

Thursday, 2 December 2021

Report of the Leader of the Council

Budget Consultation 2022/23

Exempt Information

None

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

It is recommended that:

1. Cabinet endorse the report,
2. Cabinet take account of the findings, along with other sources of information, when setting the 2022/23 Budget.

Executive Summary

A total of 83 responses were received to the consultation and these consisted of:

- 73 residents
- 4 businesses
- 6 community and voluntary organisations.

*Please see Appendix 1 for information on methodology.

The vision

The general consensus from respondents was very much in support of the vision 'To put Tamworth, its people and the local economy at the heart of everything we do' and this was reflected in respondents' comments.

People and place priorities

Support was also evident for the four priorities which come under the heading people and place.

- To meet housing needs through a variety of approaches and interventions – seen as important by 59% of respondents,
- To facilitate sustainable growth and economic prosperity - seen as important by 73% of respondents,
- To work collaboratively and flexibly to meet the needs of our communities - seen as important by 66% of respondents,

- To create a new and developing vision for the continued evolution of Tamworth, including a town centre fit for the 21st century - seen as important by 84% of respondents.

Organisation priorities

Support was also evident for the four priorities which come under the heading organisation.

- To be financially stable - seen as important by 82% of respondents,
- To ensure our employees have the right skills and culture to help our residents, visitors and businesses- seen as important by 73% of respondents,
- To ensure our service delivery is consistent, clear and focussed - seen as important by 76% of respondents,
- To ensure our decisions are driven by evidence and knowledge - seen as important by 80% of respondents.

Spend on services

It was most common for respondents to say they would prefer that current levels of spend remained the same; this was the case in 7 of the 13 major cost areas. Respondents most wanted to see maintained level of spend on 'refuse collection and recycling' (67%).

Two areas where respondents wanted to see more spend were 'improving the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of Tamworth (49%) and 'tackling anti-social behaviour' (53%).

Respondents wanted to see less spend in the following areas 'Commissioning Services from voluntary organisations & charities (39%) and Arts, Assembly Rooms & Events (38%).

If the Council were to consider changes to the charges it places upon its services, increasing charges for 'leisure and other activities' would be met with least resistance; 53% of respondents would support increased charges for this. Conversely, decreasing charges for 'car parking' would be a popular move; 78% of respondents said that they would like to see these decreased.

The largest proportion of residents (43%) would prefer the lowest level of Council Tax increase (a 0.54% increase). The second lowest level of increase (1.99%) was the next most popular option, selected by 26% of respondents.

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.

Equalities Implications

There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

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

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List of Background Papers

None

Appendices

Appendix 1: Budget Consultation 2022/23 – Full report

Appendix 2: Budget Consultation 2022/23 – Respondents comments

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