

CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL 2015 BUSINESS PLANNING CONSULTATION

FINAL RESULTS

DEC 2015

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

There has been a shift in emphasis for this years' Business Planning Consultation. Councillors have advocated a longer term approach that seeks to both inform and engage with the public around the issues and challenges that the organisation faces. In particular the Council has moved away from asking a core set of questions about priorities towards questions that focus on the community's capacity to mitigate against some of the worst impact of the cuts being made to services as well as support the Council in its long term aim to prevent or delay people from requiring support.

In line with this approach the council has ceased to commission a 'paid for' doorstep survey, where a market research company was employed to gain the views of a representative sample of Cambridgeshire residents. Instead a significantly smaller sum of money was spent on a more enduring budget challenge animation which could be used throughout the next eighteen months to explain to people what the pressures on local government budgets were and how the County Council was responding to them. The animation was posted to YouTube and at the time of writing this has been viewed over 1,700 times.

The animation was supported by an on-line survey and together both items were publicised through various media channels. In total, 668 members of the public responded to the survey.

In addition to the on-line survey there were four direct engagement events with the community. The communication material from these was based upon the messages within the animation. These events were led by the Community Engagement Team and a range of staff from across County Council services took part. Overall this engagement directly reached over 350 people.

An engagement exercise was also carried out with the business community. The target audience were small and medium sized enterprises (SME). This was facilitated by the Cambridgeshire Chambers of Commerce who invited County Council representatives to local chamber committee meetings. There was also a County Council presence at the Chamber's regular 'B2B' event (that allows local businesses to network and communicate business to business services). Overall direct discussions were held with the representatives of 75 businesses through these methods.

SUMMARY RESULTS

ONLINE CONSULTATION

The results of the survey represent a 'self-selecting' audience of 668 members of the public. By the nature of the methodology the sample only includes those who have access to the internet either at home or through public access points. The sample also includes 10% more women than men and significantly fewer people under the age of twenty-five than expected given the demography of the County.

Response to the challenge and service priorities

- 83% of respondents agreed that the YouTube Animation left them with a good understanding of the challenges faced by the County Council and over 90% of respondents felt concerned by these challenges.
- Concerns were raised about the effect of reducing essential services, ranging from care support to wider services such as libraries or children's centres, described as *"a vital lifeline to many vulnerable, lonely, isolatedpeople"*.
- Looking across three broad categories of service respondents preferred to look for savings against universal services that everyone used (69% selecting the service area for a lower level of spending)

compared to cutting targeted services (50%) or care packages (39%).

- There was a similar level of strong support amongst respondents for all of the County Council's seven priorities.

Increased Community Involvement

- Respondents were asked how realistic different messages in the animation were. The majority of respondents felt that all of the messages were realistic in at least some communities.

'Seeking greater involvement in services' by town or parish councils or by businesses was considered to be most realistic (over 90% saying this was realistic in at least some communities). Whereas 'encouraging communities to get involved in delivering our services' was considered to be least realistic (79%).

However 79% of all respondents did feel that it was appropriate to ask residents to become more involved in their own communities.

- Just under three quarters of respondents identified that 'time' was the biggest barrier against people getting more involved in their local community. 46% identified that 'unwillingness' on behalf of some community members was a problem and 44% identified 'understanding what is expected' as a barrier.
- Over a third of respondents indicated that did not 'volunteer' at all. This rises to over half of all respondents if added to those who said that they volunteered for less than five hours in an average month. A small proportion of respondents (12%) volunteered for over 20 hours per month.
- 41% of respondents were prepared to give more of their time to their local community. Of the volunteering options presented supporting older people was the most popular (37% interest) but there was also strong interest in a number of other volunteering possibilities.
- Female respondents were more inclined to express an interest in getting involved in their local community, with a higher proportions indicating interest in getting involved with their local library, assisting vulnerable older people, supporting children in need of fostering. Male respondents expressed a markedly greater interest in getting involved in local democracy and local politics.

Council Tax

- When asked how far they agreed with the idea of increasing Council Tax to reduce the cuts to services, 60% of respondents either strongly agreed or tended to agree. This is a marked increase from last year, where less than 50% of respondents felt this way.
- There was a greater willingness to accept some sort of an increase to council tax compared to previous years. 81% were willing to accept an increase, compared to 78% last year.
- Overall, 19% of respondents opted for no increase, 32.4% opted for an increase of between 0.5 and 1.99 percent and 48.6% opted for an increase of over 1.99 percent.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Council Members and officers talked with over 350 people at four separate events in Wisbech, Cherry Hinton, Ramsey and Ely (with 217 feedback forms being completed as some talked as a couple or group). People were shown information about the County Council's budget challenge and were asked about their level of awareness, their initial reaction to the savings and what they thought of the Council's current plans to cope with the savings. People were also asked if they supported an increase in Council Tax.

Awareness and reaction to the savings challenge

- Overall, general awareness of the budget challenge faced by the County Council was good with approximately two-thirds having an understanding.
- The main gap in people's knowledge was around the scale of savings to be made over the next five years.
- People expressed their reaction to the scale of the cuts in one of two ways; either expressing shock, or that the cuts are an unfortunate reality, particularly in light of the national budget situation.

Increased community action to support services

- The vast majority of people felt that increased community action to support services was a good idea.
- During each event there were many stories of the extensive amount of volunteering and other forms of community action that were taking place.
- People did discuss the challenges involved including inspiring people to get involved for the first time, particularly when there were a range of work / time pressures.

Council Tax

- The proportion of people opposed to paying more council tax varied according to location and the type of event attended.
- Overall, the majority of people fell into a group who were willing to accept an increase providing certain conditions were met. These conditions were either that a particular service area received additional funding or was protected and/or there was some sort of means testing for the rise so people struggling to pay wouldn't be penalised.

BUSINESS CONSULTATION

In total, 75 businesses were engaged with 33 of these were through in-depth discussions through the Chambers of Commerce Local Committees, with a further 42 individual discussions at the B2B event.

Engagement with the Community

- Representatives were asked about their engagement as businesses with the local community. Key examples cited included, taking on apprenticeships and work experience placements and direct engagement with schools and colleges, providing support to develop 'soft skills' such as CV-writing and interview preparation.
- Apprenticeships were viewed very positively as they gave significant benefit to businesses and young people. Representatives noted some difficulty in schools engaging with businesses; sometimes this was down to a general lack of awareness of local business, but there was also a concern that more often it was due to a stigma being associated progressing to work in a local business compared to following a route through to university.

- Business representatives also referred to supporting the promotion of appropriate waste disposal and recycling and their role in engaging with providers / councils to seek improvement to local transport options (this was recognised as a significant block to development particularly within rural areas).

Transport and infrastructure

- This was a theme common to all representatives, and was also a major part of the feedback received from businesses last year. It was recognised that improvements are taking place, and things are slowly progressing in the right direction, but that there was a lot more work to be done. It was noted that *'poor road structure stunts business growth'*. Specific topics included the A14, A10, public transport, the electrification of railways and road/roadside maintenance.

Broadband

- Feedback this year was much more positive than last year. Many commented they had seen an improvement in broadband speeds, but concerns were also raised about the way in which the rollout was taking place, and the results achieved (for example, the reach of provision, and the speeds promised).

Skills and Staffing

- Business representatives raised concerns about staffing shortages, especially in the skilled manual labour or customer service industries. They highlighted a need for schools to provide students with a full view of all potential options for their future.

The role and structure of local government

- Representatives from some committees discussed the role and structure of local government, and the repetitious nature of policy and planning processes. Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire representatives identified issues where they felt that local government organisations regularly “buck-pass” questions and issues. It was noted that there needs to be a joined up approach between different parts of local government so this doesn’t happen.
- Many felt that it was currently unclear what the County Council does to support businesses (beyond the obvious maintenance of roads and other universal services).
- Communication processes within the Council were also discussed. It was felt that communication both with businesses and with the public was often not as strong as it could be, with a need for greater clarity and consistency of messages.

ONLINE CONSULTATION

The online survey remained open from early October to early December so that people wishing to respond to the consultation in response to news of budget proposals could have the chance to do so.

METHODOLOGY DESIGN AND DELIVERY

CHANGE OF APPROACH

In the past the County Council has employed a market research company to carry out a doorstep survey to ensure that a robust sample of the resident population in terms of age, gender, economic status and location took part. An on-line survey has then been posted as an accompaniment to this exercise. Over the years the following approaches have been used:

- 2014: A doorstep 'Priorities' survey with accompanying on-line version.
- 2013: A doorstep survey using the YouChoose interactive budget model with accompanying on-line version.
- 2012: A Spring 'priorities' survey, commissioned focus groups and a doorstep survey using the YouChoose interactive budget model with accompanying on-line version.
- 2011: Use of the Simalto budget prioritisation tool and workshops with key users of County Council services.

There has been a considerable shift in emphasis for this years' Business Planning Consultation. Councillors have advocated a longer term approach that seeks to both **inform** and **engage** with the public around the issues and challenges that the organisation faces. In particular the Council has moved away from asking a core set of questions about priorities or budgets towards questions that focus on the community's capacity to mitigate against some of the worst impact of the cuts being made to services as well as support the Council in its long term aim to prevent or delay people from requiring support.

In line with this approach the council ceased to commission a 'paid for' doorstep survey. Instead a significantly smaller sum of money was spent on a more enduring budget challenge animation (accessed by [clicking here](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/challenge)¹) which could be used throughout the next eighteen months to explain to people what the pressures on local government budgets were and how the County Council was responding to them. The animation was posted to YouTube and at the time of writing this has been viewed over 1,700 times.

¹ <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/challenge>

Figure 1: A sample view of the YouTube animation



The animation was based on a video first developed by Oldham Council, and since has been adopted as ‘best practice’ by a number of other Councils. It outlines the pressures on the Council and the severity of future service cuts which must be made. It explains how residents could help save money through small changes, such as recycling more waste correctly, engaging with their community (for example supporting an elderly neighbour), and accessing Council services online.

SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

The social media campaign that accompanied the survey had the broader aim of raising awareness of the County Council’s situation; the on-line survey should be viewed as a supporting product to this campaign, gathering people’s reaction to its key messages. The campaign was built around propagating the key messages that the County Council wished to communicate; encouraging people to watch the YouTube animation to gain a further understanding of the situation and finally encouraging people to give their views.

Figure 2: Key messages of the social media campaign



Key messages and questions raised by the social media campaign are shown above. As well as social media the campaign was supported by a series of press releases which gained positive headlines throughout local media. Information also went direct to County Council libraries, parish councils and key mailing groups. The types of social media used included:

- Internet: The budget consultation has featured continually on the front page of the County Council's website and was featured favourably on the pages of local news outlets.
- Twitter: Regular tweets through the County Council's account and accompanying retweets by Cllrs and other key influencers.
- Facebook: Regular features on the County Council's account with the additional purchase of specific side-bar advertising targeting local Facebook users.
- E-Mails: Targeted mail to previous consultation respondents and specific mailing groups.

Twitter impressions for relevant tweets hit over 20,000 impressions during November (with a twitter campaign reach of 130,000²). One Tweet appeared as a 'Great UK Government Tweet' (This means it was one of the top performing government tweets of that day) and had 2,104 impressions and a reach of 21,820).

The Facebook campaign yielded figures of over 25,000 impressions with nearly 45,000 unique people reached via a paid-for Facebook advert. The County Council's budget webpage itself has had more than 3,900 visits. The number of views of the budget challenge animation is growing steadily (and will continue to grow as it becomes a feature of other consultation exercises. So far there have been over 1,700 views.

QUESTIONS AND CAVEATS

Questions were designed to be neutral as possible, with regular opportunities for respondents to give further comments. Where used grid questions presented possible answers on a Likert scale³, with the option to say "don't know". The software used enable questions with listed options to be randomised for each respondent, thereby eliminating behavioural bias.

An online engagement, whilst in theory available to all residents, does have an opt-in bias towards those people who have easy access to the internet, and those who actively want to answer online surveys about local government cuts. The survey was available in other formats, however none were requested. Therefore the results should not be considered to be fully representative of the views of all residents (the community events and other associated activities were commissioned so as to take steps to engage with those less likely to take part in an on-line survey).

Specific bias noted for the sample of those answering the survey included more women than men were responding to the survey and fewer people from Fenland or within the under-twenty-five age range responding.

² Impressions are the number of times people saw a tweet or a post. This includes people seeing a post multiple times. Reach is the number of people who saw the post 'organically'; as it is shared or appeared on twitter.

³ A likert scale is where respondents are asked to rate their views of something against a scale, usually something like satisfaction with a service; 'Very satisfied', 'Satisfied' and so on to 'Very dissatisfied', or on a numeric scale, usually 1 to 5.
<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/scallik.php>

ONLINE CONSULTATION: FINDINGS

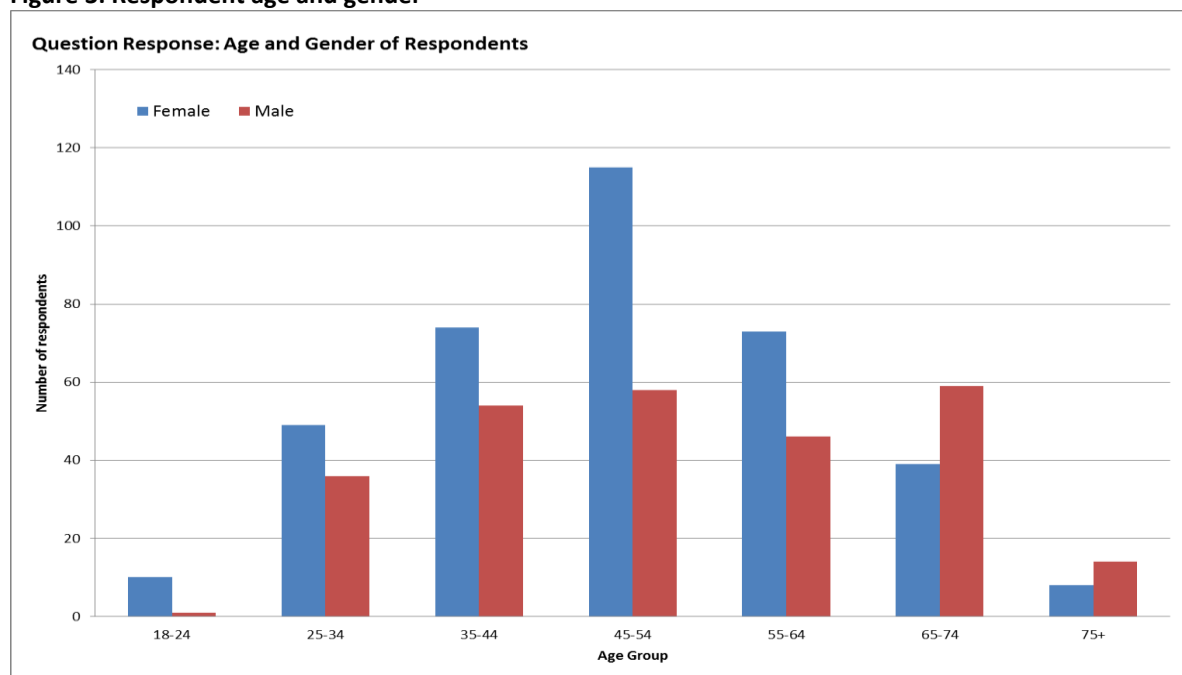
In total, 668 members of the public responded to the survey. Based on a total population of 635,100 (County Council Population Estimate 2013) this number of respondents would in theory give results that are accurate to $\pm 3.79\%$ at the 95% confidence interval. For example, this means with a result of 50%, we can be 95% confident that if we interviewed all residents then the result would be between 46.21% and 53.79%.

RESPONDENT PROFILE

Within the survey, respondents were asked for some details about themselves. This information assists in analysing some of the context to the answers people gave. The information is only used to help us understand how different groups of residents feel and whether there are specific concerns by, for example, age group or resident location.

40.7% of respondents indicated they were male, with 55.4% female and 0.6% other. When asked their age, a greater proportion of respondents indicated they were aged between 45 and 54 years. 1.7% indicated they were under 25 years, and 18.3% over 65 years. This age breakdown differs to those figures from the 2011 Census, where 33.6% of residents were aged over 65. The following chart outlines respondents broken down by age and gender.

