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Budget Consultation Report 2014

For 2015/16 budget

Summary Report

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Tamworth Borough Council's vision to 'aspire and prosper' and to be 'healthier and safer' are strongly endorsed by Tamworth's residents. This is evident in their views on 'what makes somewhere a good place to live' and 'what most needs improving to make Tamworth a better place to live'.

'Low levels of crime', 'a good health service' and 'good job prospects' were considered universally important by residents. All three of these factors have remained consistently important to Tamworth's residents in recent years. Despite progress, residents were clear that Tamworth would be a better place to live if improvements continued to be made to all three.

Businesses however had their own priorities and to enable them to flourish/expand and support Tamworth's vision, the majority of business respondents felt that a reduction in business rates and other charges would most assist their businesses and the wider economy.

Whilst support for the vision was clearly evident, the ways in which efforts should be focused can be understood more clearly by examining the priorities which sit beneath.

Working with businesses to create more employment opportunities locally was considered important by the majority. This was closely followed by creating opportunities for business growth and raising aspirations and attainment levels of young people. All of the priorities under 'aspire and prosper' were considered important by over half the respondents. Considered least important was 'branding and marketing Tamworth as a great place to live life to the full'.

Similar levels of support were expressed for the priorities under 'healthier and safer'. All of the priorities were supported by over half or more of respondents. However, the level of support was varied. Whilst over three quarters felt 'tackling crime and anti-social behaviour' was important, far fewer felt 'tackling alcohol abuse' was important.

Respondents were invited to indicate whether Tamworth Borough Council should spend more, the same or less on a wide range of key services. Respondents views on spending varied greatly. Spending more on tackling anti-social behaviour and improving the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of Tamworth were supported by over half whilst spending more on events was supported by far fewer, just over one in ten would spend more on this.

Spending on refuse collection and recycling should remain the same or be increased. There was zero support for reduced spending on this services which is reflective of the importance of this universal, frontline service to Tamworth residents. There were services however where some support for reduced spending was apparent. This included spending less on housing advice and grants, and on grants for voluntary organisations and charities.

The consultation results reflected that there was a high level of support for increasing charges for leisure and other activities. Conversely residents clearly expressed their views on both town centre rentals and car parking, with decreased charges supported for both by two thirds or more respondents.

Whilst views were divided on an acceptable level of Council Tax increase, there was most support provided for the smallest rise offered. 38% supported a 0.6% rise and this is reflective of the average increase expected in Council's according to a survey by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).

2. INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

Tamworth Borough Council reviews its Council Tax and charges on an annual basis and this helps to develop the Council's budget and ensures funding is put into areas which are of priority. Residents, businesses and the voluntary sector are an important part of this process and all were invited to share their views on priorities for the year ahead and different options for the budget before decisions are made on how to proceed.

The consultation for the 2015/16 budget ran from 1st August 2014 to 15th September 2014 and residents, businesses and the voluntary sector were encouraged to share their views through tailored online surveys.

A total of 198 responses to the consultation were received and consisted of:

- 183 residents
- 14 businesses; 7 based on an industrial estate, 4 in a town centre location, 2 in a local neighbourhood and 1 based at an out of town location
- 1 voluntary service organisation

This report presents the analysis of the combined results and emphasises where there are differences in opinions between the different respondent groups. Comparisons with the results of the consultation from last year have been made in order to identify any trends. In most cases, opinions remain consistent with those recorded last year and therefore only exceptions to this will be highlighted throughout the report.

3.1 RESULTS - VIEWS ON THE CORPORATE PRIORITIES

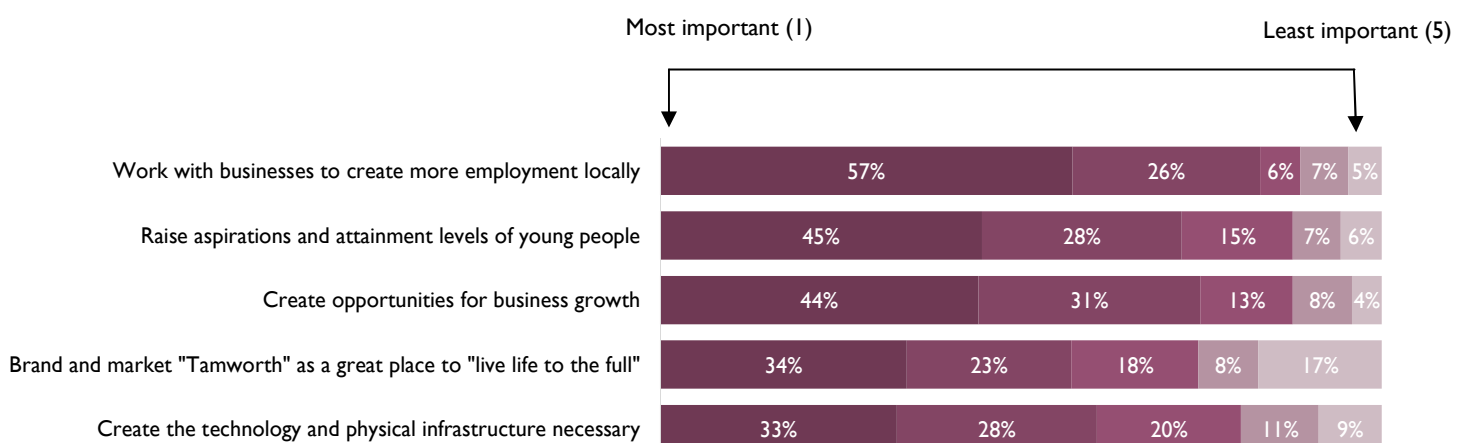
The Council vision is "One Tamworth, Perfectly Placed" and focus is to be placed upon working with partners to:

Aspire and prosper in Tamworth – to create and sustain a thriving local economy and make Tamworth a more aspirational and competitive place to do business.

Be healthier and safer in Tamworth - to create a safe environment in which local people can reach their full potential and live longer, healthier lives

Respondents were asked a series of questions about the importance of these priorities to themselves and the businesses they were representing, the results to these questions are detailed in the following section.

