoted through business social networking sites and business email contact databases,
- A voluntary and community sector survey – on line, promoted through email contact databases at the CVS.

### Timetable

Planning	from July 2021
Postal survey posted (Residents)	launched August 2021
Online survey (Residents)	launched August 2021
Online survey (Businesses)	launched August 2021
Online survey (V&CS)	launched August 2021
Surveys closes and taken offline	September 2021
Budget Consultation Report at CMT	21 <sup>st</sup> October 2021
Budget Consultation report at Cabinet	11 <sup>th</sup> November 2021

### Objectives

- Identify important priorities to target for savings,
- Advise on acceptable levels of fees, charges and council tax,
- Obtain views on the revised corporate priorities.

A small budget has been set aside within the Corporate Consultation budget to undertake this work.

## **Planned Changes for 2022**

This year's Residents' Survey was fairly successful, attracting around five times more responses than the average Budget Consultation in recent years (539).

The Residents' Survey ran from February to April, however given the usual purdah period and end of the municipal year, better timing for the survey going forward would potentially be over the Summer period from June onwards or a short sharp survey from September, dependent on the time needed to let the survey run, then analyse evidence and prepare report in readiness for a November Cabinet meeting (on the Budget aspect at least).

As we have the Budget Consultation usually running in the summer, it would not be prudent to have two surveys coming out in quick succession as it is anticipated that this could limit the impact and response rate of both.

Therefore, it is proposed that we take advantage of the higher uptake of the Residents' Survey by combining the Budget Consultation into it.

This presents the opportunity to review & tailor the Budget Consultation questions using evidence from the first Residents Survey to help inform that process.

Timing wise, the new combined survey could help set the agenda for both the new municipal agenda and the budget process.

There may also be an opportunity to link in with a survey promotion leaflet to widen reach as we did this year with the Residents Survey.