Figure 3: Respondent age and gender



86.8% of respondents indicated their ethnicity as being white British, with smaller proportions from a range of different backgrounds. 77.3% of respondents stated they did not have a health problem or disability which limited their day-to-day activities, with 16.3% stating they did. Of those that did, 60.6% were female.

When asked about working status, 72.2% indicated they were in full or part time employment, with a further 17.5% stating they were retired. This is consistent with employment figures for Great Britain as produced by the ONS APS⁴, 77.5% of people in employment for July 2014-June 2015 (figures for Cambridgeshire are slightly higher, at 82.4%).

⁴ <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1941962832/report.aspx#tabempunemp>

The following table breaks down responses to this question in full:

Table 1: Occupational status of survey respondents

Occupation Status	Count	% Respondents
In education (full or part time)	5	0.75%
In employment (full or part time)	421	63.02%
Self-employed (full or part time)	61	9.13%
Retired	117	17.51%
Stay at home parent / carer or similar	24	3.59%
Other	40	5.99%
Total	668	-

Of those 24 who stated 'other', responses included those registered as disabled, some with combined employment and education status, scholars, and those who are generally unemployed.

In total, of the 668 members of the public who responded to the survey, over 80% left an identifiable postcode. By district, the survey had a higher rate of respondents from South Cambridgeshire compared to other districts. Huntingdonshire and Fenland had the lowest rate of response.

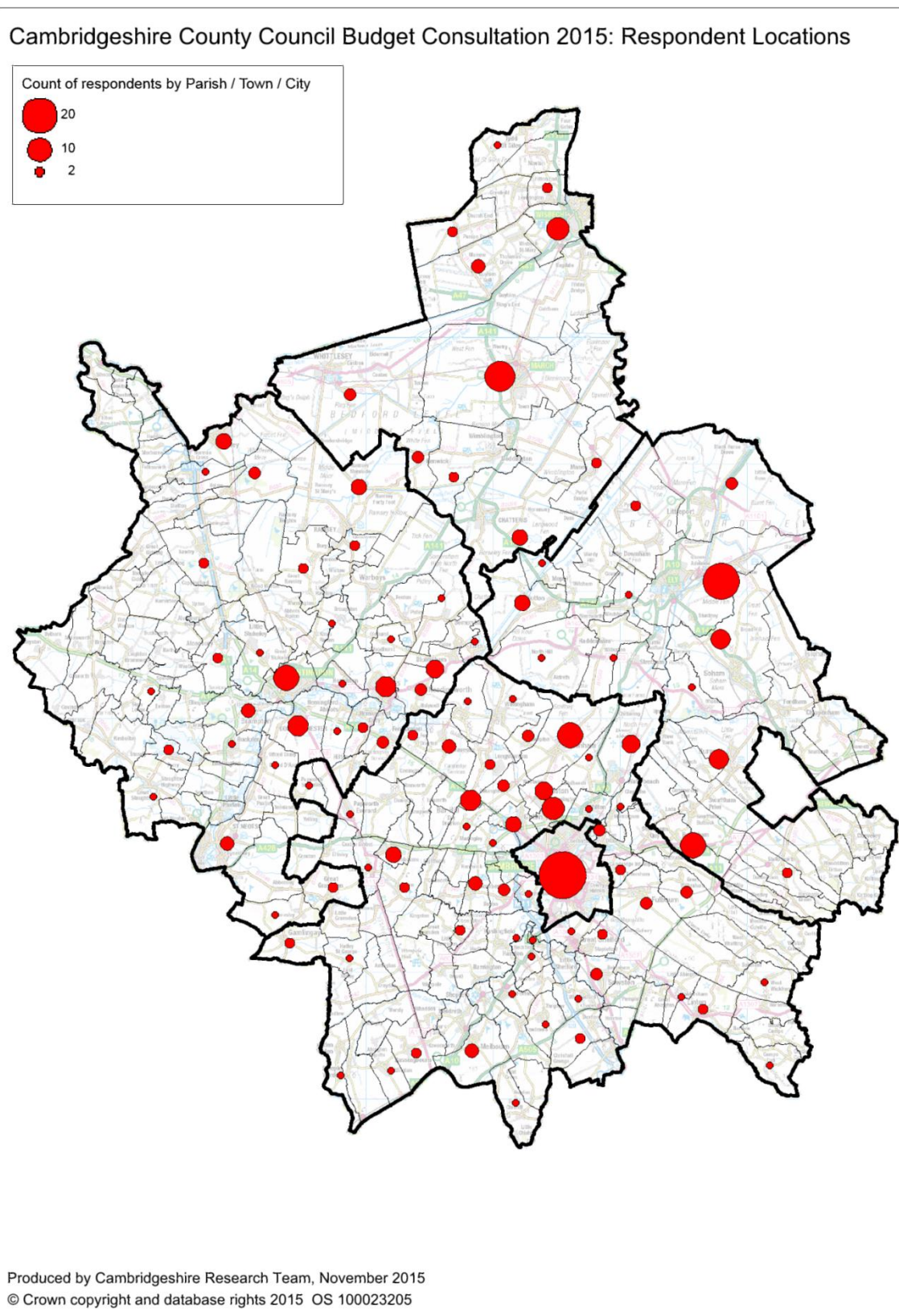
Table 2: Count and Rate of Respondents by district (*November 9th data extract)

District	Count	Respondents against District Population: Rate per 10,000
Cambridge City	83	6.5
East Cambridgeshire	63	7.4
Fenland	48	5.0
Huntingdonshire	87	5.0
South Cambridgeshire	128	8.5
ALL CAMBRIDGESHIRE	409*	6.4

Table based on those respondents leaving valid postcodes

The approximate location of respondents by parish / town / city is shown in the map overleaf.

Figure 4: Approximate location of respondents

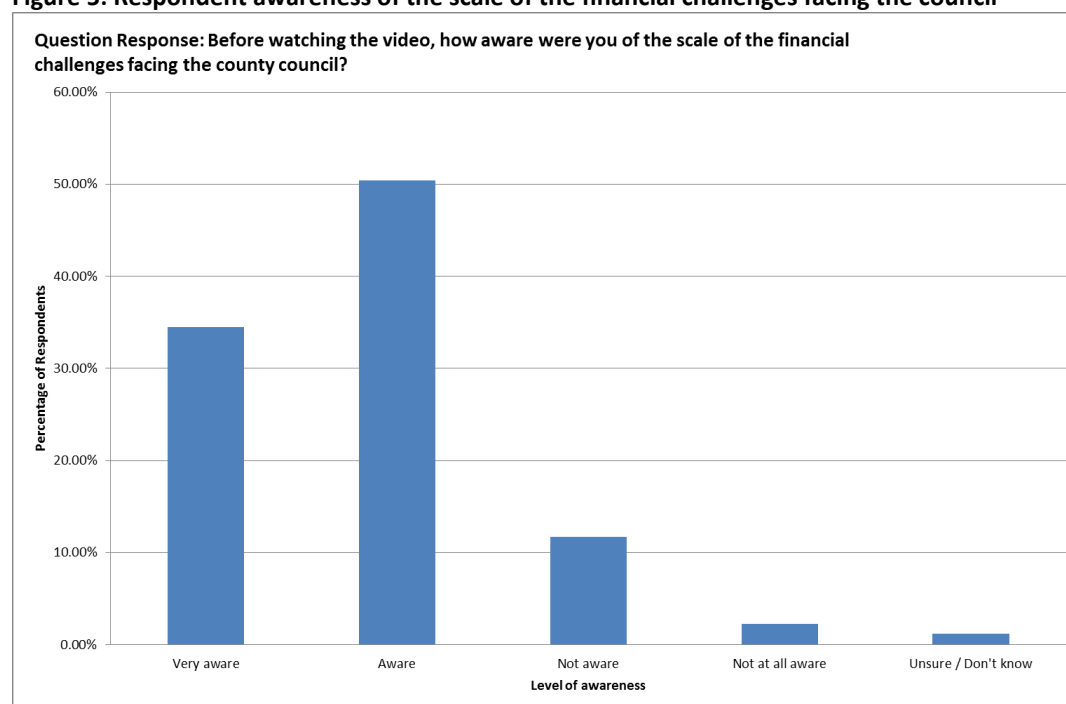


SECTION 1: OUR BUDGET CHALLENGE: VIDEO

On the first page of the survey, the YouTube Video (which can be accessed by [clicking here](#)) was displayed. In total, 95.6% of respondents indicated they had watched the video prior to completing the survey.

83.1% of respondents agreed that the video left them with a good understanding of the challenges faced by the County Council. Prior to watching the video 84.9% of respondents indicated they were either aware or very aware of the scale of the financial challenges facing the County Council. The following chart outlines responses to this question:

Figure 5: Respondent awareness of the scale of the financial challenges facing the council



In total, 165 respondents left initial comments as an immediate reaction to the video, these generally related to the following thematic areas:

- **Concern about the loss essential services and the general impact of austerity**
It was noted that cuts should not always be blamed on local public services, with a number discussing the issues of responsibility at all layers of government, and the need for local government representatives (specifically chief executives and county councillors lobbying parliament)
- **Concern about the impact of the service cuts on vulnerable people**
Services were described as *"a vital lifeline to many vulnerable, lonely, isolatedpeople"* or as extremely valuable *"I am aware there are fabulous services the council offer to the public and many guises. However I believe there is so much more to be done, rather than less. That is why I have grave concerns about how the most vulnerable people will continue to access services required."*

Concern for vulnerable people was raised in a generic way *"the cut in so many services will lead to vulnerable families being left in crisis and that those who are already finding it very hard to cope with less support will be expected to fend more for themselves."* Or people referred to very specific circumstances. *"My son has severe special needs which are growing as he is. I struggle to get the help in Direct payments I do get now. I am worried this will be cut."* Or *"I have little hope that good outcomes for my son will be reached. His quality of life has been severely impacted. There are no safe settings that he can access in order to have good social experiences and cannot take part in normal life due to his disability."*

- **Challenges about the current level of efficiency of the County Council**

Some questioned whether the *“financial challenges [were] quite as dire as portrayed”* and the point was raised about if the Council was getting increasing income as the population increases.

Questions were also raised around the use of business rates, and potential savings made through either complete devolution or the amalgam of services across the various layers of local government. Focusing on the video, it was suggested that the *“challenge is over-stated, mixing up annual and total savings or costs and understating proposed... efficiency gains”*.

- **Specific comments about the content and use of the video for consultation**

With regards to the video, questions were raised about the cost of the video; *“Stop wasting money on expensive information videos and the media budget. This could have been done a lot cheaper by someone speaking to the camera”*. Others questioned the accuracy of figures provided and the related visuals⁵. Whilst some felt that the video was patronising, others did suggest the video was a helpful guide.

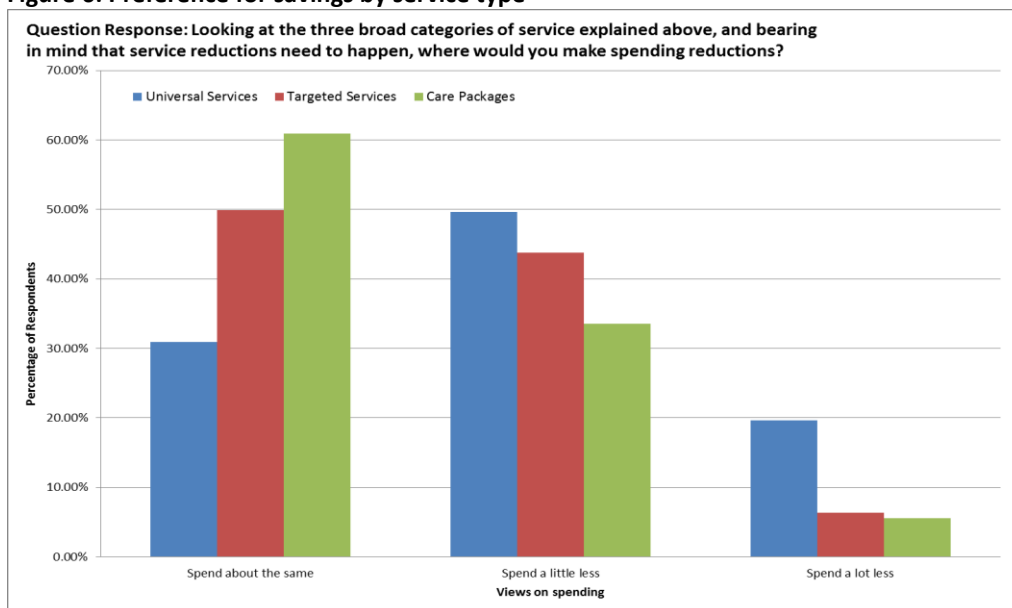
SECTION 2: LOOKING FORWARD

Within the survey, we separated out the types of services we provide into three broad ‘top level’ groupings:

- Universal services: By this we mean for use by everyone - such as repairing potholes, libraries and providing school transport;
- Targeted services: For example support for children with special educational needs, mental health services, and children’s centres;
- Individually: Focused services. For example, care packages for those people with the greatest need.

Respondents were asked to consider these three broad categories (given the understanding that savings had to be made) and to identify where they would spend less. Overall, when looking at the three groupings opinion was clearly more in favour of spending less on universal services as compared to reducing spend on specialized care packages.

Figure 6: Preference for savings by service type



⁵ Due to an editing error, at one point in the video the shape of a pie chart didn’t reflect the figures quoted.

260 respondents left further comments to this section, where they were specifically asked about which services could or should be reduced. Comments were varied, with some expressing concern about the future impact of the reduction in services. Some discussed the future impact on services if early intervention was to be cut back or cease altogether. Some services were mentioned by way of example for the different service types e.g. Universal services included repairing potholes, libraries and school transport so naturally the public's comments tended to focus around these.

Many points were raised in relation to school transport. Some questioned the benefit or reasoning behind the extensive funding of more expensive means of transport such as taxi services. One commented that *"the council needs to look at how and why it transports children with special needs miles away to remote special schools instead of educating them in their immediate community because the budget for their transport is substantial."* Questions were also raised in relation to the efficiency of school route planning and it was asked whether the costs involved in schools transport had increased as knock-on effect of the reduction in subsidised bus routes, especially in rural areas of the county.