Please tell us how important our priorities under 'aspire and prosper' are to you/your business/organisation, with 1 being most important and 5 being the least important



It is clear across the board that respondents felt that any action to create opportunities for business growth, increase employment opportunities and raise aspirations of young people in the area were considered the most important priority areas under 'aspire and prosper', this was reinforced by some of the additional comments:

- *“The emphasis must be on....increased availability of local job opportunities.”*
- *“It is important to grow and sustain businesses in the area helping to create local job opportunities.”*
- *“Our priority has to be youngsters to be groomed for responsible adulthood if possible.”*
- *“We must make our youngsters aim higher to ensure we have the right skills in the workforce.”*
- *“More job prospects and better wages for all age groups.”*

Some respondents noted that the priorities are inter-linking and to solve one would positively impact on another:

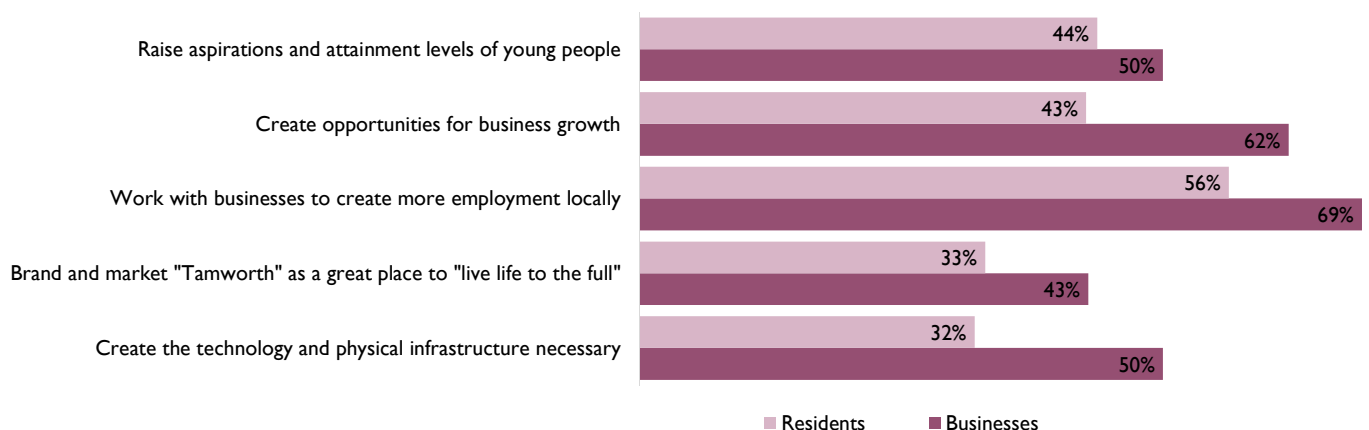
- *“Full employment can remove many social ills so prioritising business/employment solves many wider problems.”*
- *“If the aspiration and attainment levels are looked into, the youth crime and anti-social behaviour would (hopefully) be dealt with. I appreciate it will never be completely gone but I feel sure it would help.”*

While others highlighted that although they were supportive of what the Council is trying to achieve, there were several obstacles to overcome in order to succeed:

- *“No opportunities for businesses e.g. shops in the town centre being moved to Ventura Park and rental prices”.*
- *“Can't create a good infrastructure because of the poor rates of pay and people being able to afford it due to employment opportunities.”*

Comparing results by respondent group

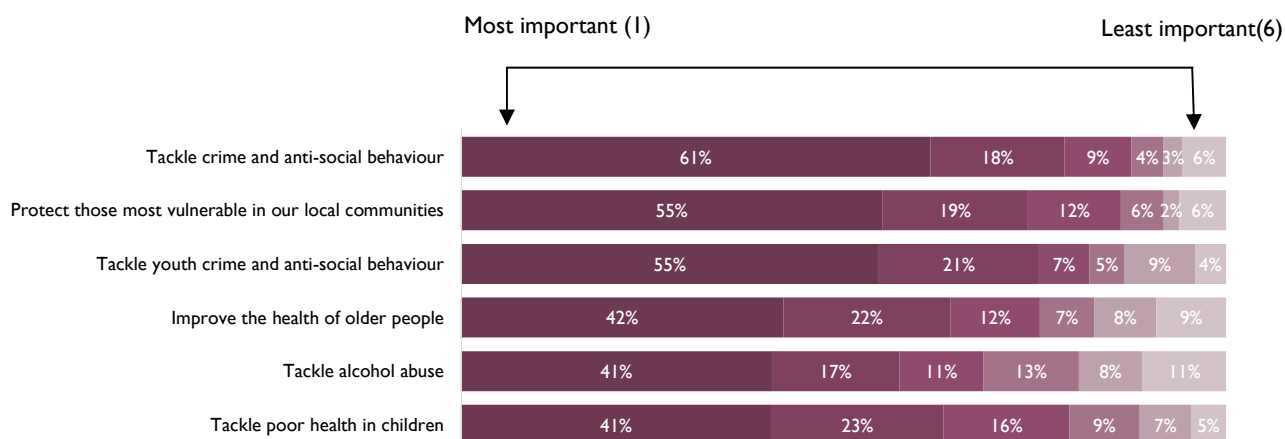
The graph below illustrates the breakdown of responses against each priority by respondent group type. Since there was just one respondent from a voluntary sector organisation, only the responses from businesses and residents have been compared. The results shown are the proportion of each group who felt that each of the priorities were of high importance to address.



When drawing conclusions from this it is important to remember that the business respondent group is considerably smaller than the residents. However, it is quite clear that to businesses, creating the necessary technology and physical infrastructure is considered of greater importance than in the opinion of residents.

Aside from this, opinion is in concurrence and the top three priorities are mirrored across both groups.

Please tell us how important our priorities under 'be healthy and safer in Tamworth' are to you/ your business/organisation, with 1 being most important and 6 being the least important



*combined results

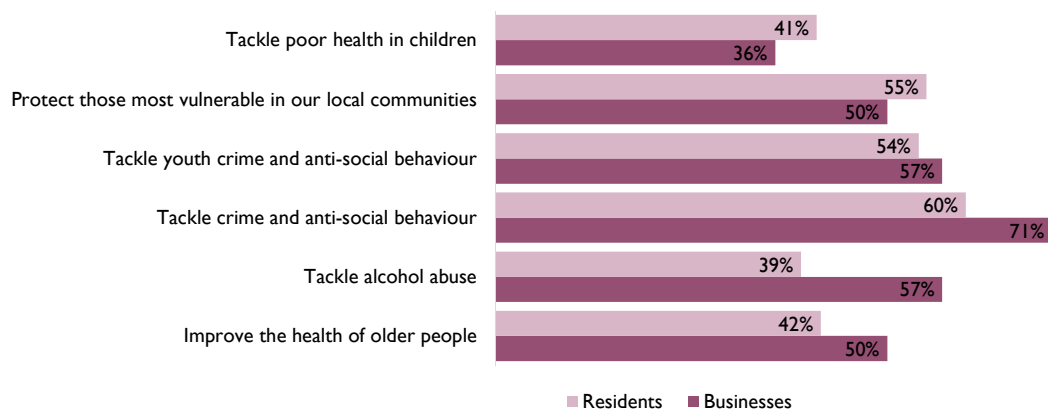
There are three clear priorities that resonate with the group as being of high importance and they focus on crime, anti-social behaviour and protecting vulnerable groups in the community:

- *“Priorities should be making Tamworth a safe place with low anti social behaviour.”*
- *“Support is limited in availability to people with disabilities and mental health problems.”*
- *“Tamworth is not a great place to live for older people, no where to go at night and be safe.”*
- *“Tamworth has an ageing population and the key to reducing acute demand especially where long term conditions exist is to ensure that they are supported to live independently in their own homes through joined up services that are the eyes and ears for each other and that they are enabled to make sensible and well informed choices.”*

Tackling health was highlighted a number of times within the additional comments and while respondents identified that there was a real need to tackle this issue many felt that this was not in the remit of the local council and the responsibility lay with “parents or the doctor”. However, several suggested that “poor health in children is often due to lack of education in their parents” and consequently action should be taken to “educate children with domestic science in schools and that may help improve children's health.”

Breakdown of results by respondent group

The graph below illustrates the breakdown of responses against each priority by respondent group type. Since there was just one respondent from a voluntary sector organisation, only the responses from businesses and residents have been compared. The results shown are the proportion of each group who felt that each of the priorities were of high importance to address.



Opinions across the two different groups was quite similar and tackling crime, anti-social and alcohol abuse (all of which are inter-linked) are important priorities along with protecting the vulnerable groups in society.

The general consensus was very much in support of both the vision and the priorities under them, “*your vision is what most people want in Tamworth*”. Respondents felt that achieving these priorities would be beneficial to the local community, “*I like it as Tamworth needs to become a nice place to live again*”. However, there were concerns how this could all be achieved, “*how we go about creating the vision is the problem. We need public/businesses/police & Council all to work together*”. One respondent felt that there were too many priorities to focus upon, “*you might be better advised to concentrate on achieving a few basic outcomes, rather than eleven*” and another felt that “*there are sections of society that do not want to live a decent life. No amount of money can change that. My priority would be improving work/life prospects for those who want to live in a decent community*”.

Revive the town centre and attract visitors to Tamworth

An overwhelming theme from the additional comments from all respondents was that there needs to be a real focus on reviving the town centre and attracting visitors to Tamworth:

- “*There are some lovely areas in Tamworth, but the town centre is so depressing. Too many empty properties Castle grounds are good. Lower shop rents to attract independent retailers and hence more visitors.*”
- “*We must keep our Town attractive to visitors by fostering our Historic Heritage.*”
- “*Shops in the town being reopened to encourage people to visit Tamworth and as a result bring in more money.*”
- “*The town centre is unattractive to visitors - make more of the river and castle.*”
- “*Tamworth needs to attract more people to the town centre, it’s dying on it’s feet.*”
- “*Clean up the 'image' of Tamworth to the public. Make it more attractive to want to shop or visit in the town centre. It is rowdy and unattractive, especially during the evenings.*”

Make Tamworth safer

Another theme raised in the comments from the group, which goes hand-in-hand with rebuilding the image of Tamworth is making it safer:

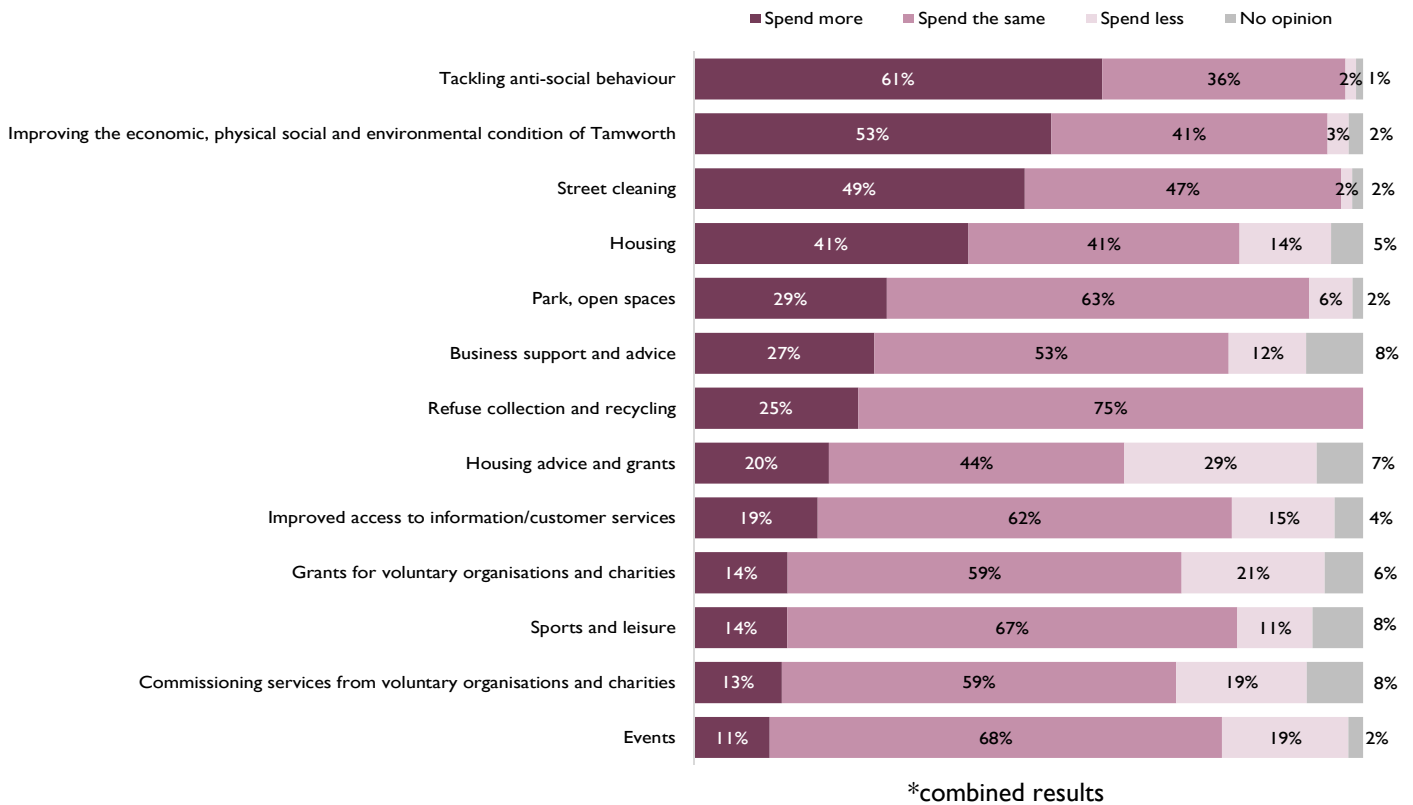
- “*There is too much talking and not enough action not enough actual policing.*”
- “*Let’s see more Police on the streets.*”
- “*Safer streets and more community spirit and social events.*”