The second most commented issue was on 'roads and pavements' as an area of concern. Concerns were raised that reductions in spending in these areas were a *"false economy, ... not repairing potholes, gritting roads etc. could result in serious accidents, again increasing burden on emergency services, NHS, and potential liability claims"*. There was a significant sentiment expressed that this was an area of 'universal' service that needed to be protected as it benefited everyone. There was also scepticism around 'targeted' services *"Reduce the part of the council that does 'parenting' of residents. Mainly because this is not the bit that it does particularly well....Instead focus on infrastructure, waste, building schools etc. i.e. all the things that we really, truly, can't do ourselves (or with help from local charities)."*

The third most commonly commented issue focused on those more vulnerable and "hard to reach" people in society. Concerns were raised that these reductions in services could mean that further families and individuals needing support will be left in crisis. One commented that *"To severely cut targeted services would not only impact immediately on families/individuals in need of these services but would put additional pressure on services such as social care as difficulties would escalate."*

SECTION 3: COUNTY COUNCIL PRIORITIES

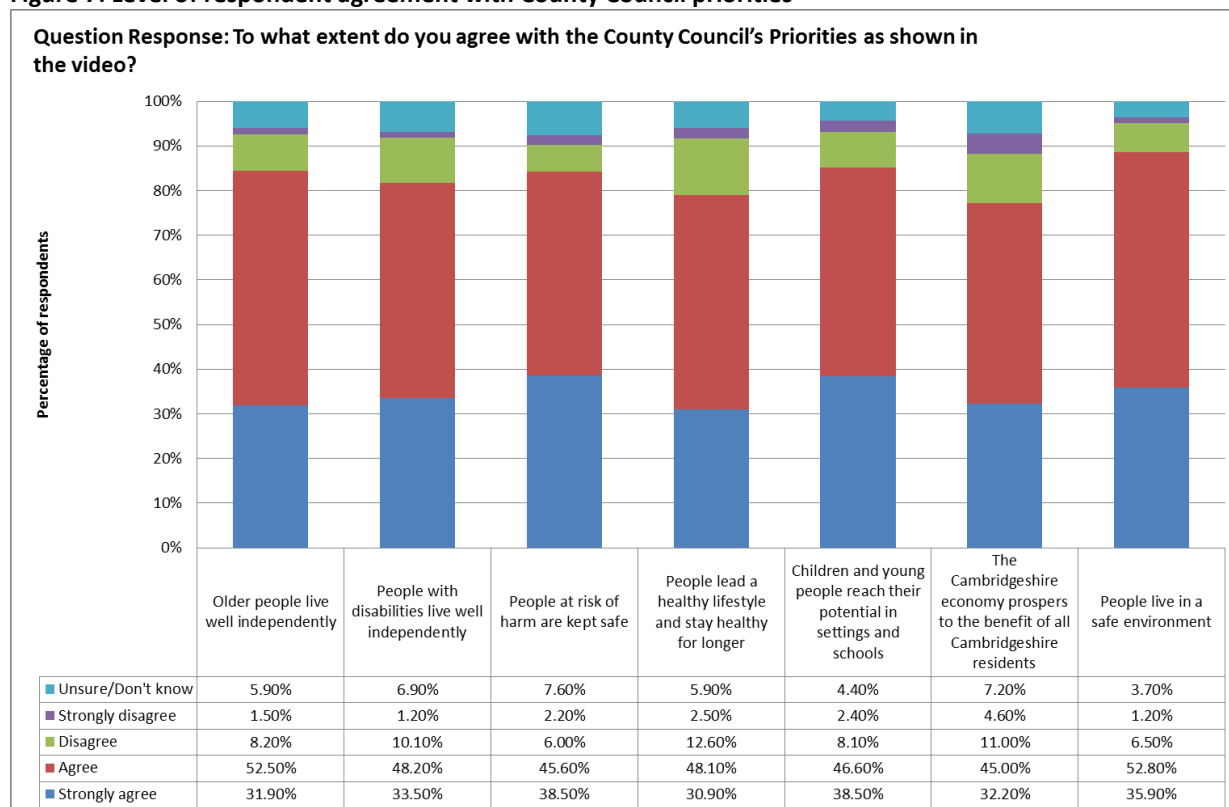
The County Council has developed seven draft priorities as part of its revised strategic framework:

- Older people live well independently
- People with disabilities live well independently
- People at risk of harm are kept safe
- People lead a healthy lifestyle and stay healthy for longer
- Children and young people reach their potential in settings and schools
- The Cambridgeshire economy prospers to the benefit of all Cambridgeshire residents
- People live in a safe environment

Respondents were asked to consider these priorities, and define how far they agreed with each of them. Overall, there was very little difference in the public response to each priority; all were supported to a similar level. By a small margin the top three priorities that respondents most agreed with are as follows:

- People live in a safe environment (88.7%)
- Children and young people reach their potential in settings and schools (85.1%)
- Older people live well independently (84.4%)

Figure 7: Level of respondent agreement with County Council priorities



Respondents were then invited to discuss anything that is particularly important that they felt we had missed. In total, 158 left further comments, this ranged from suggesting alternative priorities to concerns around state parenting versus personal responsibility. People also discussed the substance of the priorities *“These priorities are too general, who could disagree with them? Maybe some specific policies aimed at these priorities could be re-evaluated to save money. - It should also be a priority to balance the budget and avoid the temptation to take on loans.”*

Respondents commented on the importance of transport and roads mainly because these are specifically mentioned within the wording of the priorities.

Mental health was also raised as an issue potentially overlooked within the priorities. Concerns were raised about the impact of mental health at all ages, with one stating that *“There is massive underfunding in preventative mental health services and early intervention - people can only reach their full potential and live a healthy life if they are emotionally healthy and stable”*. Other raised concerns about older peoples’ mental health, with a specific focus on illnesses such as Alzheimer’s and general dementia.

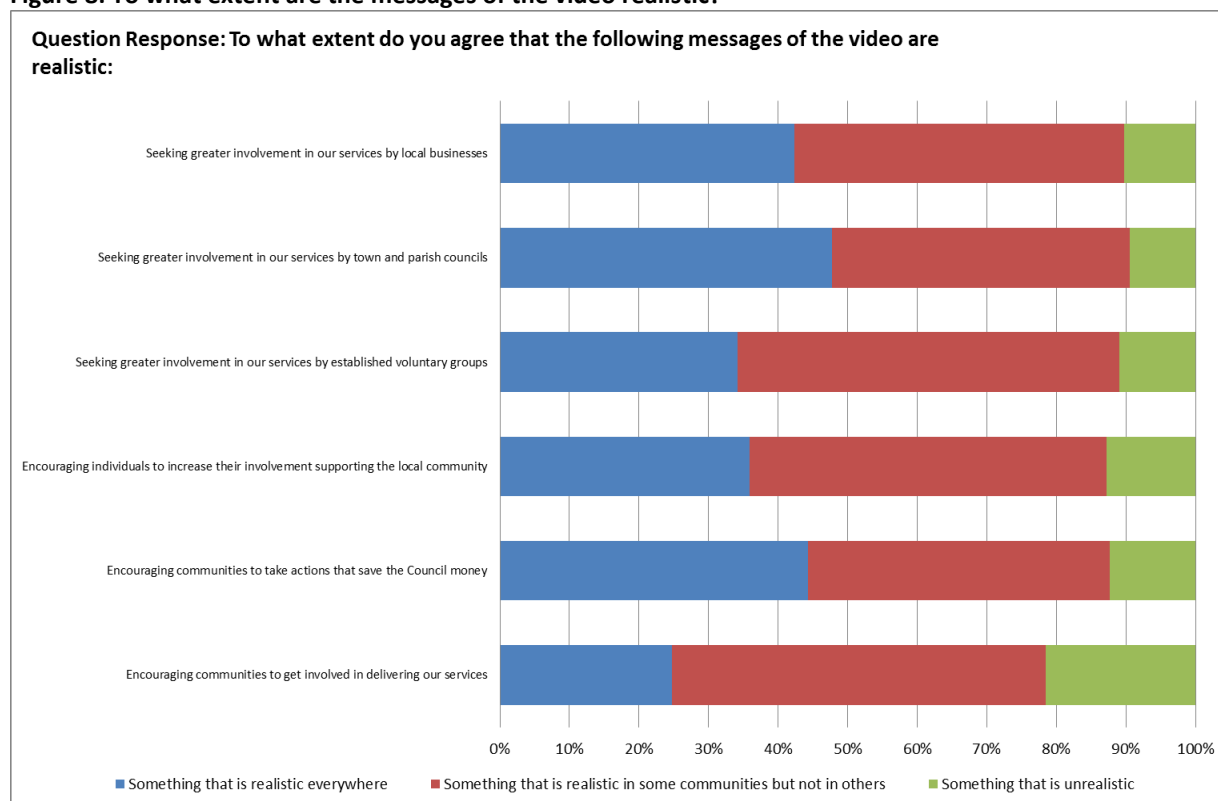
SECTION 4: THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY IN CAMBRIDGESHIRE’S FUTURE

This section took respondents back to consider the video, and its key messages. Six were outlined, as follows, and respondents were asked to consider how realistic they felt each was:

- Encouraging communities to take actions that save the Council money;
- Seeking greater involvement in our services by established voluntary groups;
- Seeking greater involvement in our services by local businesses;
- Encouraging individuals to increase their involvement supporting the local community;
- Seeking greater involvement in our services by town and parish councils;
- Encouraging communities to get involved in delivering our services

It was most strongly felt that the aim of seeking greater involvement in services by town and parish councils was most realistic with over 47% of people thinking that this could happen everywhere. For all of the messages, at least three quarters of respondents felt they were realistic to some degree, however views were mixed as to whether this was the same for all communities or just some. The following chart summarises responses to this question:

Figure 8: To what extent are the messages of the video realistic?



The question was then posed whether these ideas will enable the Council to continue to help people whilst having significantly less funding – and the responses were very mixed, with just 36.6% feeling they would. 36.3% were unsure, and 27% felt they would not.

198 respondents left further comments for this section. As with earlier comments, concerns were raised about the knock-on effect changes would have for the future. Three key areas of discussion rose above the rest:

- The overall plan of the County Council not being realistic or achievable
- Success would only be achieved in some communities not everywhere
- Skill development and funding would be required to achieve these ambitions

A number of respondents stated they did not believe the messages of the video were realistic. One stated that *“individual people are at breaking point, unable to give more volunteer time unless they know they can pay their mortgage/rent and put food on the table first.”* This reflected the view of a number of other respondents, who expressed concerns about individual capacity, and for the capacity of businesses to help, when their incomes are also a priority. Concerns were also raised that the *“voluntary sector is already struggling under the strain of having to make up the gaps left by public funding reductions”*, and the capacity to expect further involvement in service delivery was unrealistic.

Of those who indicated that some communities would be more receptive than others, comments focused on the sense of community spirit already existing in an area, and the importance of building on this. Additional respondents commented on the need to build up the sense of community in some areas, raising concerns that for some, the *“Community ethos will have to fundamentally change from that of ‘there is help for us from the county council’ to ‘we have to do it ourselves as there is no help from the council’*. Another stated that *“People*

can easily get involved in their local communities, save money and increase their sense of participation in the area where they live. Getting the message out AND understood will be problematic though because people have got used to having things done for them”.

Respondents commented on the need for specific skills and training to be provided for some if they were to get involved in services (this included the individual as well as organisations). This ranged from the basic need for DBS checks for those getting involved with vulnerable people to more in-depth qualifications for those taking on more specific roles. It was also noted that *“the untrained cannot replace the trained”* and a number of respondents indicated that they would be more willing to support services if they did not feel it would directly result in a paid member of staff losing their position.

Further comments also included the need to push people to get involved – sometimes with rewards, but sometimes by simply removing service provision. IT was also mooted that there should be stronger lobbying of national government, to increase funding and boost support: *“The Council, in association with other local government authorities, should lobby central government for reinstatement of council funding, scaled up, pro rata, in line with inflation since it was originally cut”.*

SECTION 5: TAKING PART IN YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

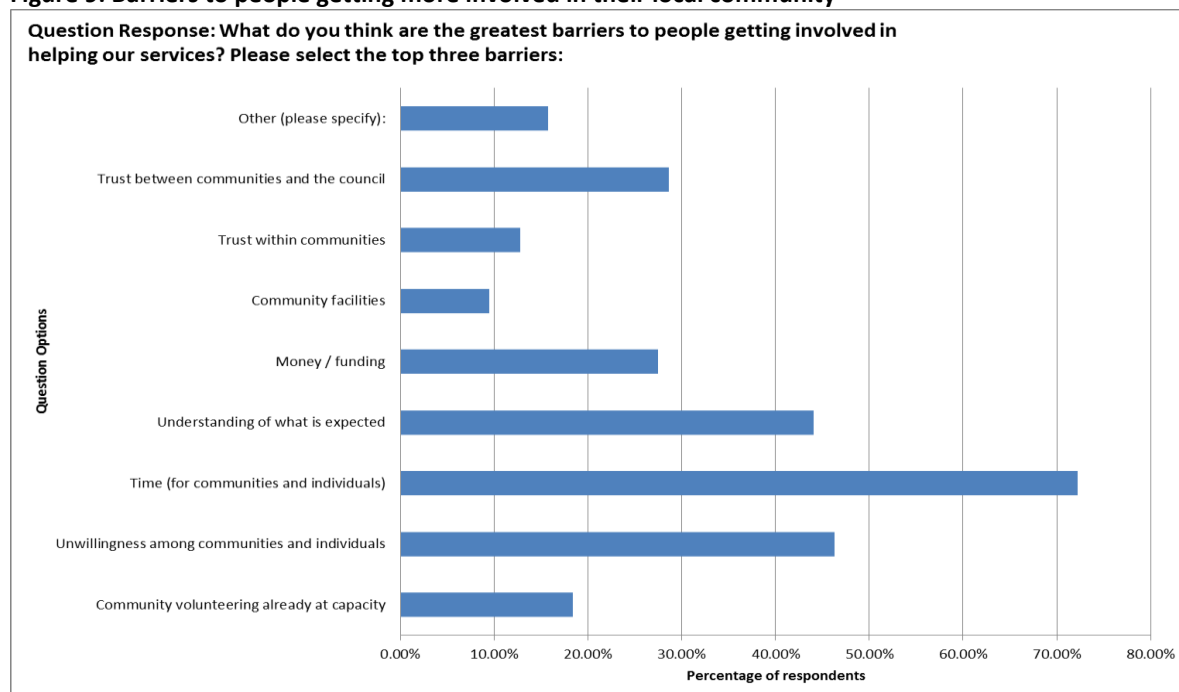
Within this section, respondents were asked to consider whether it was appropriate to ask residents to become more involved in their communities and to support the Council to provide services, 79.4% felt it was a good idea.

261 respondents left further comments. Of these, the most common comment noted that this could only be appropriate for certain services and only then typically with the support of a paid, skilled, member of staff. It was also noted that *“Highly skilled roles should not be included”*, and that the Council should clearly outline services that could welcome involvement: *“It [CCC] should specifically list services where local help is needed”.*

Respondents also commented that it was likely that only specific communities would find residents willing and able to engage with their community, which sometimes works to a benefit, but sometimes serves as a deterrent to others wanting to get involved when there was, for example, a *“range of community services being run by cliques and interest groups”*. One noted that typically only specific sections of society could afford to take time out to get involved, and as such there was a risk of only certain areas being represented. It was also noted that those communities most in need were also likely to consist of those least able to get involved.

Respondents were then asked to consider what barriers there might be to people getting involved in helping the Council provide services. Eight closed options were provided, with the option for respondents to add an additional ‘other’ response. 72% of people identified that ‘time’ was the biggest barrier to getting involved and around 45% of people identified either ‘unwillingness amongst some communities’ or ‘understanding what is expected’ as a barrier.

Figure 9: Barriers to people getting more involved in their local community



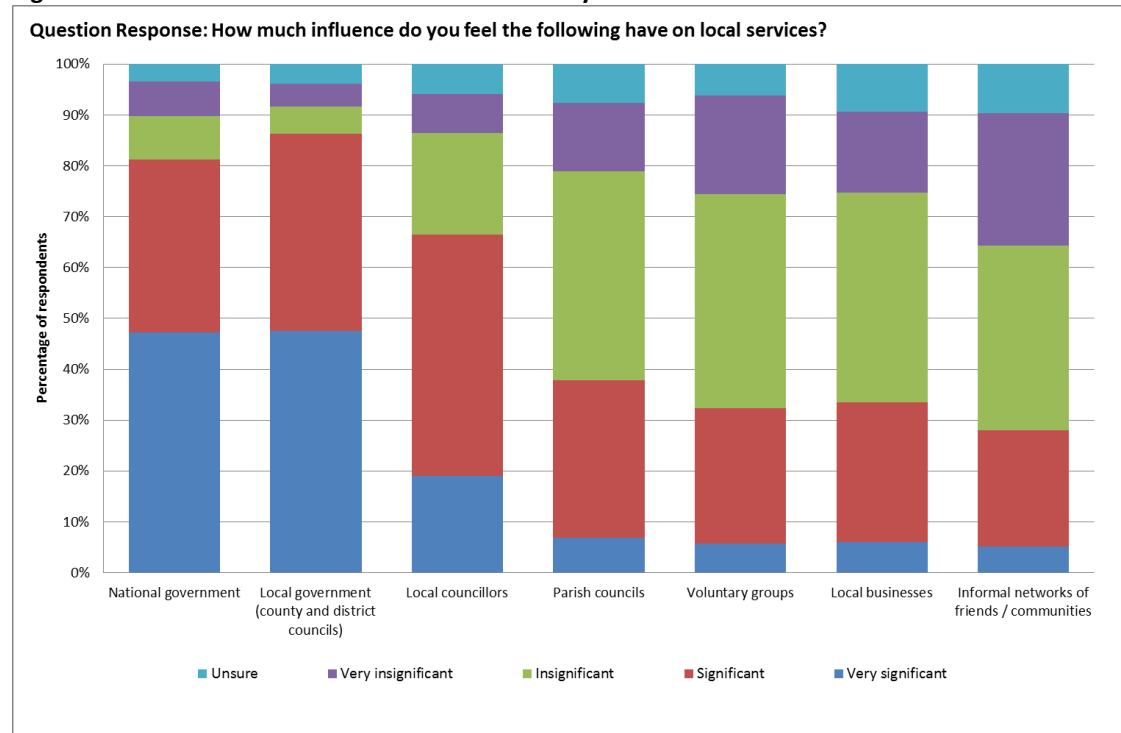
106 respondents left further comments, which focused on the general reluctance of people to engage, sometimes due to general apathy, but sometimes due to a lack of awareness of how and where to get involved, and frustrations around the degrees of bureaucracy involved in volunteering to support some services. People reflected on the general lack of awareness of what to do and of the impact: *"People are not [a]ware that they could/should get involved and what this would mean to them, their community and the council"*. It was noted that consistent communication from the Council was needed, with one stating that there was a *"lack of communication. Social media publicity is free but under used by the council"*. 8.3% commented on the need for a sense of reward, with stories of success to push for involvement in schemes.

The actual or the perceived level of bureaucracy faced by volunteers was also raised. One commented on *"crazy health and safety legislation"* as a barrier, another commented that *"Individuals simply do not have the institutional support to deal in a coherent and consistent way with service delivery. Setting up ad hoc and individual dependant alternatives to current services leaves councils and individuals open to legal challenge"*.

SECTION 6: LOCAL DECISION-MAKING

Within this section, respondents were asked to consider how much influence they felt certain groups / organisations had on local services and local decision-making. The following bar chart summarises the responses provided to this question.

Figure 10: Perceived level of influence on services by different institutions



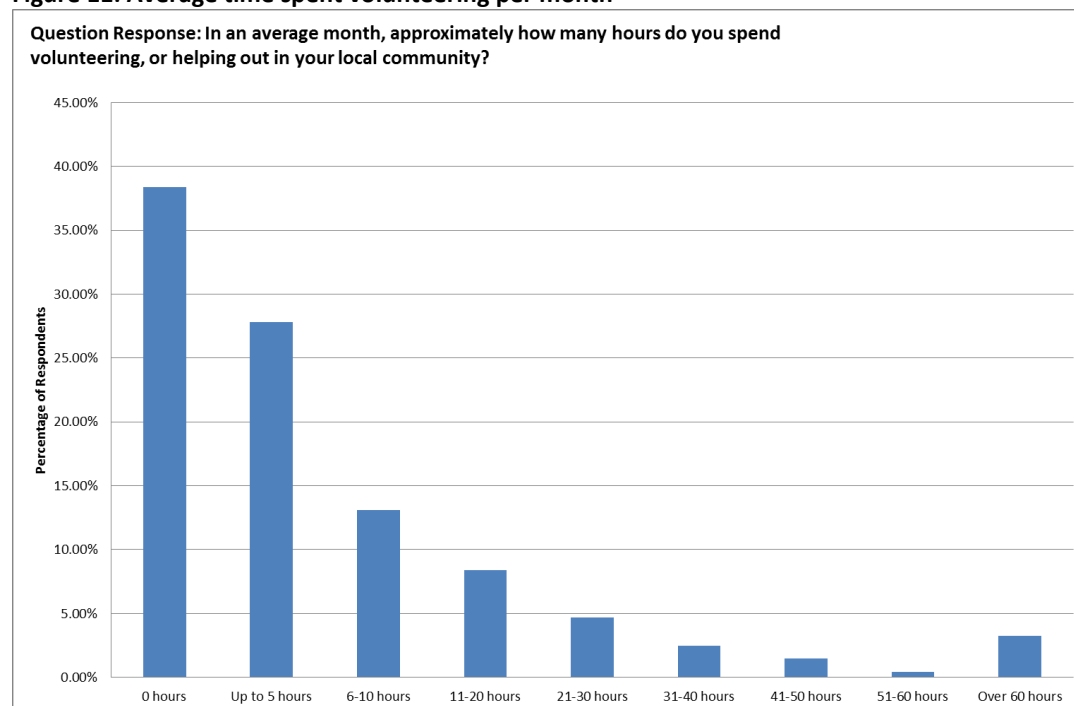
There was a greater sense that national and local government had the greatest impact on local services. Parish Councils were considered to be no more influential than voluntary groups, local businesses and Informal networks.

SECTION 7: CURRENT INVOLVEMENT IN YOUR COMMUNITY

This section of the survey focused on respondents' current experiences getting involved in their local community, such as direct volunteering or supporting others.

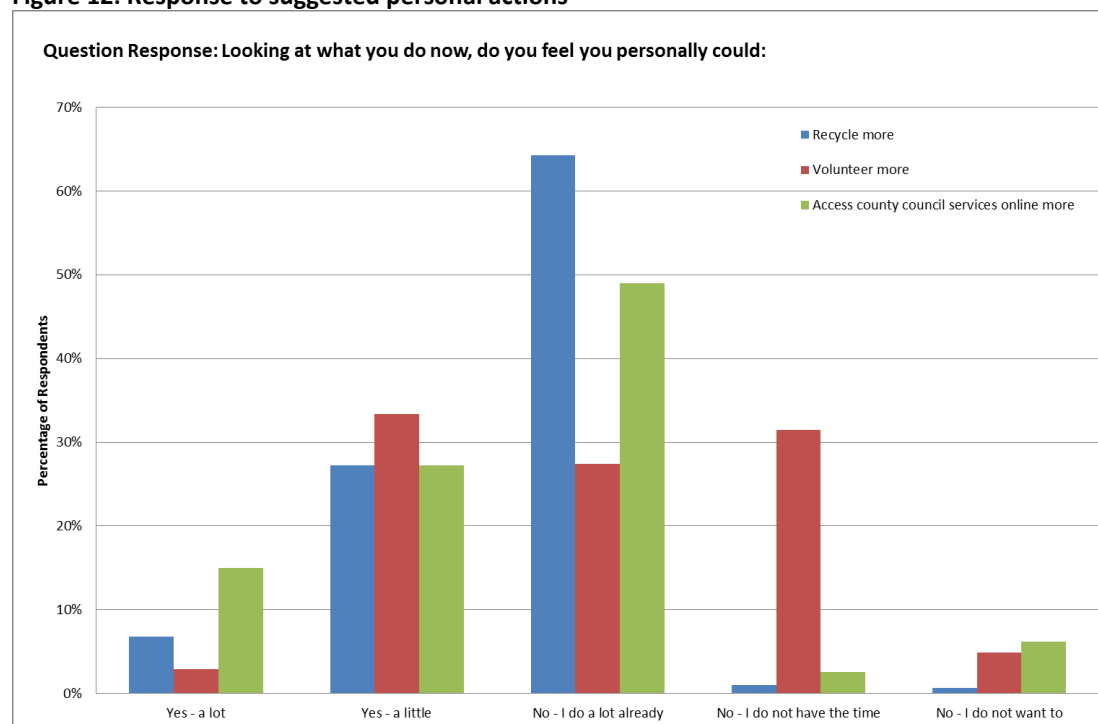
Over a third of respondents stated that they did not volunteer or help out in their community at all with an addition 28% saying that they volunteered less than five hours a month (overall 66% volunteering five hours or less).

Figure 11: Average time spent volunteering per month



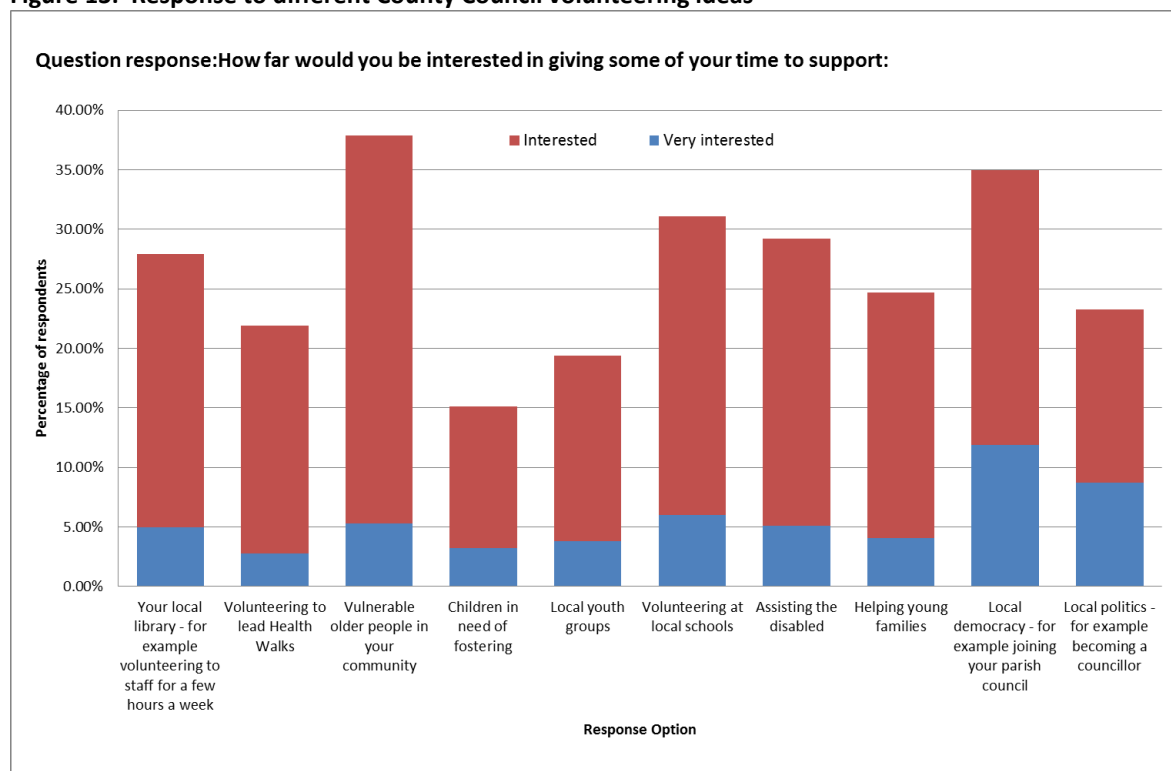
Respondents were asked to consider their current ability to recycle more, volunteer more and access more services online. 15% felt that they could do a lot more to access County Council services on-line compared to what they did at the moment. Opinions regarding the ability to volunteer more were more mixed, with a higher proportion indicating they could do a little more – but an almost equal proportion indicated they did not have the time.

Figure 12: Response to suggested personal actions



Respondents were then provided with the following ten ideas, and asked how far they would be interested in giving some of their time to support each. For all proposed options, the majority of respondents were either not at all interested or not interested in taking part, with over 60% of respondents selecting these in each suggestion (for some, over 85% selected this).

Figure 13: Response to different County Council volunteering ideas



The following bullets break down each of the ten options separately, completing them against other questions in the survey.

- Your local library - for example volunteering to staff for a few hours a week**
 27.9% of all respondents indicated they would be interested or very interested in getting involved in their local library. Females and males showed an equal interest in this activity.
- Volunteering to lead Health Walks**
 21.9% of respondents indicated they would be interested or very interested in volunteering to lead health walks. There was no significant difference by gender.
- Vulnerable older people in your community**
 37.9% of respondents were either interested or very interested in working with vulnerable over people in their community. This was the highest proportion for any of the ten suggestions. Females were more interested in this activity, with 43.2% expressing an interest, compared to 30.1% of males.
- Children in need of fostering**
 15.1% of respondents indicated they would be interested or very interested in giving some of their time to support children in need of fostering. Again, females expressed more interest in engaging with this, with 17.4% expressing interest compared to 11.8% of males.
- Local youth groups**
 19.4% of respondents indicated they were interested or very interested in engaging with local youth groups. By gender, there was no significant difference in engagement levels.

- Volunteering at local schools
31.1% of respondents indicated they were interested or very interested in volunteering at local schools. Females were significantly more interested in getting involved, with 34.3% indicating interest, compared to 25.7% of males.
- Assisting the disabled
29.2% of respondents indicated they were interested or very interested in assisting the disabled. There was no significant difference by gender.
- Helping young families
In total, 24.7% of respondents indicated they were interested or very interested in helping young families. By gender, again females expressed more interest, at 29.7%, compared to 18% of males.
- Local democracy - for example joining your parish council
35% of all respondents indicated they were interested or very interested in engaging with local democracy. Males were significantly more likely to want to get involved, with 46.3%% expressing some degree of interest, compared to 27.3% of females.
- Local politics - for example becoming a councillor
23.3% of respondents stated they were interested or very interested in getting involved in local politics (for example becoming a councillor). Again, males were significantly more interested, with 31.9% expressing interest, compared to 16.3% of females.

255 respondents provided further comments on this; with the key messages being that they had no time due to non-voluntary commitments or that they did a lot already.

Of those indicating time as a restricting factor, comments related to the pressure to make ends meet or existing care responsibilities *"already have to work two jobs (1 full time 1 part time and have three elderly relatives to care for) spare time!!!! What spare time!!!!"* or *"I a single breadwinning parent of a young child. So I don't have very much spare time."* Some indicated a lack of support from employers as a barrier, citing issues such as inflexibility in time off. Other noted the considerable amount of time dedicated to care-giver roles, typically for close family members, and cited frustration that these were not treated with more value. There was however recognition that the Council does have little option but to reduce support.

Of those who indicated they specifically volunteered a lot already, a number commented on the strain that the current financial situation was placing on local voluntary organisations and informal groups. Respondents provided a variety of examples of services they were involved in, including those services highlighted above, food banks, visiting the local prison, supporting local football clubs and volunteering at local museums.

SECTION 8: COUNCIL TAX

This section was identical to a set of questions asked the previous year so comparisons can be drawn.

Respondents were asked to identify which Council Tax band their property was in. The web survey form then highlighted for them how much council tax they paid per year to the County Council. There were then asked a series of questions about taxation. Of the sample, a quarter indicated they were in Council Tax band D (25.2%) with a fairly even distribution around this point.

When asked how far they agreed with the idea of increasing Council Tax to reduce the cuts to services the Council has to make, 60% of respondents either strongly agreed or tended to agree. This is a marked increase from last year, where 48.1% of respondents felt this way. Opinions were consistent across all tax bands.

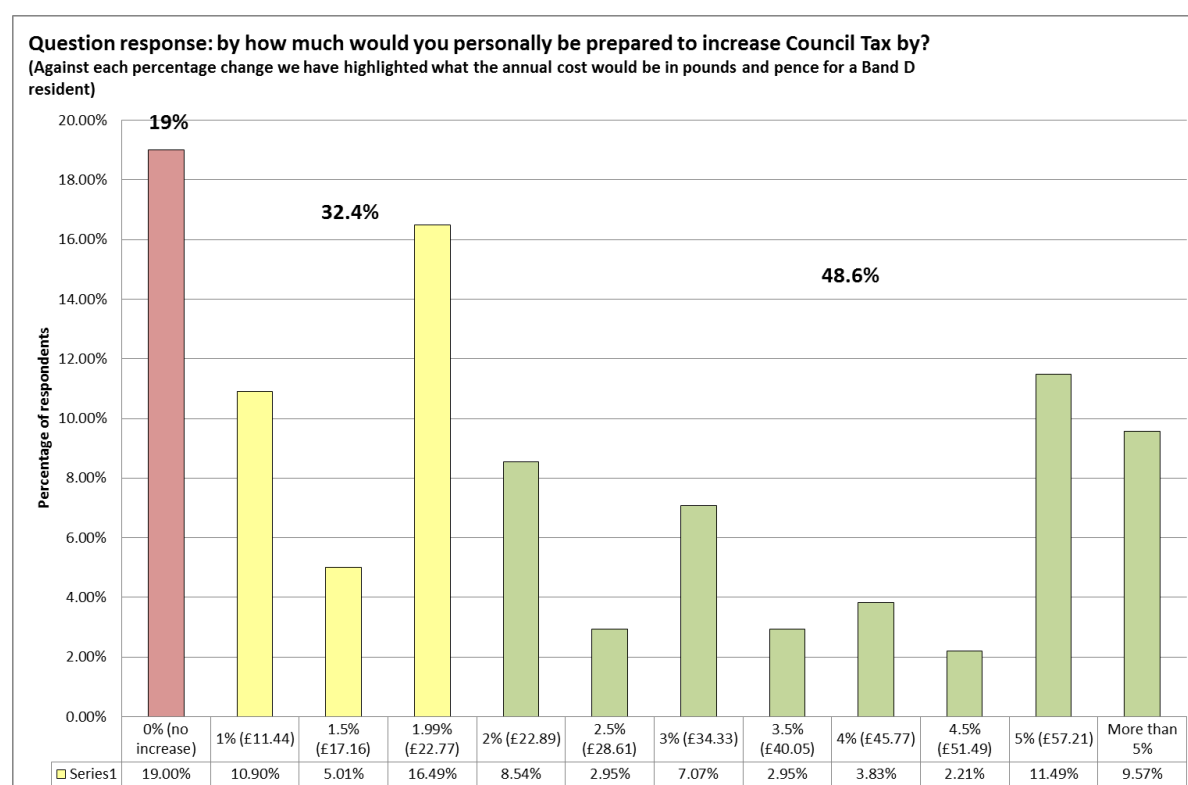
Respondents were then asked by how much they would personally be prepared to increase Council Tax by, taking into account the savings required, and that an increase of over 1.99% would require a public referendum to be held.