Additional comments:

- “*To achieve the vision get local services back.*”
- “*Tamworth Council is an enabler, not a doer. If the Council focuses on putting in place the infrastructure, tax regime and educational opportunities then our location and accessibility speaks for itself. The council should make more of our access to the transport network, London just over 1 hour away or 80% of the population within 1 hour of Tamworth (check the number but it must be high) then we can attract international investment as foreign companies look to set up in the UK. We must make our youngsters aim higher to ensure we have the right skills in the workforce.*”
- “*If attempting to carry out any of the above involves redundancies/loss of jobs of TBC employees then I am not in favour of any and certainly would not support TBC employers diminishing and private enterprise flourishing at their cost.*”
- “*I love this town, but I think it has a long way to go before being able to generate civic pride in people.*”
- “*There aren't enough places for youngsters to go where they can be given the necessary information to better their lives.*”
- “*Provision of cheaper fitness classes/equipment for older people to improve their health including slimming classes - many can't afford regular attendance which leads to overweight & health issues.*”
- “*Get kids in lesser areas, (Glascote Heath, Kerrig etc), to go to school. Train their parents in how to parent. Make sure they have breakfast before they go to school. That way, the next generation have a chance.*”

3.2 RESULTS - SPENDING ON SERVICES

Respondents were asked whether they felt the Council should increase, decrease or keep spending on major cost areas the same. Their collective responses are illustrated in the graph below:



Maintain levels of spending

For the majority of cost areas, respondents felt that the level of spending should remain the same which echoes the sentiment from the responses received last year. Residents agreed that maintaining the levels of spending was particularly important in relation to refuse collection and recycling, sports and leisure and event. However, while businesses agreed that spending on refuse collection and recycling and events should remain the same, they also felt that street cleaning was an area of priority to maintain current levels of spending.

Increase levels of spending

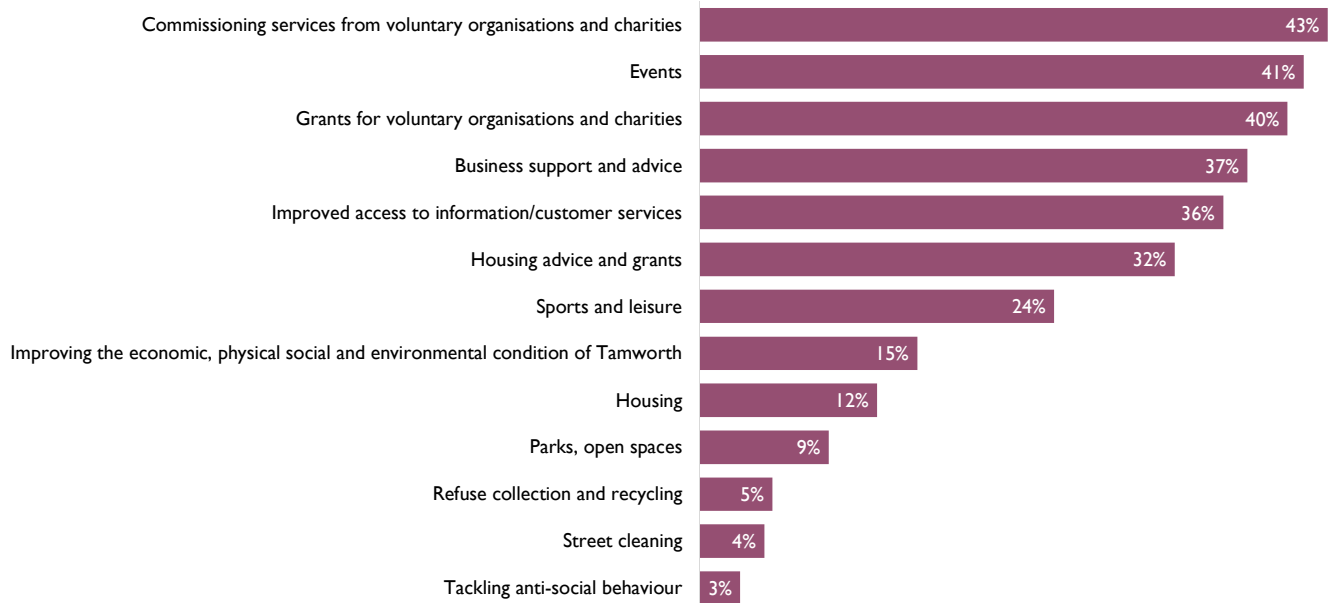
There are four cost areas where a high proportion of respondents would support increased spending; tackling anti-social behaviour, improving the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of Tamworth, street cleaning and housing. These are the same four areas identified in the responses from last year's consultation and clearly remain a priority for local residents and businesses.

Looking at the priorities by respondents group it is clear that businesses think that spending money to improve the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of Tamworth is a key priority. They consider money spent on other elements which compliment this such as business support and advice, parks and open space, sports and leisure and refuse collection and recycling are of higher priority than other cost areas. Residents, on the other hand, view cost areas such as street cleaning and housing as a greater priority.

Reduce levels of spending

The four priority areas which respondents feel levels of spending should be reduced are housing grants and advice, grants for voluntary organisations and charities, commissioning services from voluntary organisations and charities and events. Both businesses and residents have the same view on these top priorities although businesses feel more strongly that spending should be reduced on improved access to information/customer services more so than grants for voluntary sector and charities.

Which THREE services should the Council look at if they had to make savings or reduce costs?