19% of respondents felt they would not be prepared to see any increase, with 32.4% opting for an increase of between 1% and 1.99%. 48.6% of respondents felt they could take an increase of over 2%. Again these differ from last year, with a higher proportion of respondents being open to the idea of a tax increase. Last year, 78.3% were open to some level of increase, compared to 81% this year. The following table compares this year's responses with those from 2014.

Table 3: Willingness to increase council tax

% Tax increase	2015	2014
0 (no increase)	19.0%	21.7%
1 – 1.99	32.4%	23.9%
> 2	48.6%	54.4%

Figure 14: Willingness to increase council tax



COMMUNITY EVENTS

INTRODUCTION

In addition to the on-line survey there were four direct engagement events with the community. The events attended were in Wisbech, Cherry Hinton, Ramsey and Ely (with the choice of location being limited to suitable community events being run during the consultation period. The communication material from these was based upon the messages within the animation. These events were led by the Community Engagement Team and a range of staff from across County Council services took part. Local elected members were also invited to attend.

Overall this engagement directly reached over 350 people with well over 200 contact forms being completed (people participated in couple or groups). Each write-up was circulated to those officers who had been present for confirmation and a further 'feedback' meeting was held, with all facilitator invited, to establish the key themes arising from the consultation.

RESULTS FROM COMMUNITY EVENTS

CAMBRIDGESHIRE'S BUDGET CHALLENGE: WISBECH

Sunday 13th September 10-3 Wisbech Heritage Craft Market & Car Boot

Members of County Council staff and a local councillor talked with over 100 people at the Heritage Craft Market (with 61 feedback forms being completed as some talked as a couple or group). People were shown information about the County Council's budget challenge and were asked about their level of awareness, their initial reaction to the budget cuts and what they thought of the County Council's plans to cope with the cuts. People were also asked if they supported an increase in Council tax. Conversations were wide ranging and people commented on local issues as well as the County Council's budget. There were many positive examples of people volunteering to support the community. Thirty people gave their e-mails in order to participate in the on-line survey when it became available.

Awareness of the Budget Challenge

- Almost half the people we talked to were unaware of the budget challenge faced by the County Council. In total 46% were unaware of the issue prior to meeting County Council staff and a further 11% only had a little awareness of the issue.
- Some people expressed '*surprise*' at the scale of the cuts needed over the next five years whilst others found them '*A bit shocking / worrying*'. One person indicated that they were '*saddened and appalled*' and another said that £100million was too much.
- Within some people's minds the scale of the cuts were combined with what they considered to be a history of underinvestment in Wisbech. Several referred to Wisbech being '*underfunded*' and money being spent in other parts of the County.

Suggestions for Savings

- Savings suggestions from members of the public included cutting Councillors expenses 'you don't need £7,000 to be a Councillor', cutting senior pay ('*cuts should not come from services. Why do high end Council employees get paid so much - cut their salary*') and not spending money on consultants
- A few people pointed to expenditure on translation fees as an area where money could be saved and one person suggested that this was where volunteers could help.
- There were suggestions that street lights could be turned off late at night; although more people mentioned this as a negative idea saying that Wisbech was not safe enough for this to happen. These

people went on to say that local policing was inadequate or needed protecting from cuts.

- Some suggested that money could be spent in a more efficient or targeted way and there were suggestions that different parts of government could be merged. A couple questioned spending money on proposals to reopen the Wisbech to March railway line.
- There was general support expressed for charging more for some services if people could afford the additional amount.

Community Action to support services

- Generally there was a very positive response to the suggestion that increased community action and volunteering could help to support local services. For example people thought that it was possible for libraries to be staffed by volunteers (*'Volunteering is a good idea as it increases feelings of wellbeing and helps the community'*)
- There were many examples of people doing a considerable amount within their local communities. There was a positive story about the benefits of 'Wisbech in Bloom' in maintaining the built environment of the town. Another person was involved with the University of the Third Age (the 43 separate groups/activities in the March area) and the additional informal support that had grown out of this. There were also more personal examples *'I look after my brother who is mentally ill. We come under Norfolk NHS and their mental health team are always at the end of the phone in an emergency - they support me to support him'*. Generally existing volunteers were able to point to further opportunities for collaboration.
- When asked if they personally would be willing to volunteer more there was a mixed response. Some people felt that they already did what they could and cited work / family commitments as a barrier for example one person said that *'they already visit three people'*.
- There was considerable discussion about where new volunteers would be drawn from. The people we spoke to identified the young as well as the recently retired as being groups to target. One person recognised the skills amongst recently retired people. Several mentioned the unemployed and suggested that an element of service should be linked to benefit entitlement.
- There was a mixed response regarding community spirit. Those who regularly volunteered felt that the community spirit in Wisbech was really strong and cited many positive examples. Others thought that there wasn't a strong spirit and a small number linked this issue to migration.
- It was positive that a number of people provided their e-mail addresses in order to hear more about volunteering opportunities.

Paying more Council Tax

- Of those who gave a direct answer to this question (50 people) 52% said that Council tax should not be increased. A small number argued for a decrease. For those who said it shouldn't go up *'Feels like we pay enough already and get little for it'* was a common comment.
- 48% of people said that they would pay more but for over half of these people this was a conditional statement. There were three common conditions; the first was that the increase should not be too high; the second was that it was inevitable; the third was that it should be clearly demonstrated what the additional money was for *'target services that need protecting'*, *'depends on services'* and *'yes – for direct delivery of priorities'* are example comments.
- Some people highlighted that taxes should be means tested with some groups (older people, those on a low income) paying less than those who are better off.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE'S BUDGET CHALLENGE: CHERRY HINTON

Saturday 19th September Cherry Hinton Festival, Cherry Hinton

Members of County Council staff talked with over 100 people at the Cherry Hinton Festival with 59 feedback forms being completed as some talked as a couple or group). People were shown information about the County Council's budget challenge and were asked about their level of awareness, their initial reaction to the budget cuts and what they thought of the County Council's plans to cope with the cuts. People were also asked if they supported an increase in Council tax. Conversations were wide ranging and people commented on local issues as well as the County Council's budget. There were many positive examples of people volunteering to support the community. Thirty-six people gave their e-mails in order to participate in the on-line survey when it became available.

Awareness of the Budget Challenge

- The level of awareness about the cuts was very good. Of the people who specifically answered this questions (50) 62% were very aware and a further 22% were broadly aware. It should be noted that a proportion attributed this awareness to being public sector workers e.g. from the NHS.
- Five people linked their awareness to the scale and scope of the cuts to the proposals to turn off streetlights between midnight and 6am.
- Of the minority who did not have much awareness there was some shock expressed as to the scale of the cuts that needed to be made over the next few years; one person admitted turning off the news because it was all 'too depressing'.

Suggestions for Savings

- There were not many savings suggestions from members of the public. Rather they found it easier to list services that they valued. These included Mental Health Services, Transport (Bus passes being described as a 'life-line') and 'Concern about the impact on children from low income families and older people'.
- Bus passes were also raised by an additional two people in relation to the ability of some to pay for bus services that they currently got for free. One thought was that bus passes should be means tested. One person wrote "Understand it's very challenging. Important to protect transport - although not necessarily as it is at the moment - it could be increasing community transport and decreasing bus subsidy". One person also mentioned 'pay to use' library services.
- Making increased use of the internet was mentioned. "Should do more digitally. Stop posting stuff, only use online. And equip people so that they can engage digitally - training, providing tablets, etc."

Community Action to support services

- There were many excellent examples of people already doing an extensive amount of volunteering within the community. 'Community readers' do Saturday morning session each week for children'; 'I live in a small village and that is already happening - there are lots of elderly volunteers'. 'I'm 76 and happy to do my bit - I've been part of St John Ambulance most of my life. I've also set up an Old Boy's Club recently'
- Many people mention the need for signposting for people to be able to help volunteer more 'Yes to volunteering - has volunteered at Cambridge ReUse and Children's Society - would do more if she could find the right opportunities' also 'people can help but they won't - need a coordinator otherwise people will sit around waiting for others to help'. Others mentioned how inspiring some individuals are 'Could have lost the library - one person was key to saving it - now things have turned around.'
- Time pressures were mentioned as one of the reasons people couldn't volunteer more 'Does mowing for old people working / time pressure limits ability to do more' and 'I'm not sure that they can - they are squeezed too - working longer, raising children and retiring later and looking after parents. Need

to make more opportunities for working people. Think capacity is declining'

- Another barrier mentioned for volunteering was not being perceived as an official or being allowed to help without running into red tape. *'You run into problems litter picking. I'd get an earful for not being 'official'.*
- Some conversations centred on how to move volunteering on from something that is person or local e.g. *'I know my neighbours we do the odd thing for each other - we just pay our way - that's how it is.'* Or *'Needs to be directly relevant to family - e.g. children's football team.'* To something that is outside someone's normal scope of community involvement; time credit schemes were praised in this regard.

Paying more Council Tax

- Of those who gave a direct answer to this question (44 people) only 20% said that Council tax should not be increased. For those who said it shouldn't go up almost all said that they would struggle to pay the additional amount or they were already struggling to pay.
- As many as 75% of people said that they would pay more but for over half of these people this was a conditional statement.

There common conditions were;

- A specific area of public service work would receive the additional funding or would be protected. The NHS was mentioned in this regard as was children's centres as well as the police.
- That there was some sort of fairness or means test attached to the increase. People mentioned *'big corporates'* paying more and another person suggested that *'students'* should be taxed. *'Only for people who can afford it'* and *'personally wouldn't mind an extra £150 p.a., but concerned about people who can't afford it'* were also two recorded comments.
- Some people also highlighted the transparency in spending and knowing about the sort of things local taxes were spent on.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE'S BUDGET CHALLENGE: RAMSEY

Sunday 27th September, Ramsey Plough Day, Ramsey

Members of County Council staff talked with over 50 people at the Ramsey Plough Day (with 37 feedback forms being completed as some talked as a couple or group).

People were shown information about the County Council's budget challenge and were asked about their level of awareness, their initial reaction to the budget cuts and what they thought of the County Council's plans to cope with the cuts. People were also asked if they supported an increase in Council tax. Conversations were wide ranging and people commented on local issues as well as the County Council's budget. There were many positive examples of people volunteering to support the community. Eighteen people gave their e-mails in order to participate in the on-line survey when it became available.

Awareness of the Budget Challenge

- Well over half the people we talked to were aware of the budget challenge faced by the County Council. In total 63% were aware of the issue prior to meeting County Council staff.
- Some people expressed '*surprise*' at the scale of the cuts '*sounds like a lot more than I thought*' and '*Shocking - couldn't believe the amounts involved*' were two of the comments recorded.
- Others expressed that the cuts were inevitable given the state of the public finances '*everyone's money is squeezed*'. T
- There was some expression that the cuts were either unfairly targeted at local services '*Shame there has to be cuts and sharing the amount around needs to be fair to make up the deficit. Shire Counties are being hit the hardest*'; '*Staggering amount - can understand why we don't see coppers on the beat anymore*' and '*Sounds like a lot more than thought. Noticing run down paths and hedgerows and other things slipping*'
- There was a further comment about the most vulnerable being hit the hardest '*Well as usual it will be the vulnerable people, older people that get hit, suffer as a result. Provision for children with disabilities and social services is in free fall (that's what I've heard). Infrastructure isn't funded appropriately, respite care is underfunded*'.

Suggestions for Savings

- Savings suggestions from members of the public included cutting Councillors and their allowances '*Stop paying councillors -expenses only*'
- A form of local government reorganisation was also mentioned by several people '*District councils not needed. Remove this tier*' and '*Cheaper offices. Fewer Councillors, Shared facilities, commercialise and charge for more services. Reduce levels of government*'
- People were aware of the problem of playing services off against each other; '*difficult to think about how it can be met without removing services that are essential. Cuts to roads rather than youth services*' and '*Spending money where we don't need to i.e. on street lighting. Put it in roads instead*'.
- There was also some concentration on the current quality of services and the current approach to spending. Someone commented '*Can understand there must be savings but don't think CCC is clear about how the money is spent. Also some departments don't seem to do anything i.e. Conservation. Feels things are going back rather than improving*' and also '*Wasted at source before it is ever spent. This needs to be looked at.*'

Community Action to support services

- Unlike the other areas where this consultation has been carried out there was a mixed response to the suggestion that increased community action and volunteering could help to support local services. - There were many examples of people doing a considerable amount within their local communities. People volunteering to run health walks, with the Ramsey Museum (run entirely by volunteers), street

pride initiatives, community gardening and with cancer charities.

- There was also some pessimism that the community would be able to respond with additional effort as services are cut. Someone observed *'Community won't do it. Used to have many more volunteers within communities. Commuters - often not interested / able in volunteering within communities'* whilst another said *'Warboy's community spirit hangs by a thread. Job to get volunteers to run things'*.

- When exploring in more detail why there were problems with volunteering people attributed this to the work pressures placed on the young *'Already do a lot of volunteering. When people are working can be very difficult - if you get a volunteer under fifty then you are very lucky'* and *'It is always the same people volunteering and younger people have more work / financial pressures. Volunteers need support as well. Can't just do it on their own'*.
- It was positive that a number of people provided their e-mail addresses in order to hear more about volunteering opportunities. There was also particular praise for the Ramsey Million project and also for the St Neot's Time Bank as being better ways to engage younger people in the community.

Paying more Council Tax

- Of those who expressed an opinion only 22% said yes to paying for an additional amount of Council tax.
- A much larger proportion of 41% said that they would pay an increase but it was conditional. The main conditions are as follows:
 - The money is spent well and not wasted;
 - That they could be sure that the money was spent on some very specific services *'If the money went to services I used then yes'* or *'Need to know a lot more about what it would be spent on i.e. £20 more council tax ...this is what will be achieved with it.'*
 - That the increase would not be unfairly charged to those on a low income e.g. poorer pensioners or struggling families.
- A few people referred to the quandary of being asked for ever more council tax at the same time as services were being cut, feeling that if this was the case there was little point in paying the increase *'Wouldn't object to paying more council tax if services remained'*.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE'S BUDGET CHALLENGE: ELY

Saturday 16th October, Ely Market

Members of County Council staff and a local councillor talked with over 100 people in (with 60 feedback forms being completed as some talked as a couple or group). People were shown information about the County Council's budget challenge and were asked about their level of awareness, their initial reaction to the budget cuts and what they thought of the County Council's plans to cope with the cuts. People were also asked if they supported an increase in Council tax. Conversations were wide ranging and people commented on local issues as well as the County Council's budget. There were many positive examples of people volunteering to support the community. Thirty one people gave their e-mails in order to participate in the on-line survey when it became available.

Awareness of the Budget Challenge

- Only a quarter of the people we talked to were unaware of the budget challenge faced by the County Council. In total 25% were unaware of the issue prior to meeting County Council staff and a further 23% only had a partial awareness of the issue.
- Just over 50% of people said they were fully aware of the situation. Most attributed put this awareness down to what they've read or seen in the media but a few also reported direct experience of the cuts as either service users or because relatives worked in public services.
- Some people expressed their reaction to the scale of the cuts in one of two ways:
 - shock; *'Shock, that much money is being spent...you have 'open my eyes' to the scale of the cuts needed'; 'Shocking about the amount that needed to be saved'.*
 - The cuts as a necessary evil, particularly in light of the national budget situation; *'Not shocked by the level of the challenge. Deficit has to be cleared. (It's like any household budget). No good living in cloud cuckoo land about it'; 'Pragmatic - do what needs to be done. Start at the top - councillor's expenses'.*

Suggestions for Savings

- Some savings suggestions by members of the public were made in light of a perception that local government was wasteful;
 - *'people at the top get too much. We should start with getting rid of golden handshakes / huge salaries';*
 - *'They find it frustrating that so much is wasted on ideas / planning projects that don't happen. Move on prevention - i.e not leaving road damage until it costs a fortune to repair'*
 - *'Money is wasted on outsourcing'*
- The proposal to reduce street lighting arose and opinion was divided as to this being a good idea or not. One person suggested that the streetlights were one of the few benefits that they got for their council tax (alongside bin collections). Whereas others approved of the measure, particularly in light of other areas that could be cut;
 - *'Happy to see a reduction in street lighting but not older and vulnerable people'.*
 - *'Turn the street lights off and turn libraries into community centres'*
 - *'Yes people should help in their communities would be happy to go without streetlights'*
- Rather than suggest areas for cuts people put forward area that they wanted to see protected.
 - *'It is wrong that the savings might be taken from children and the disabled. The elderly should be properly supported - better support for those who need it. Worry about essential services going even though they are supposed to be protected.'*
 - *'Worried about the impact on care for older people. Children need a good education, felt all services described were important.'*
 - *'Protecting vulnerable people is most important'*
 - *'Shouldn't lose libraries as they offer so much.'*
- People also raised issue of service quality.
 - *'Roads are rubbish, we've only four street lights and I've never seen a bus.'*

- 'I go to London for eye Hospital appointments. Often miss the last bus [there aren't any later ones] when I get home and have to pay £30 for a taxi'

Community Action to support services

- We heard lots of stories about how much volunteering was already taking place in the community.
 - *'Already work within their community - helping a number of elderly people'*.
 - *'Member of Soham Rotary Club so raise money for good causes'*
 - *'Local volunteer / secretary of village centre.... there is community spirit there. Older people pull together'*
 - *'runs a dementia group - finds it difficult to inspire people - runs group herself after funding was cut'*
 - *'School / college do volunteering and also donate to charity'*
- Generally there was strong support for the idea of encouraging more volunteering and other forms of community action but people questioned if it would be a suitable replacement for paid services.
 - *'It's not wrong to be asked. Same people would be happy to be asked. But its not for everybody, depends on the circumstances of the person. Volunteering is brilliant if you are that type of person. Cannot be compulsory'*
 - *'yes it can be right to ask people to help - but the same people want to be paid to deliver services. Not sure about community spirit'*
 - *'This initiative should cover health services as well. People do 'keep an eye' on neighbours but worried this is seen as being nosey'*

Paying more Council Tax

- Of those who gave an opinion only 16% gave an unequivocal yes to increasing council tax. This can be balanced against the 24% who said no to an increase.
- 59% of people gave an answer that amounted to a conditional yes. Agreeing to an increase but placing caveats on that agreement.
 - *'Yes for specific things - i.e. roads. People need to know what the extra money will be spent on.'*
 - *'I don't mind as long as the money goes to the right services.'*
 - *'Yes as long as the Council doesn't waste money.'*
 - *'Yes but it needs to be spent on appropriate things - essential services not bypasses and roads.'*
 - *'Wouldn't mind a slight increase if services improved'*

BUSINESS CONSULTATION

INTRODUCTION

As part of its business planning process, the Council consults with the public, businesses and other interest groups to gain insight into their views about what should be considered priority areas for budget spending. In the case of businesses, the Council wished to develop an insight into their views about what it can do to help local businesses thrive. The Council was also keen to talk with businesses about how they engage with and support their local communities.

In order to develop this engagement, the Council sought to run a series of consultative meetings with businesses across the County. To do this, it was agreed with the Cambridgeshire Chambers of Commerce that County Council research staff should gather views by attending local Chamber committees. Alongside these sessions, individual businesses were consulted at a Chamber of Commerce B2B event. Experience has shown that face to face conversations are the most effective approach to engage with businesses. A decision was made not to run the online consultation this year due to the typically low response rate of this engagement.

This report summarises consultations carried out with 75 businesses through the Cambridgeshire Chambers of Commerce Local Committees in September, October and November 2015 and at the 2015 Cambridgeshire Chambers of Commerce B2B event held at Quay Mill Hotel in September. In its 6th year, the event hosted over 100 exhibitors and 600 visitors.

METHODOLOGY

The consultation sought to gather the views of businesses across the County about what the County Council can and should be doing to develop an environment within which local businesses can thrive, through having a semi-structured discussion. The face to face consultation with businesses had the following objectives:

- Focus predominantly on small to medium enterprises (SME). The Cambridgeshire Chambers of Commerce advise that 68% of businesses in Cambridgeshire employ four people or fewer.
- Gather the views of businesses across the County about what the County Council can and should be doing to develop an environment within which local businesses can thrive.
- Explore the involvement of local businesses in the community through processes such as work experience placement and apprenticeships.

There were two parts to the consultation. The major part was open discussions similar to a focus group with the business representatives on the four local Cambridgeshire Chambers of Commerce committees for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, Ely, Fenland, and Huntingdonshire. These were carried out through September to November 2015. In-depth discussions with 33 businesses took place through the Chambers of Commerce local committees in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, Ely, Fenland, and Huntingdonshire.

The second part looked beyond the representatives sitting on the Cambridgeshire Chamber of Commerce committees to other businesses involved in the local area. County Council representatives manned a stall at the annual B2B event, held this year at the Quay Mill Hotel in September. Discussions were focused in the same way as for those at the Chambers meetings.

The face to face consultations and the survey were run by the County Council Research Team. Promotion was conducted by the Cambridgeshire Chamber in tandem with the Research Team.

QUESTION DESIGN AND DELIVERY

The questions were designed to be open so as to promote discussion and gather businesses' views without being constrained by any preconceptions.

A short paper was circulated beforehand to the business representatives on the Chambers of Commerce Local Committees which explained the level of savings required from the County Council budget, the main areas of current spending and a summary of progress the Council has made over the past year addressing the key issues raised in our 2014 engagement exercises.

At the B2B event, this was provided alongside presentation of some key facts and figures on the saving we need to undertake. A guide questionnaire was developed, and following a brief run through of the circulated paper to ensure understanding, discussions with business representatives were guided around the following open questions:

- How aware was the person of the scale of the savings challenge. What was their reaction to the savings challenge, and how do they think their business has been affected?
- What does their business value from the County Council – what are the best bits that we are doing currently that supports their business to thrive? (*e.g.: transport links, childcare, broadband, digital first, staff training, qualifications for staff, licensing and rogue traders*).
- What do they feel Cambridgeshire County Council should be doing to help their business thrive that we don't already do. What do we need to do more of to support their business most? (*This also examines the community involvement of the business and how the Council can support a business to do more.*)

The Council Research staff recorded discussions at the Commerce meetings and the B2B event in note form. The discussion points were sorted into themes as presented in this report. In total 75 businesses were engaged with. 33 of these were through in-depth discussions through the Chambers of Commerce Local Committees, with a further 42 individual discussions at the B2B event.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE RESULTS

During September, October and November, members of the Council's Research Team attended each of the Chamber of Commerce Local Committees: East Cambridgeshire, Fenland, Huntingdonshire, Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire. In total, 33 representatives were engaged with through these meetings.

ENGAGEMENT WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Within our discussions with business representatives both at the B2B event and the Chamber of Commerce local committees, Research staff questioned respondents on their current degree of engagement with their local communities, from what they do now, to ideas of engagement they could do – and what the barriers were, if any.

A key focus by almost all representatives was around local apprenticeship schemes and work experience placements. Some businesses gave excellent examples of strong engagement with local colleges and schools, including engaging in 'in-house' support on soft skills such as CV-writing and interview preparation. A number of representatives across Cambridgeshire did raise concerns about the difficulties in engaging with some schools, with a number citing examples of the times they had attempted to engage but had no response.

Looking at transport and environmental issues, some did note the promotion of appropriate waste disposal (including recycling) on their premises. Others discussed supporting roadside maintenance. One example was given by a local company wishing to engage in promotion on roundabouts, with a willingness to pay and to

assist in the maintenance / beautification of the area. They highlighted difficulties in engaging with the local council and questioned why more roundabouts were not available for sponsorship. A best practice example for this would be Milton Keynes.

Transport was discussed as a blocking issue for staff and for engaging with local communities. Some funded taxis to enable potential work experience students and apprentices to get to work.

TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

This came up as a key topic in 2014, and again has been raised by all Chamber of Commerce meetings. For some, positive statements arose, for others concerns were raised about the accessibility to their services by other businesses and customers. It was recognised that improvements are taking place, and things are progressing in the right direction, but that there was a lot more work to be done. It was noted that *'poor road structure stunts business growth'*.

Specific topics included:

- The A14
- The A10
- Electrification of railways
- Public transport
- Road and roadside maintenance

Two key issues about poor transport and infrastructure were discussed, focusing on how it stunted a business from developing. Firstly, that customers could not easily access and engage with a business. Secondly, that recruitment could be hindered, with the staffing and apprentice pool becoming limited to local residents.

Developments on the A14 were noted by the Cambridge & South Cambridgeshire and East Cambridgeshire meetings as being generally positive, with some improvements identified around traffic flow. It was however recognised that these developments are some way off completion, so further developments might still result in marked improvements. The A10 was noted as being a barrier to businesses, especially when seeking to expand their customer base. This mirrors feedback from 2014.

Representatives from Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire noted the degree of delay that took place when planning projects, and that this often meant that improvement only took place slowly. This reflects back on another common point of discussion around the repetitious nature of government, especially around policy and project planning.

Road maintenance was discussed as an issue, especially in rural areas. It was noted that there was a need for local communities to take on verge-side maintenance, with residents performing simple tasks such as mowing the grass directly outside their property. It was noted that Councils need to positively recognise that behaviour, however.

Developments around the train station in Ely were discussed positively by the East Cambridgeshire business representatives. Access to businesses and customers would be significantly improved. Concerns around parking and taxi ranks within the station were discussed.

Further electrification of railways was discussed specifically by business representatives from Fenland, as a requirement to boost reliability of services and production. The cost of HS2 was noted as being possibly better-placed in investing in local train services across the country.

BROADBAND

The rollout of super-fast broadband has been recognised and was applauded; however concerns were raised about the methodology behind the achievement of “95% coverage”. It was suggested that this might be far from the case in more rural areas. Concerns were raised that in some areas, boxes were installed but that they did not cover a full village – hence they were recording as having coverage incorrectly⁶.

Broadband and connectivity is still viewed as a significant issue in rural areas – especially so in Fenland, with businesses suffering as a result. Access speeds were also discussed, with many representatives expressing scepticism that the pledged speeds matched actual speed. One example was provided by a local business owner who still had difficulty with simple requirements such as processing card payments.

Business representatives stressed the need for good broadband access and described the lack of broadband access for households and for businesses as a deprivation indicator. It was noted that poor coverage impacted not only on businesses but also on families and schools and education. The benefits of the roll out were discussed, where better broadband might have an indirect positive impact in other areas – for example reductions in traffic, improving road and rail links, and boost business productivity, labour markets and increase potential cost-saving methods.

SKILLS AND STAFFING

Business representatives raised concerns about staffing shortages, especially in the skilled manual labour or customer service industries.

Difficulties in recruiting staff were linked to skills gaps, but also to the pool of workers to hand. As above, poor transport and infrastructure can act as a block for staff, and as such the pool of potential employees can be drastically reduced. Housing affordability was also noted as a block, specifically for Cambridge City.

The EDGE Jobs and Skills Service was discussed by representatives at the Huntingdonshire meeting, and it was noted that adult learning and education departments are engaged with the service. Job application skills development required improvement, and should be integral to education in schools.

SCHOOLS AND APPRENTICESHIPS

Each Committee discussed how positive apprenticeships were and the significant benefit they gave businesses. The majority of representatives (including those from the B2B event) had taken on apprentices, and found them to be a very positive resource. The introduction of the Living Wage and its impact was discussed, with recognition that this was pushing businesses to reconsider employment and apprenticeship processes, re-examining the age profiles of staff to plan for the future.

There was a general sense from representatives that the demand for apprentices and work experience outweighs the candidates currently available. Difficulties in getting potential apprentices to work was also discussed – again with regards to transport provision, and the limited local pool of candidates.

Representatives noted difficulty in schools engaging with businesses – sometimes this was down to a general lack of awareness of local business, but there was concern that more often it was due to the stigma associated to progressing down alternative routes to university.

It was recognised that some schools fully engage with businesses, in a very rewarding fashion, but for the most part the feedback was that there was a need to push schools to engage with trades and local business

⁶ Although expressed as a view this is probably not the case. The details published at <http://www.connectingcambridgeshire.co.uk/my-area/> do reflect coverage details of this sort.

opportunities. Typically, communications to schools received no response, and this was a point where the Council should play a lead role in transforming how schools link with local businesses.

THE ROLE AND STRUCTURE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Representatives from some committees discussed the role and structure of local government, and the repetitious nature of policy and planning processes. Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire representatives identified issues where they felt that local government organisations regularly “buck-pass” questions and issues. It was noted that there needs to be a joined up approach between different parts of local government so this doesn’t happen. Many felt that it was currently unclear what the County Council does to support businesses (beyond the obvious maintenance of roads and other universal services).

Communication processes within the Council were also discussed, with similar reflections as those engaged with at the B2B exhibition. It was felt that communication both with businesses and with the public was often not as strong as it could be, with a need for greater clarity and consistency of messages. In the view of some businesses Councils appear to communicate only from a defensive point of view, responding to an issue or a problem raised in the press. It was felt that there was a need for the council to better communicate its successes, and that *‘there are probably some very good news stories that the Council are simply not raising awareness of’*.

The potential of devolution was raised, with mixed opinions around accountability, and the inevitable cost of the process in the form of meetings, debates, and repetitious discussions across the organisations in question.

It was emphasised that Councils need to *‘be more business-like’* in both its management and decision-making processes, drawing similar teams together and being more forceful with partner organisations.

COMMENTS FROM BUSINESSES AT THE B2B EVENT

In its sixth year, the B2B event at Quy hosted over 100 exhibitors and 600 visitors. The day was a great success for many, providing numerous networking opportunities as well as the chance to learn through the inspiring seminar programme. Cambridgeshire County Council manned a stall at the event and through this and walking through the event engaged with a high number of businesses.

The majority of businesses were aware of the financial pressures faced by the County Council. For some this was due to having relatives working in the public sector, whilst for others it was due to their business’ historical involvement with local groups. In general, those questioned were less concerned about the impact this might have on their businesses, but did reflect on wider impact this might have— for example degradation of road networks and reductions in free parking. Concerns about the focus on SMEs were raised, with some suggesting that the council could do more to engage with and support smaller business.

The majority of comments focused on the accessibility of their business to their customers – for many this focused on road and rail networks, for others concern around a lack of suitable office space and broadband was raised. Key issues raised include:

- **Advice and Support.** Some felt that little support was provided directly from the County Council to assist businesses in promoting their brand. This ranged from a need for more business advisors to a willingness to let out land (e.g. roundabouts) for promotion. Guidance on how smaller businesses can bid for projects was also requested.
- **Communication.** It was felt that engagement between the County Council and the SMEs needed improvement, with some commenting that it reflected a wider communication issue. This is a similar issue to that raised last year. There was a sense that many positive activities run by the council were not widely communicated and hence not recognised.

- **Transport Infrastructure.** Respondents spoke positively about improvements that have taken place over the last year across the county. Some noted that their selection of business location was specifically guided by the fact that some key roads become blocked – specifically referencing the A14 and the A10.
- **Travel and congestion.** Whilst it was recognised that roads have improved, there was a concern that congestion had not. Some reflected positively on the A14 developments, but added concern that this had not led to the improvement in travel time that had been hoped for. Concerns were expressed that this was limiting their customer pool as well as their access to skilled staff.
- **Availability of office space.** Businesses questioned felt that a lack of availability of affordable office space was a significant issue, specifically with regards to Cambridge City. One smaller business explained they were being pushed out of their premises in Cambridge for a new housing development, but could find nowhere else to move to.
- **Broadband.** In contrast to last year, feedback on broadband and the availability of super-fast connections was spoken of very positively. Whilst concerns were raised about the continuing existence of small areas with no access (typically more remote rural locations) feedback was positive and reflected on the improvements seen over the past year. Questions were raised about the promised connection speeds compared to the actual speed provided.