*combined results

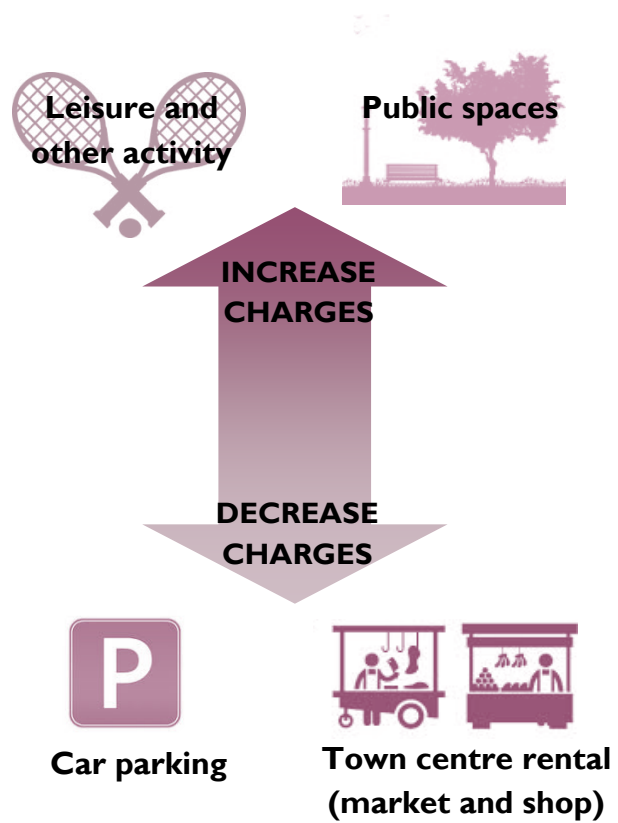
As the above graph shows, the respondents felt that the Council should focus reductions on three main areas; commissioning services from voluntary organisations and charities, events and grants for voluntary organisations and charities. While the first two service areas are the same as were selected last year, the latter has moved up the list from fourth to third.

Which TWO of the below income areas do you think the Council could/should increase or decrease charges for?

To emphasise once again the need to encourage more business into the town centre many respondents stressed the need to reduce town centre rental charges, “by decreasing rental on town properties it should bring better shops to the town, which means more people will visit and spend more money”.

Furthermore it was suggested that if parking charges are also reduced then more people will be encouraged into the town, not only to visit the new shops but also the wealth of history and beautiful open spaces Tamworth has to offer, “car parking needs to be reduced for town centre, too high for so little shopping”, “if the car parking fees were reduced, I feel sure more people would come into the town.”

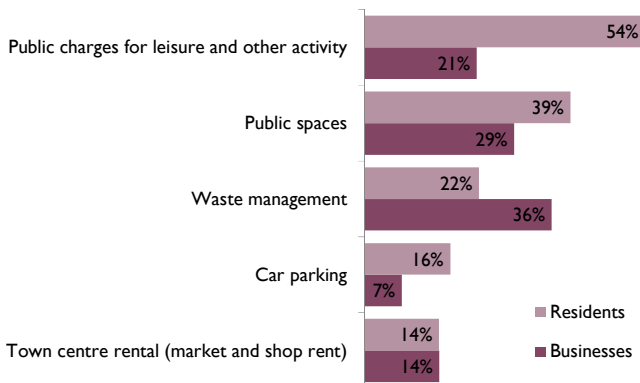
However, it was suggested that it might be beneficial to implement “a charge to park at Ventura, a nominal amount, would allow funds to be available to sort out the lack of parking”.



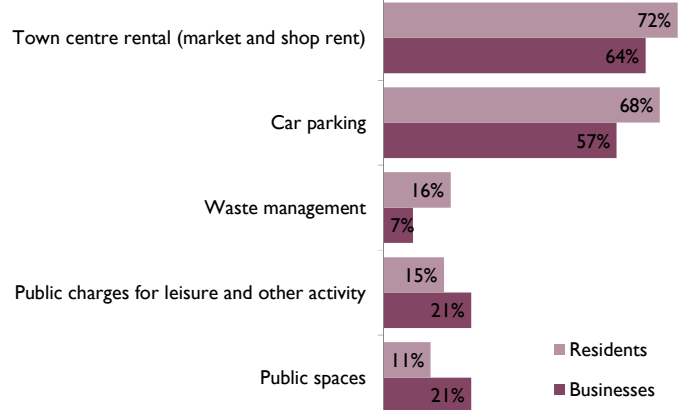
Breaking the responses down by respondent group highlights several differences when looking at the preferences for increasing charges with residents prioritising public charges for leisure activities while business felt that charges for waste management could be increased.

Both groups were in agreement with the top two priorities for decreasing charges however, with both stressing the continued point for the need for “investment into the town centre”.

Increase charges



Decrease charges



3.3 RESULTS - MAKING TAMWORTH A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE

The following questions were posed to the respondents who were participating in the consultation as a local resident.

What makes somewhere a good place to live and what needs to be improved in Tamworth?

The word cloud below depicts the answers selected by the group, the size of the font reflects the number of times that each element was selected. It is clear to see that low levels of crime, good job prospects and good health services continue to be considered as the three most important aspects of making somewhere a good place to live.



These aspects were the same three highlighted in last year's consultation and, as the word cloud below illustrates, all three of these key elements remain a priority in terms of areas where improvements are needed in Tamworth, alongside the provision of affordable, decent housing and clean streets.



Additional comments from respondents emphasised this, “if people are given affordable decent housing - good education and health services, plus good prospects, the rest will follow” and reiterated other key themes which have arose throughout the consultation analysis.

Better employment opportunities

Several respondents discussed their opinions towards the need to create better employment prospects and opportunities:

- “Jobs and education go far beyond what the Council could achieve, but increased apprenticeship provision would be an ideal.”
- “Jobs for school leavers who are not academic.”

Importance of localised services

Many respondents spoke of the necessity of having “local services back”, more specifically “a hospital worthy of its residents” “maternity unit, university, Magistrates Courts, Crown court and walk in health centres”.

Revive the town centre

Once again, respondents commented that the town centre was “virtually non-existent” and “could benefit from some attention”. It was agreed that there was a real need to “encourage shops into Tamworth town centre”, not only to

improve the look and feel of it since “large numbers of charity and cut price shops give a poor impression” but also to improve access to shops as retail parks are “not convenient for older people to get around easily.”

Market the town’s heritage, utilise the open spaces and encourage tourism

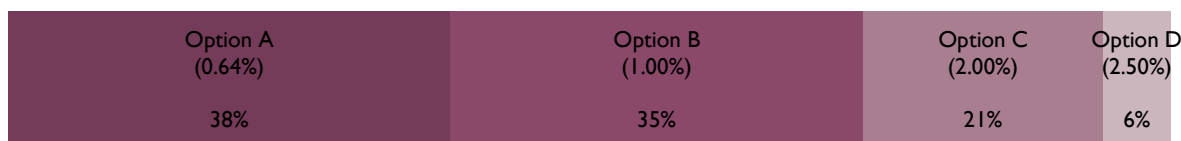
Residents’ feel that through marketing campaigns, tourism levels can increase as there is a wealth of history in the town. Some expressed real passion that this had not been done previously to encourage local economy growth, “if the heritage of Tamworth had not been sold off and destroyed in previous decades then it would be thriving as Lichfield is. We need to trade upon Tamworth's historical past to bring people in through tourism”.