Businesses were asked about how they get involved in their local community, with a specific focus on work experience placements and apprenticeships.

Businesses also made the following points:



- **Infrastructure provision** to support housing developments – *“it is okay to build homes but if there is no surrounding infrastructure to support it you will have difficulties.”*
- **Apprenticeships / work experience placements** also need to be sought out by schools: *“Expectation by colleges to have people come to them ... Used to get direct work experience requests - doesn't seem to happen in Cambridgeshire.”*
- **Congestion** is a challenge and things are worsening, especially around in **Cambridge City**. There is a need to invest in public transport – *“busway is fantastic”* and cycleways - *“Lack of safe cycling paths, lack of interest from CCC in cycling⁷”*.
- Concern over **procurement support**: *“SMEs find it very difficult to negotiate the public sector procurement system, [they need] more support on how to get into the system.”*
- The implementation of the **living wage**. Views were mixed – some (typically larger businesses) felt it was a very positive move, whilst others expressed concern that it might destabilise their business and that even now it stopping them from hiring new staff.




⁷ When the respondent was then advised about cycling initiatives across the City, they were impressed, but questioned why the Council did not promote it more.






APPENDICES




On-line Survey Summary

2. Our Budget Challenge

Have you watched the video? (If not, you can continue with this survey but it will not be possible to answer a number of the questions):						Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes					95.59%	650
2	No					4.41%	30
Analysis	Mean:	1.04	Std. Deviation:	0.21	Satisfaction Rate:	4.41	answered 680
	Variance:	0.04	Std. Error:	0.01			skipped 1

Did the video leave you with a good understanding of the challenges that the County Council faces?						Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes					83.09%	565
2	No					4.41%	30
3	Unsure					12.50%	85
Analysis	Mean:	1.29	Std. Deviation:	0.68	Satisfaction Rate:	14.71	answered 680
	Variance:	0.46	Std. Error:	0.03			skipped 1

Before watching the video, how aware were you of the scale of the financial challenges facing the county council?						Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very aware					34.47%	233
2	Aware					50.44%	341
3	Not aware					11.69%	79
4	Not at all aware					2.22%	15
5	Unsure / Don't know					1.18%	8
Analysis	Mean:	1.85	Std. Deviation:	0.8	Satisfaction Rate:	21.3	answered 676
	Variance:	0.63	Std. Error:	0.03			skipped 5

How concerned are you about the financial challenges faced by the County Council?						Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very concerned					51.26%	347
2	Concerned					40.92%	277
3	Not concerned					5.47%	37

How concerned are you about the financial challenges faced by the County Council?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
4	Not at all concerned		1.03%	7

3. Looking forward

Looking at the three broad categories of service explained above, and bearing in mind that service reductions need to happen, where would you make spending reductions?				
	Spend about the same	Spend a little less	Spend a lot less	Response Total
Universal services which anyone can access	30.9% (210)	49.6% (337)	19.6% (133)	680
Targeted services	49.9% (339)	43.8% (298)	6.3% (43)	680
Care packages for people with the greatest need	60.9% (414)	33.5% (228)	5.6% (38)	680
			answered	680
			skipped	1

Matrix Charts

5.1. Universal services which anyone can access							Response Percent	Response Total
1	Spend about the same			<div><div></div></div>			30.9%	210
2	Spend a little less			<div><div></div></div>			49.6%	337
3	Spend a lot less			<div><div></div></div>			19.6%	133
Analysis	Mean:	1.89	Std. Deviation:	0.7	Satisfaction Rate:	44.34	answered	680
	Variance:	0.49	Std. Error:	0.03				

5.2. Targeted services							Response Percent	Response Total
1	Spend about the same			<div></div>			49.9%	339
2	Spend a little less			<div></div>			43.8%	298
3	Spend a lot less			<div></div>			6.3%	43
Analysis	Mean:	1.56	Std. Deviation:	0.61	Satisfaction Rate:	28.24	answered	680
	Variance:	0.37	Std. Error:	0.02				

5.3. Care packages for people with the greatest need							Response Percent	Response Total
1	Spend about the same				<div><div></div></div>		60.9%	414
2	Spend a little less				<div><div></div></div>		33.5%	228
3	Spend a lot less				<div><div></div></div>		5.6%	38
Analysis	Mean:	1.45	Std. Deviation:	0.6	Satisfaction Rate:	22.35	answered	680

5.3. Care packages for people with the greatest need					Response Percent	Response Total
Variance:	0.36	Std. Error:	0.02			

4. Our Priorities

To what extent do you agree with the County Council's Priorities as shown in the video?						
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure/Don't know	Response Total
Older people live well independently	31.9% (217)	52.5% (357)	8.2% (56)	1.5% (10)	5.9% (40)	680
People with disabilities live well independently	33.5% (228)	48.2% (328)	10.1% (69)	1.2% (8)	6.9% (47)	680
People at risk of harm are kept safe	38.5% (262)	45.6% (310)	6.0% (41)	2.2% (15)	7.6% (52)	680
People lead a healthy lifestyle and stay healthy for longer	30.9% (210)	48.1% (327)	12.6% (86)	2.5% (17)	5.9% (40)	680
Children and young people reach their potential in settings and schools	38.5% (262)	46.6% (317)	8.1% (55)	2.4% (16)	4.4% (30)	680
The Cambridgeshire economy prospers to the benefit of all Cambridgeshire residents	32.2% (219)	45.0% (306)	11.0% (75)	4.6% (31)	7.2% (49)	680
People live in a safe environment	35.9% (244)	52.8% (359)	6.5% (44)	1.2% (8)	3.7% (25)	680
					answered	680
					skipped	1

Matrix Charts

7.1. Older people live well independently						Response Percent	Response Total	
1	Strongly agree			<div></div>		31.9%	217	
2	Agree			<div></div>		52.5%	357	
3	Disagree			<div></div>		8.2%	56	
4	Strongly disagree			<div></div>		1.5%	10	
5	Unsure/Don't know			<div></div>		5.9%	40	
Analysis	Mean:	1.97	Std. Deviation:	0.99	Satisfaction Rate:	24.23	answered	680
	Variance:	0.99	Std. Error:	0.04				






7.2. People with disabilities live well independently							Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly agree				<div></div>		33.5%	228
2	Agree				<div></div>		48.2%	328
3	Disagree				<div></div>		10.1%	69
4	Strongly disagree				<div></div>		1.2%	8
5	Unsure/Don't know				<div></div>		6.9%	47
Analysis	Mean:	2	Std. Deviation:	1.05	Satisfaction Rate:	24.93	answered	680
	Variance:	1.11	Std. Error:	0.04				

7.3. People at risk of harm are kept safe							Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly agree			<div><div></div></div>			38.5%	262
2	Agree			<div><div></div></div>			45.6%	310
3	Disagree			<div><div></div></div>			6.0%	41
4	Strongly disagree			<div><div></div></div>			2.2%	15
5	Unsure/Don't know			<div><div></div></div>			7.6%	52
Analysis	Mean:	1.95	Std. Deviation:	1.1	Satisfaction Rate:	23.71	answered	680
	Variance:	1.22	Std. Error:	0.04				

7.4. People lead a healthy lifestyle and stay healthy for longer						Response Percent	Response Total	
1	Strongly agree		<div></div>			30.9%	210	
2	Agree		<div></div>			48.1%	327	
3	Disagree		<div></div>			12.6%	86	
4	Strongly disagree		<div></div>			2.5%	17	
5	Unsure/Don't know		<div></div>			5.9%	40	
Analysis	Mean:	2.04	Std. Deviation:	1.03	Satisfaction Rate:	26.1	answered	680
	Variance:	1.06	Std. Error:	0.04				

7.5. Children and young people reach their potential in settings and schools							Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly agree				<div><div></div></div>		38.5%	262
2	Agree				<div><div></div></div>		46.6%	317
3	Disagree				<div><div></div></div>		8.1%	55
4	Strongly disagree				<div><div></div></div>		2.4%	16
5	Unsure/Don't know				<div><div></div></div>		4.4%	30
Analysis	Mean:	1.88	Std. Deviation:	0.97	Satisfaction Rate:	21.88	answered	680
	Variance:	0.94	Std. Error:	0.04				




7.6. The Cambridgeshire economy prospers to the benefit of all Cambridgeshire residents							Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly agree			<div><div></div></div>			32.2%	219
2	Agree			<div><div></div></div>			45.0%	306
3	Disagree			<div><div></div></div>			11.0%	75
4	Strongly disagree			<div><div></div></div>			4.6%	31
5	Unsure/Don't know			<div><div></div></div>			7.2%	49
Analysis	Mean:	2.1	Std. Deviation:	1.12	Satisfaction Rate:	27.39	answered	680
	Variance:	1.25	Std. Error:	0.04				


7.7. People live in a safe environment						Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly agree					35.9%	244
2	Agree					52.8%	359
3	Disagree					6.5%	44
4	Strongly disagree					1.2%	8
5	Unsure/Don't know					3.7%	25
Analysis	Mean:	1.84	Std. Deviation:	0.88	Satisfaction Rate:	20.99	answered 680
	Variance:	0.78	Std. Error:	0.03			



5. The role of the community in Cambridgeshire's future




To what extent do you agree that the following messages of the video are realistic:				
	Something that is realistic everywhere	Something that is realistic in some communities but not in others	Something that is unrealistic	Response Total
Encouraging communities to get involved in delivering our services	24.7% (166)	53.8% (362)	21.5% (145)	673
Encouraging communities to take actions that save the Council money	44.3% (296)	43.4% (290)	12.3% (82)	668
Encouraging individuals to increase their involvement supporting the local community	35.9% (241)	51.3% (345)	12.8% (86)	672
Seeking greater involvement in our services by established voluntary groups	34.2% (228)	54.9% (366)	10.9% (73)	667
Seeking greater involvement in our services by town and parish councils	47.7% (318)	42.9% (286)	9.4% (63)	667
Seeking greater involvement in our services by local businesses	42.3% (283)	47.5% (318)	10.2% (68)	669
			answered	675
			skipped	6




Matrix Charts




9.1. Encouraging communities to get involved in delivering our services						Response Percent	Response Total
1	Something that is realistic everywhere					24.7%	166
2	Something that is realistic in some communities but not in others					53.8%	362
3	Something that is unrealistic					21.5%	145
Analysis	Mean:	1.97	Std. Deviation:	0.68	Satisfaction Rate:	48.44	answered 673
	Variance:	0.46	Std. Error:	0.03			



9.2. Encouraging communities to take actions that save the Council money						Response Percent	Response Total
1	Something that is realistic everywhere					44.3%	296


9.2. Encouraging communities to take actions that save the Council money						Response Percent	Response Total
2	Something that is realistic in some communities but not in others					43.4%	290
3	Something that is unrealistic					12.3%	82
Analysis	Mean:	1.68	Std. Deviation:	0.68	Satisfaction Rate:	answered	668
	Variance:	0.46	Std. Error:	0.03			

9.3. Encouraging individuals to increase their involvement supporting the local community						Response Percent	Response Total
1	Something that is realistic everywhere					35.9%	241
2	Something that is realistic in some communities but not in others					51.3%	345
3	Something that is unrealistic					12.8%	86
Analysis	Mean:	1.77	Std. Deviation:	0.66	Satisfaction Rate:	answered	672
	Variance:	0.43	Std. Error:	0.03			

9.4. Seeking greater involvement in our services by established voluntary groups						Response Percent	Response Total
1	Something that is realistic everywhere					34.2%	228
2	Something that is realistic in some communities but not in others					54.9%	366
3	Something that is unrealistic					10.9%	73
Analysis	Mean:	1.77	Std. Deviation:	0.63	Satisfaction Rate:	answered	667
	Variance:	0.4	Std. Error:	0.02			










9.5. Seeking greater involvement in our services by town and parish councils						Response Percent	Response Total
1	Something that is realistic everywhere					47.7%	318
2	Something that is realistic in some communities but not in others					42.9%	286
3	Something that is unrealistic					9.4%	63
Analysis	Mean:	1.62	Std. Deviation:	0.65	Satisfaction Rate:	answered	667
	Variance:	0.43	Std. Error:	0.03			

9.6. Seeking greater involvement in our services by local businesses						Response Percent	Response Total
1	Something that is realistic everywhere					42.3%	283
2	Something that is realistic in some communities but not in others					47.5%	318
3	Something that is unrealistic					10.2%	68
Analysis	Mean:	1.68	Std. Deviation:	0.65	Satisfaction Rate:	answered	669
	Variance:	0.42	Std. Error:	0.03			

Do you think these ideas will enable us to continue to help people whilst having significantly less funding?							Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes						36.62%	249
2	No						27.06%	184
3	Unsure						36.32%	247
Analysis	Mean:	2	Std. Deviation:	0.85	Satisfaction Rate:	49.85	answered	680
	Variance:	0.73	Std. Error:	0.03			skipped	1

6. Taking Part in your Local Community

Do you think it is a good idea asking residents to become more involved in their local community to help us to provide council services?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes	<div></div>	79.41%	540
2	No	<div></div>	20.59%	140
			skipped	1

What do you think are the greatest barriers to people getting involved in helping our services? Please select the top three barriers:							Response Percent	Response Total
1	Community volunteering already at capacity						18.40%	124
2	Unwillingness among communities and individuals						46.29%	312
3	Time (for communities and individuals)						72.26%	487
4	Understanding of what is expected						44.07%	297
5	Money / funding						27.45%	185
6	Community facilities						9.50%	64
7	Trust within communities						12.76%	86
8	Trust between communities and the council						28.64%	193
9	Other (please specify):						15.73%	106
Analysis	Mean:	11.58	Std. Deviation:	12.8	Satisfaction Rate:	110.39	answered	674
	Variance:	163.89	Std. Error:	0.49			skipped	7

7. Local decision-making

How much influence do you feel the following have on local services?							Response Total
	Very significant	Significant	Insignificant	Very insignificant	Unsure		
National government	47.2% (321)	34.1% (232)	8.5% (58)	6.8% (46)	3.4% (23)		680




How much influence do you feel the following have on local services?



	Very significant	Significant	Insignificant	Very insignificant	Unsure	Response Total
Local government (county and district councils)	47.5% (323)	38.8% (264)	5.3% (36)	4.6% (31)	3.8% (26)	680
Local councillors	19.0% (129)	47.5% (323)	20.0% (136)	7.6% (52)	5.9% (40)	680
Parish councils	6.8% (46)	31.0% (211)	41.0% (279)	13.5% (92)	7.6% (52)	680
Voluntary groups	5.7% (39)	26.6% (181)	42.1% (286)	19.4% (132)	6.2% (42)	680
Local businesses	6.0% (41)	27.5% (187)	41.3% (281)	15.9% (108)	9.3% (63)	680
Informal networks of friends / communities	5.1% (35)	22.9% (156)	36.3% (247)	26.0% (177)	9.6% (65)	680
					answered	680
					skipped	1






Matrix Charts






13.1. National government							Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very significant			<div><div></div></div>			47.2%	321
2	Significant			<div><div></div></div>			34.1%	232
3	Insignificant			<div><div></div></div>			8.5%	58
4	Very insignificant			<div><div></div></div>			6.8%	46
5	Unsure			<div><div></div></div>			3.4%	23
Analysis	Mean:	1.85	Std. Deviation:	1.05	Satisfaction Rate:	21.25	answered	680
	Variance:	1.11	Std. Error:	0.04				






13.2. Local government (county and district councils)							Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very significant			<div><div></div></div>			47.5%	323
2	Significant			<div><div></div></div>			38.8%	264
3	Insignificant			<div><div></div></div>			5.3%	36
4	Very insignificant			<div><div></div></div>			4.6%	31
5	Unsure			<div><div></div></div>			3.8%	26
Analysis	Mean:	1.78	Std. Deviation:	1	Satisfaction Rate:	19.6	answered	680
	Variance:	1.01	Std. Error:	0.04				



13.3. Local councillors						Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very significant					19.0%	129
2	Significant					47.5%	323
3	Insignificant					20.0%	136




13.3. Local councillors						Response Percent	Response Total
4	Very insignificant					7.6%	52
5	Unsure					5.9%	40
Analysis	Mean:	2.34	Std. Deviation:	1.05	Satisfaction Rate:	33.49	answered 680
	Variance:	1.11	Std. Error:	0.04			

13.4. Parish councils						Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very significant					6.8%	46
2	Significant					31.0%	211
3	Insignificant					41.0%	279
4	Very insignificant					13.5%	92
5	Unsure					7.6%	52
Analysis	Mean:	2.84	Std. Deviation:	1	Satisfaction Rate:	46.07	answered 680
	Variance:	1	Std. Error:	0.04			


13.5. Voluntary groups						Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very significant					5.7%	39
2	Significant					26.6%	181
3	Insignificant					42.1%	286
4	Very insignificant					19.4%	132
5	Unsure					6.2%	42
Analysis	Mean:	2.94	Std. Deviation:	0.97	Satisfaction Rate:	48.42	answered 680
	Variance:	0.93	Std. Error:	0.04			



13.6. Local businesses						Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very significant					6.0%	41
2	Significant					27.5%	187
3	Insignificant					41.3%	281
4	Very insignificant					15.9%	108
5	Unsure					9.3%	63
Analysis	Mean:	2.95	Std. Deviation:	1.02	Satisfaction Rate:	48.71	answered 680
	Variance:	1.04	Std. Error:	0.04			



13.7. Informal networks of friends / communities						Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very significant					5.1%	35
2	Significant					22.9%	156

13.7. Informal networks of friends / communities						Response Percent	Response Total
3	Insignificant					36.3%	247
4	Very insignificant					26.0%	177
5	Unsure					9.6%	65
Analysis	Mean:	3.12	Std. Deviation:	1.03	Satisfaction Rate:	answered	680
	Variance:	1.06	Std. Error:	0.04			

8. Your Current Involvement in your Community

In an average month, approximately how many hours do you spend volunteering, or helping out in your local community?							
						Response Percent	Response Total
1	0					38.38%	261
2	Up to 5 hours					27.79%	189
3	6-10 hours					13.09%	89
4	11-20 hours					8.38%	57
5	21-30 hours					4.71%	32
6	31-40 hours					2.50%	17
7	41-50 hours					1.47%	10
8	51-60 hours					0.44%	3
9	Over 60 hours					3.24%	22
Analysis	Mean:	2.48	Std. Deviation:	1.88	Satisfaction Rate:	answered	680
	Variance:	3.55	Std. Error:	0.07		skipped	1

Are you involved in your local community?							
						Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes					61.91%	421
2	No					38.09%	259
Analysis	Mean:	1.38	Std. Deviation:	0.49	Satisfaction Rate:	answered	680
	Variance:	0.24	Std. Error:	0.02		skipped	1

Would you be willing/ able to provide more of your time to support your local community in Cambridgeshire?							
						Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes					40.88%	278
2	No					59.12%	402
Analysis	Mean:	1.59	Std. Deviation:	0.49	Satisfaction Rate:	answered	680
	Variance:	0.24	Std. Error:	0.02		skipped	1

Looking at what you do now, do you feel you personally could:

	Yes - a lot	Yes - a little	No - I do a lot already	No - I do not have the time	No - I do not want to	Response Total
Recycle more	6.8% (46)	27.2% (185)	64.3% (437)	1.0% (7)	0.7% (5)	680
Volunteer more	2.9% (20)	33.4% (227)	27.4% (186)	31.5% (214)	4.9% (33)	680
Access county council services online more	15.0% (102)	27.2% (185)	49.0% (333)	2.6% (18)	6.2% (42)	680
					answered	680
					skipped	1

Matrix Charts

17.1. Recycle more						Response Percent	Response Total	
1	Yes - a lot			<div><div></div></div>		6.8%	46	
2	Yes - a little			<div><div></div></div>		27.2%	185	
3	No - I do a lot already			<div><div></div></div>		64.3%	437	
4	No - I do not have the time			<div><div></div></div>		1.0%	7	
5	No - I do not want to			<div><div></div></div>		0.7%	5	
Analysis	Mean:	2.62	Std. Deviation:	0.66	Satisfaction Rate:	40.44	answered	680
	Variance:	0.44	Std. Error:	0.03				

17.2. Volunteer more						Response Percent	Response Total	
1	Yes - a lot				<div><div></div></div>	2.9%	20	
2	Yes - a little				<div><div></div></div>	33.4%	227	
3	No - I do a lot already				<div><div></div></div>	27.4%	186	
4	No - I do not have the time				<div><div></div></div>	31.5%	214	
5	No - I do not want to				<div><div></div></div>	4.9%	33	
Analysis	Mean:	3.02	Std. Deviation:	0.98	Satisfaction Rate:	50.48	answered	680
	Variance:	0.96	Std. Error:	0.04				

17.3. Access county council services online more							Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes - a lot				<div><div></div></div>		15.0%	102
2	Yes - a little				<div><div></div></div>		27.2%	185
3	No - I do a lot already				<div><div></div></div>		49.0%	333
4	No - I do not have the time				<div><div></div></div>		2.6%	18
5	No - I do not want to				<div><div></div></div>		6.2%	42
Analysis	Mean:	2.58	Std. Deviation:	0.98	Satisfaction Rate:	39.45	answered	680
	Variance:	0.97	Std. Error:	0.04				

How far would you be interested in giving some of your time to support:					
	Very interested	Interested	Not interested	Not at all interested	Response Total
Your local library - for example volunteering to staff for a few hours a week	5.0% (34)	22.9% (156)	46.8% (318)	25.3% (172)	680
Volunteering to lead Health Walks	2.8% (19)	19.1% (130)	49.3% (335)	28.8% (196)	680
Vulnerable older people in your community	5.3% (36)	32.6% (222)	40.9% (278)	21.2% (144)	680
Children in need of fostering	3.2% (22)	11.9% (81)	46.9% (319)	37.9% (258)	680
Local youth groups	3.8% (26)	15.6% (106)	48.7% (331)	31.9% (217)	680
Volunteering at local schools	6.0% (41)	25.1% (171)	41.8% (284)	27.1% (184)	680
Assisting the disabled	5.1% (35)	24.1% (164)	46.2% (314)	24.6% (167)	680
Helping young families	4.1% (28)	20.6% (140)	46.9% (319)	28.4% (193)	680
Local democracy - for example joining your parish council	11.9% (81)	23.1% (157)	38.1% (259)	26.9% (183)	680
Local politics - for example becoming a councillor	8.7% (59)	14.6% (99)	43.5% (296)	33.2% (226)	680
				answered	680
				skipped	1

Matrix Charts

18.1. Your local library - for example volunteering to staff for a few hours a week							Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very interested			<div><div></div></div>			5.0%	34
2	Interested			<div><div></div></div>			22.9%	156
3	Not interested			<div><div></div></div>			46.8%	318
4	Not at all interested			<div><div></div></div>			25.3%	172
Analysis	Mean:	2.92	Std. Deviation:	0.82	Satisfaction Rate:	64.12	answered	680
	Variance:	0.68	Std. Error:	0.03				

18.2. Volunteering to lead Health Walks							Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very interested			<div><div></div></div>			2.8%	19
2	Interested			<div><div></div></div>			19.1%	130
3	Not interested			<div><div></div></div>			49.3%	335
4	Not at all interested			<div><div></div></div>			28.8%	196
Analysis	Mean:	3.04	Std. Deviation:	0.77	Satisfaction Rate:	68.04	answered	680
	Variance:	0.59	Std. Error:	0.03				

18.3. Vulnerable older people in your community						Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very interested					5.3%	36
2	Interested					32.6%	222
3	Not interested					40.9%	278
4	Not at all interested					21.2%	144
Analysis	Mean:	2.78	Std. Deviation:	0.84	Satisfaction Rate:	59.31	answered 680
	Variance:	0.7	Std. Error:	0.03			

18.4. Children in need of fostering						Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very interested					3.2%	22
2	Interested					11.9%	81
3	Not interested					46.9%	319
4	Not at all interested					37.9%	258
Analysis	Mean:	3.2	Std. Deviation:	0.77	Satisfaction Rate:	73.19	answered 680
	Variance:	0.59	Std. Error:	0.03			

18.5. Local youth groups						Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very interested					3.8%	26
2	Interested					15.6%	106
3	Not interested					48.7%	331
4	Not at all interested					31.9%	217
Analysis	Mean:	3.09	Std. Deviation:	0.79	Satisfaction Rate:	69.56	answered 680
	Variance:	0.62	Std. Error:	0.03			

18.6. Volunteering at local schools						Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very interested					6.0%	41
2	Interested					25.1%	171
3	Not interested					41.8%	284
4	Not at all interested					27.1%	184
Analysis	Mean:	2.9	Std. Deviation:	0.87	Satisfaction Rate:	63.28	answered 680
	Variance:	0.75	Std. Error:	0.03			

18.7. Assisting the disabled						Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very interested					5.1%	35
2	Interested					24.1%	164
3	Not interested					46.2%	314

18.7. Assisting the disabled						Response Percent	Response Total
4	Not at all interested					24.6%	167
Analysis	Mean:	2.9	Std. Deviation:	0.83	Satisfaction Rate:	answered	680
	Variance:	0.68	Std. Error:	0.03	63.38		

18.8. Helping young families						Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very interested					4.1%	28
2	Interested					20.6%	140
3	Not interested					46.9%	319
4	Not at all interested					28.4%	193
Analysis	Mean:	3	Std. Deviation:	0.81	Satisfaction Rate:	answered	680
	Variance:	0.65	Std. Error:	0.03	66.52		

18.9. Local democracy - for example joining your parish council						Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very interested					11.9%	81
2	Interested					23.1%	157
3	Not interested					38.1%	259
4	Not at all interested					26.9%	183
Analysis	Mean:	2.8	Std. Deviation:	0.97	Satisfaction Rate:	answered	680
	Variance:	0.94	Std. Error:	0.04	60		

18.10. Local politics - for example becoming a councillor						Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very interested					8.7%	59
2	Interested					14.6%	99
3	Not interested					43.5%	296
4	Not at all interested					33.2%	226
Analysis	Mean:	3.01	Std. Deviation:	0.91	Satisfaction Rate:	answered	680
	Variance:	0.82	Std. Error:	0.03	67.11		

9. Council Tax

Which Tax Band are you in? If you don't know what Band you are in, you can look up your property here. Alongside your tax band, we have highlighted how much of your money went to the Council for 2015/16.						Response Percent	Response Total
1	Band A (£762.84)					5.74%	39
2	Band B (£889.98)					9.28%	63
3	Band C (£1,017.12)					21.65%	147

Which Tax Band are you in? If you don't know what Band you are in, you can look up your property here. Alongside your tax band, we have highlighted how much of your money went to the Council for 2015/16.

							Response Percent	Response Total
4	Band D (£1,144.26)				<div><div></div></div>		25.18%	171
5	Band E (£1,398.54)				<div><div></div></div>		16.20%	110
6	Band F (£1,652.82)				<div><div></div></div>		10.01%	68
7	Band G (£1,907.10)				<div><div></div></div>		7.51%	51
8	Band H (£2,288.52)				<div><div></div></div>		1.33%	9
9	Don't know				<div><div></div></div>		1.91%	13
10	I don't pay Council Tax				<div><div></div></div>		1.18%	8
Analysis	Mean:	4.23	Std. Deviation:	1.84	Satisfaction Rate:	35.92	answered	679
	Variance:	3.4	Std. Error:	0.07			skipped	2

How far do you agree with the idea of increasing Council Tax to reduce the cuts to services we need to make?

							Response Percent	Response Total	
1	Strongly agree				<div></div>		26.36%	179	
2	Tend to agree				<div></div>		33.58%	228	
3	Indifferent				<div></div>		7.07%	48	
4	Tend to disagree				<div></div>		13.99%	95	
5	Strongly disagree				<div></div>		17.53%	119	
6	Don't know				<div></div>		1.47%	10	
Analysis	Mean:	2.67	Std. Deviation:	1.5	Satisfaction Rate:		33.43	answered	679
	Variance:	2.26	Std. Error:	0.06				skipped	2

Considering the above, by how much would you personally be prepared to increase Council Tax by? Against each percentage change we have highlighted what the annual cost would be in pounds and pence for a Band D resident.

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	0% (no increase)		19.00%	129
2	1% (£11.44)		10.90%	74
3	1.5% (£17.16)		5.01%	34
4	1.99% (£22.77)		16.49%	112
5	2% (£22.89)		8.54%	58
6	2.5% (£28.61)		2.95%	20
7	3% (£34.33)		7.07%	48
8	3.5% (£40.05)		2.95%	20
9	4% (£45.77)		3.83%	26
10	4.5% (£51.49)		2.21%	15
11	5% (£57.21)		11.49%	78

Considering the above, by how much would you personally be prepared to increase Council Tax by? Against each percentage change we have highlighted what the annual cost would be in pounds and pence for a Band D resident.

							Response Percent	Response Total
12	More than 5%						9.57%	65
Analysis	Mean:	5.53	Std. Deviation:	3.83	Satisfaction Rate:	41.18	answered	679
	Variance:	14.67	Std. Error:	0.15			skipped	2

10. Section 1: About You

Are you...

							Response Percent	Response Total
1	Male						40.72%	272
2	Female						55.84%	373
3	Other						0.60%	4
4	Prefer not to say						2.84%	19
Analysis	Mean:	1.66	Std. Deviation:	0.64	Satisfaction Rate:	21.86	answered	668
	Variance:	0.41	Std. Error:	0.02			skipped	13












Please provide your age:

							Response Percent	Response Total
1	Under 18						0.30%	2
2	18-24						1.65%	11
3	25-34						12.87%	86
4	35-44						19.46%	130
5	45-54						26.50%	177
6	55-64						18.26%	122
7	65-74						14.97%	100
8	75+						3.29%	22
9	Prefer not to say						2.69%	18
Analysis	Mean:	5.18	Std. Deviation:	1.54	Satisfaction Rate:	52.19	answered	668
	Variance:	2.38	Std. Error:	0.06			skipped	13







How would you describe your ethnic background?

							Response Percent	Response Total
1	British						86.83%	580
2	Irish						1.05%	7
3	Gypsy & Traveller						0.00%	0

How would you describe your ethnic background?

							Response Percent	Response Total
4	Eastern European						0.60%	4
5	Other						4.34%	29
6	African						0.30%	2
7	Caribbean						0.00%	0
8	Other						0.45%	3
9	White and Black African						0.15%	1
10	White and Black Caribbean						0.00%	0
11	White and Asian						0.60%	4
12	Other						0.15%	1
13	Indian						0.60%	4
14	Pakistani						0.15%	1
15	Bangladeshi						0.00%	0
16	Chinese						0.15%	1
17	Other						0.00%	0
18	Any other Ethnic Group						0.00%	0
19	Prefer not to say						4.64%	31
Analysis							answered	668
	Mean:	3.52	Std. Deviation:	4.98	Satisfaction Rate:	10.97	skipped	13
	Variance:	24.77	Std. Error:	0.19				

Are you..

							Response Percent	Response Total
1	In education (full or part time)						0.75%	5
2	In employment (full or part time)						63.02%	421
3	Self-employed (full or part time)						9.13%	61
4	Retired						17.51%	117
5	Stay at home parent / carer or similar						3.59%	24
6	Other (please specify):						5.99%	40
Analysis							answered	668
	Mean:	2.78	Std. Deviation:	1.21	Satisfaction Rate:	35.63	skipped	13
	Variance:	1.47	Std. Error:	0.05				

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About the Cambridgeshire Research Group

The Research Group is the central research and information section of Cambridgeshire County Council. We use a variety of information about the people and economy of Cambridgeshire to help plan services for the county. The Research Group also supports a range of other partner agencies and partnerships.

Subjects covered by the team include:

- Consultations and Surveys
- Crime and Community Safety
- Current Staff Consultations
- Data Visualisation
- Economy and The Labour Market
- Health
- Housing
- Mapping and Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
- Population
- Pupil Forecasting

For more details please see our website:

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