Additional comments

Some further areas of improvement were identified in the additional comments including:

- “Better public toilets.”
- “Lower parking charges.”
- “More information on local events.”
- “More quality food and clothing shops in town, less phone and card shop.”
- “More exposed timber clad building.”
- “More leisure facilities at affordable prices for all ages.”
- “Focus on increasing the ambition and affluence of our population.... will drive our business growth and create a virtuous circle of tax and investment which will raise our perception/standing in the country.”

What would you consider to be an acceptable Council Tax increase for the 2015/16 budget?



Whilst views were divided on an acceptable level of Council Tax increase, there was most support provided for the smallest rise offered. 38% supported a 0.6% rise and this is reflective of the average increase expected in Council’s according to a survey by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).

3.4 RESULTS : MAKING TAMWORTH BETTER FOR BUSINESSES

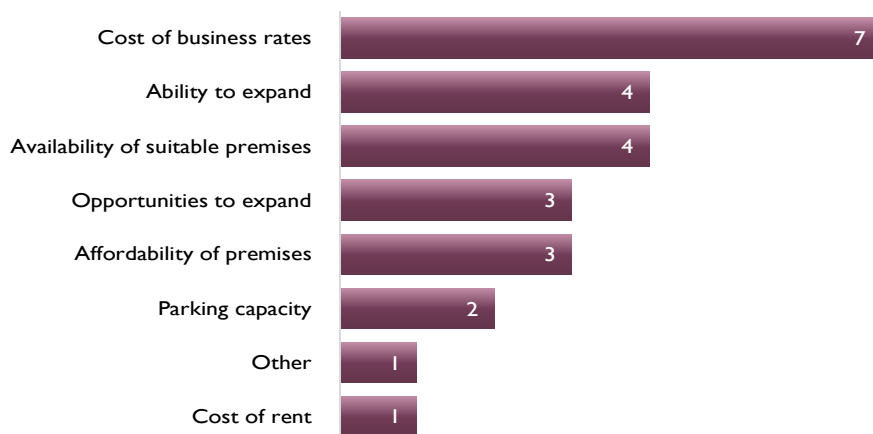
Respondents who completed the questionnaire from the perspective of a local business were asked to provide opinion and comments on a number of questions posed to gather a picture of how Tamworth can be made better for businesses. This section will explore these questions and the responses that were given. Since the number of respondents from businesses was so low (14), numbers as well as percentages have been used in the graphs in this section.

Almost half of the respondents stipulated that access to main road networks was one of the main reasons their company was based in Tamworth while almost a third cited proximity to customers. 11 of the businesses stipulated that their current premises were suitable for now and their likely future needs although 4 later stipulated that they were looking to relocate and a further 3 businesses intended to expand.

Barriers to business expansion

As identified in the vision and priorities, the Council is keen for local businesses to grow and therefore need to be aware of what barriers need to be broken down in order for this to happen.

Respondents were asked to identify what they believe to be the three main barriers from the list shown in the graph below. While it was requested that three options were selected, only 5 respondents did so with a further 2 respondents identifying 2 barriers and 6 selecting just one.



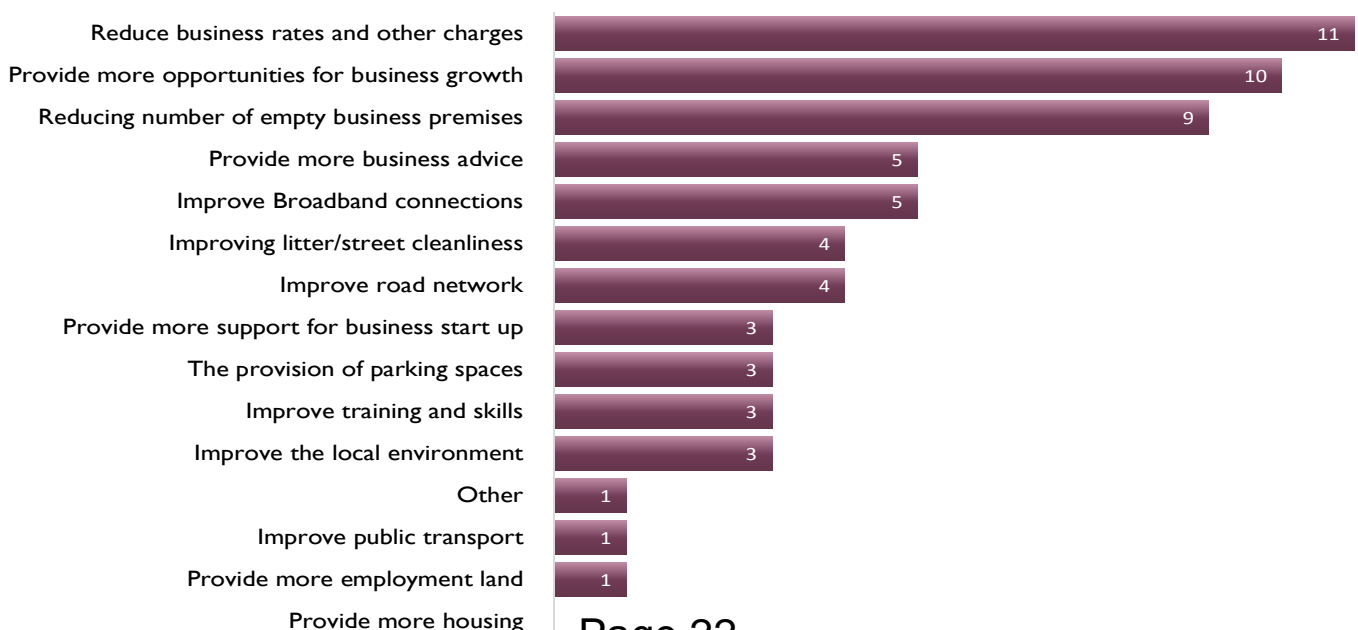
The cost of business rates was identified by half of all business respondents as the main barrier to business expansion with ability to expand and availability of suitable premises being identified as the next two most common barriers.

An additional barrier identified in the comments section echoed a theme raised in earlier questions regarding the “town centre decline/decay” which is

deemed as a barrier to business expansion since it’s current state is “not attractive for retail customers”.

A further comment identified the “availability of appropriately qualified staff” as another barrier to expansion.

How can Tamworth be improved to assist businesses and the economy?



3.5 RESULTS :ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Any other areas where you feel the Council could save money:

- **Introduce new charges** – “Charge nominal fee for pensioners bus passes yearly”, “Charge small fee for mobility scooters to ride on footpaths”, “Disabled parking should be charged. They get their designated parking, but why does it have to be free?”
- **Reduce the number of Councillors** – “We are over represented by Councillors who appear to be more interested in getting selected than carrying out useful work, reduce each ward to 2 Councillors with one as a combined Borough and County representative.”
- **Reduce/freeze expenses payments and local council staff wages** – “Look at the salaries of staff and Members' Allowances”, “some expenses for top management positions in the council should be reduced or frozen. In line with other tax payers who live and work in Tamworth and local areas.”
- **Reassess staffing levels** - “Office staff cull! Vastly overstaffed with little or no management of staffing levels with controlled job volumes / objectives for each employee. Need to look at each & every position and can each be justified, honestly?”
- **Flowers and park services**- “Spend less on flowers”, “stop mowing vast areas of grass & let the wild flowers grow. Just mow paths through”, “the town is awash with flowers and displays, which, whilst visually pleasing, is not bringing visitors to the town centre.”

APPENDIX I: RESIDENTS RESPONDENT PROFILE

Are you male or female?

	Survey responses		Tamworth MYE 2013
	No's	%	%
Female	92	52%	51%
Male	84	47%	49%

What is your age?

	Survey responses		Tamworth MYE 2013
	No's	%	%
18-24	3	2%	10%
25-34	7	4%	17%
35-44	14	8%	18%
45-54	30	17%	18%
55-64	38	21%	16%
65-74	62	35%	13%
75+	18	10%	8%
	5	3%	

What is your ethnicity?

	Survey responses		Tamworth 2011 Census comparison
	No's	%	%
Asian/Asian	0	0%	0.8%
British/Indian/ Pakistani/ Bangladeshi	0	0%	0.51%
Black or Black British	0	0%	0.2%
Chinese	1	1%	1.0%
Mixed Heritage	167	95%	95%
White Other	3	2%	2.3%
Prefer not to say	4	2%	N/A
Other	1	1%	0.1%

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

	Survey responses		Tamworth 2011 Census comparison
	No's	%	%
Yes	57	33%	18%
No	115	66%	82%
Prefer not to say	2	1%	N/A

What type of disability do you have?

	Survey responses	
	No's	%
Communications	1	2%
Hearing	6	11%
Learning	1	2%
Mental Health	2	4%
Mobility	27	48%
Physical	11	20%
Visual	2	4%
Other	6	11%

APPENDIX I I: RESIDENTS TABLES OF RESULTS

Please tell us how important our priorities under 'aspire and prosper in Tamworth' are to you, with 1 being the most important and 5 being the least important.

Survey responses					
	1	2	3	4	5
Raise aspiration and attainment levels of young people.	44.4%	27.2%	15.6%	7.2%	5.6%
Create opportunities for business growth	43.1%	32.6%	11.6%	8.3%	4.4%
Work with businesses to create more employment locally	56.6%	26.4%	4.9%	7.1%	4.9%
Brand and market "Tamworth" as a great place to "live life to the full".	33.1%	23.0%	18.0%	9.0%	16.9%
Create the technology and physical infrastructure necessary	31.7%	28.3%	20.6%	11.1%	8.3%

Please tell us how important our priorities under 'be healthier and safer in Tamworth' are to you, with 1 being the most important and 6 being the least important.

Survey responses						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Tackle poor health in children	41.1%	22.2%	16.7%	8.3%	7.2%	4.4%
Improve the health of older people	41.8%	23.1%	11.5%	6.6%	8.2%	8.8%
Tackle alcohol abuse	39.0%	16.9%	11.3%	13.0%	8.5%	11.3%
Tackle crime and anti-social behaviour	60.3%	19.0%	8.4%	3.9%	2.8%	5.6%
Tackle youth crime and anti-social behaviour.	54.1%	21.5%	6.6%	4.4%	9.9%	3.3%
Protect those most vulnerable in our local communities	55.2%	19.9%	11.6%	5.0%	2.2%	6.1%

Please select FIVE things from the list below that you believe are the most important for making somewhere a good place to live.

Survey responses			
Low levels of crime	85.2%	Affordable decent housing	50.3%
Good health services	71.6%	Good parks and open spaces	46.4%
Clean streets	50.3%	Good sports and leisure facilities	15.8%
Good education provision	49.7%	Good job prospects	71.6%
Good shopping facilities	42.6%	Community events	12.6%

Please tick FIVE things you feel need to improve most to make Tamworth a better place to live

Survey responses			
Level of crime	70.5%	Affordable decent housing	57.9%
Health service	57.4%	Parks and open spaces	30.6%
Cleanliness of streets	55.7%	Community events	17.5%
Education provision	36.1%	Sports and leisure facilities	21.9%
Shopping facilities	47.5%	Job prospects	79.8%

For the following services, do you think we should spend more, the same or less?

Survey responses				
	More	Same	Less	No opinion
Sports and Leisure	12.2%	68.0%	12.2%	7.6%
Events	11.2%	67.6%	18.8%	2.4%
Refuse collection and recycling	23.8%	76.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Parks and open spaces	28.5%	63.4%	6.4%	1.7%
Street cleaning	52.0%	45.0%	1.2%	1.8%
Tackling anti-social behaviour	62.3%	34.9%	1.7%	1.1%
Improving the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of Tamworth	51.4%	42.9%	3.4%	2.3%
Grants for voluntary organisations and charities	13.5%	59.0%	22.5%	5.1%
Commissioning services from voluntary organisations and charities	12.5%	59.7%	19.9%	8.0%
Housing	42.0%	39.8%	14.8%	3.4%
Housing Advice and Grants	20.7%	43.7%	29.9%	5.7%
Improved access to information/customer services	18.1%	62.7%	15.3%	4.0%
Business support and advice	25.3%	53.4%	12.6%	8.6%

From the services listed below, if the Council had to make savings or reduce costs, which services do you think we should look at. Please select THREE.

Survey responses			
Sports and leisure	24.0%	Voluntary sector grants	37.2%
Events	37.7%	Voluntary sector commissioning	38.8%
Refuse collection and recycling	4.9%	Housing	11.5%
Parks, open spaces	7.7%	Housing advice and grants	28.4%
Street cleaning	3.3%	Improved access to information/customer services	32.8%
Tackling anti-social behaviour	2.0%	Business support and advice	34.4%
Improving the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of Tamworth	14.2%		

Which TWO of the below income areas do you think the Council could/should increase?

	Survey responses
Car parking	16.4%
Public charges for leisure and other activity	53.6%
Waste management	21.9%
Public spaces	39.3%
Town centre rental (market and shop rent)	14.2%

Which TWO of the below income areas do you think the Council could/should decrease charges ?

	Survey responses
Car parking	67.8%
Public charges for leisure and other activity	14.8%
Waste management	16.4%
Public spaces	11.5%
Town centre rental (market and shop rent)	72.1%

What would you consider to be an acceptable Council Tax increase for the 2015/2016 budget?

	Survey responses
Option A (0.64%)	38.1%
Option B (1.00%)	35.5%
Option C (2.00%)	20.6%
Option D (2.50%)	5.8%

APPENDIX III: BUSINESS TABLES OF RESULTS

Which of the following best describes your business location?

Survey responses			
Town centre location	28.6%	Out of town shopping park	0.0%
Out of town location	7.1%	A local neighbourhood area	14.3%
Industrial estate	50.0%	Based at home	0.0%

What is the status of your company at this location?

Survey responses			
Independent with no other branches	57.1%	Public sector organisation	7.1%
Head office	7.1%	Other	14.3%
Branch or subsidiary of a larger group	14.3%		

What are the main reasons why your company is based here?

Survey responses			
Availability of suitable workforce	14.3%	Cost of the site/premises	21.4%
Nature of local economy	21.4%	Availability of local facilities	7.1%
Proximity of suppliers	7.1%	Access to main road network	42.9%
Proximity to customers	28.6%	Availability of Broadband	0.0%
Quality of the environment	0.0%	Other	14.3%
Nature of the site/premises	21.4%		

Are the premises suitable for your current or likely future needs?

Survey responses	
Yes	64.3%
No	35.7%

What are your company's intentions with regard to this location?

Survey responses			
Expand	21.4%	Stay the same	64.3%
Contract	0.0%	Relocate	28.6%

In your opinion, what are the barriers to business expansion? (Please select three)

Survey responses			
Cost of business rates	50.0%	Cost of rent	7.1%
Affordability of premises	21.4%	Ability to expand	28.6%
Parking capacity	14.3%	Opportunities to expand	21.4%
Availability of suitable premises	28.6%	Other	7.1%

How can Tamworth be improved to assist businesses and the economy? We need your top five priorities from the examples given below, or if not listed tell us what they are by completing 'other'?

Survey responses			
Provide more employment land	7.1%	Improve training and skills	21.4%
Provide more housing	0.0%	The provision of parking spaces	21.4%
Improve road network	28.6%	Reducing number of empty business premises	64.3%
Improve public transport	7.1%	Improving litter/street cleanliness	28.6%
Improve the local environment	21.4%	Provide more support for business start up	21.4%
Improve Broadband connections	35.7%	Provide more opportunities for business growth	71.4%
Reduce business rates and other charges	78.6%	Other	7.1%
Provide more business advice	35.7%		

Please tell us how important our priorities under 'aspire and prosper in Tamworth' are to you, with 1 being the most important and 5 being the least important.

Survey responses					
	1	2	3	4	5
Raise aspiration and attainment levels of young people.	50.0%	28.6%	14.3%	0.0%	7.1%
Create opportunities for business growth	61.5%	7.7%	23.1%	7.7%	0.0%
Work with businesses to create more employment locally	69.2%	15.4%	15.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Brand and market "Tamworth" as a great place to "live life to the full".	42.9%	21.4%	14.3%	0.0%	21.4%
Create the technology and physical infrastructure necessary	50.0%	14.3%	14.3%	7.1%	14.3%

Please tell us how important our priorities under 'be healthier and safer in Tamworth' are to you, with 1 being the most important and 6 being the least important.

Survey responses						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Tackle poor health in children	35.7%	21.4%	14.3%	21.4%	0.0%	7.1%
Improve the health of older people	50.0%	0.0%	14.3%	14.3%	7.1%	14.3%
Tackle alcohol abuse	57.1%	14.3%	7.1%	7.1%	7.1%	7.1%
Tackle crime and anti-social behaviour	71.4%	0.0%	14.3%	7.1%	0.0%	7.1%
Tackle youth crime and anti-social behaviour.	57.1%	14.3%	7.1%	7.1%	0.0%	14.3%
Protect those most vulnerable in our local communities	50.0%	7.1%	14.3%	14.3%	0.0%	7.1%

For the following services, do you think we should spend more, the same or less?

Survey responses				
	More	Same	Less	No opinion
Sports and Leisure	38.5%	53.8%	0.0%	7.7%
Events	14.3%	64.3%	21.4%	0.0%
Refuse collection and recycling	35.7%	64.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Parks and open spaces	35.7%	57.1%	7.1%	0.0%
Street cleaning	21.4%	71.4%	7.1%	0.0%
Tackling anti-social behaviour	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Improving the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of Tamworth	84.6%	15.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Grants for voluntary organisations and charities	23.1%	53.8%	7.7%	15.4%
Commissioning services from voluntary organisations and charities	23.1%	46.2%	15.4%	15.4%
Housing	23.1%	53.8%	0.0%	23.1%
Housing Advice and Grants	7.7%	53.8%	15.4%	23.1%
Improved access to information/customer services	27.3%	45.5%	18.2%	9.1%
Business support and advice	50.0%	42.9%	0.0%	7.1%

From the services listed below, if the Council had to make savings or reduce costs, which services do you think we should look at. Please select THREE.

Survey responses			
Sports and leisure	0.0%	Voluntary sector grants	35.7%
Events	35.7%	Voluntary sector commissioning	50.0%
Refuse collection and recycling	0.0%	Housing	7.1%
Parks, open spaces	14.3%	Housing advice and grants	50.0%
Street cleaning	14.3%	Improved access to information/ customer services	35.7%
Tackling anti-social behaviour	0.0%	Business support and advice	28.6%
Improving the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of Tamworth	7.1%		

Which TWO of the below income areas do you think the Council could/should increase?

	Survey responses
Car parking	7.1%
Public charges for leisure and other activity	21.4%
Waste management	35.7%
Public spaces	28.6%
Town centre rental (market and shop rent)	14.3%

Which TWO of the below income areas do you think the Council could/should decrease charges ?

	Survey responses
Car parking	57.1%
Public charges for leisure and other activity	21.4%
Waste management	7.1%
Public spaces	21.4%
Town centre rental (market and shop rent)	64.3%

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