

Leicestershire's future

Consultation on draft financial plan 2015-19

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Key findings

The key findings from the consultation on the draft financial plan 2015-19 are:

- In total, 181 responses to the survey were received.
- A council tax increase of 1.5% was the most frequently selected option (28%). However, 45% of respondents said they would be prepared to pay an increase in council tax of more than 1.5%. One in eight respondents said they did not want a council tax increase (13%).
- When asked for their views on how the budget had been allocated across services, 46% of respondents 'agreed' and 27% 'disagreed'.
- Most frequent comments across all questions were around:
 - Reducing management costs
 - Joining up services (within the council and with the city and district councils or other authorities across the East Midlands) to reduce duplication
 - Divided views with regards to protecting and reducing spend on libraries
 - Lobbying government to ensure Leicestershire has a fairer share of funding
 - Income generation and opportunities to self-fund
- The findings from this consultation are in line with previous consultations, including the large scale budget consultation exercise which was carried out in 2013. However, a new emerging theme this year relates to comments urging the council to increase the lobbying of government for a fairer share of funding. Also, it appears there has been a continuing softening of attitudes to council tax increases, a trend which has been seen over the last few years.
- Although the survey responses represent a small sample size, the views are none-the-less valued and will be taken forward and considered as part of the detailed service redesign work over the coming months. By identifying potential negative impacts of cuts, services can start to explore how such negative impacts can be mitigated by providing services differently.
- In addition to the survey, letters were received from the Leicester Shire Business Council and Leicester Shire Promotions (see Appendix 3). Both recognised the financial pressures and difficult situation the council is in with regards to underfunding from Central Government. The Business Council particularly highlighted concerns about the council's reduced ability to provide match funding for economic development projects. Examples were given such as Midland Mainline, tourism and road network maintenance, where reductions in funding were felt to be counter-productive to the local economy, jobs and growth. The Business Council also questioned whether there was scope to make further efficiencies in Health and Social Care by addressing the organisational complexity of the sector, and noted the lack of information with regards to moving towards unitary status.

- Both the Business Council and Leicester Shire Promotions stated that they were keen to work with the council to ensure that productive and effective relationships continued through the transitional period, enabling them to participate in the design of services in the new environment.

Background

The consultation on the detailed budget proposals follows on from the extensive consultation exercise that was carried out over the summer of 2013, which informed the development of the council's four year financial plan, the Medium Term Financial Strategy¹.

During the summer of 2013, the county council heard the views of more than 7,200 residents, staff and stakeholders. Views were gathered through an online survey, a questionnaire that went to every household in the county (via the council's magazine Leicestershire Matters), and three independently facilitated in-depth deliberative workshops with a representative cross-section of Leicestershire residents.

The draft financial plan 2015-19 reflects the above findings, and the consultation exercise on the budget plan was designed to provide another opportunity for residents and community groups to have their views heard and taken into account.

Methodology

Following the publication of the detailed budget proposals, a summary document and survey form were made available on the county council's website for the duration of the consultation period of 12th December 2014 – 12th January 2015.

This provided the opportunity for any member of the public, including Leicestershire County Council employees, to complete the survey. Paper copies of the survey and copies in alternative formats (including easy read) were available on request. A dedicated email address was also provided for the duration of the consultation for respondents to submit their views should they wish. The consultation was promoted to the Leicester Shire Business Council, the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership and Leicester Shire Promotions.

Communication

Awareness of the consultation was raised through three press-releases and a banner on the council's home page. It received coverage through the Leicester Mercury and its website, Radio Leicester, the weekly press, local radio stations such as Oak FM and Harborough FM and local news websites. This was preceded by extensive coverage of the council's draft budget proposals across the press, TV, radio and internet.

It was also promoted via the council's social media channels throughout the consultation period. Stakeholder groups were alerted to the consultation, and emails were issued to those who had registered for regular budget updates. The opportunity to view the

¹The detailed findings from the 2013 exercise are available on the county council's website www.leics.gov.uk/future.

proposals was promoted to staff via the Chief Executive's newsletter, through internal briefings and emails and a news item on the County Council's intranet.

Questions

The survey asked respondents about council tax levels and the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with how the budget had been allocated across services. It also asked a number of open ended questions about the budget and the way the council works. These are listed below:

- Are there any specific service reductions you disagree with?
- How could we mitigate any impact of our proposed changes to ensure the best possible outcomes?
- Are there any additional service reductions or charges you think we should consider?
- Are there any areas where you think we could make further efficiency savings without impacting on services?
- Do you have any other comments about our draft budget proposals?

A range of demographic questions were also asked, namely: gender, age, disability, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, postcode, whether the respondents are parents or carers of a young person aged 17 or under, or a carer of a person aged 18 or over. See Appendix 2 for the full questionnaire.

Respondent profile

The demographic profile of respondents (see Appendix 1) shows:

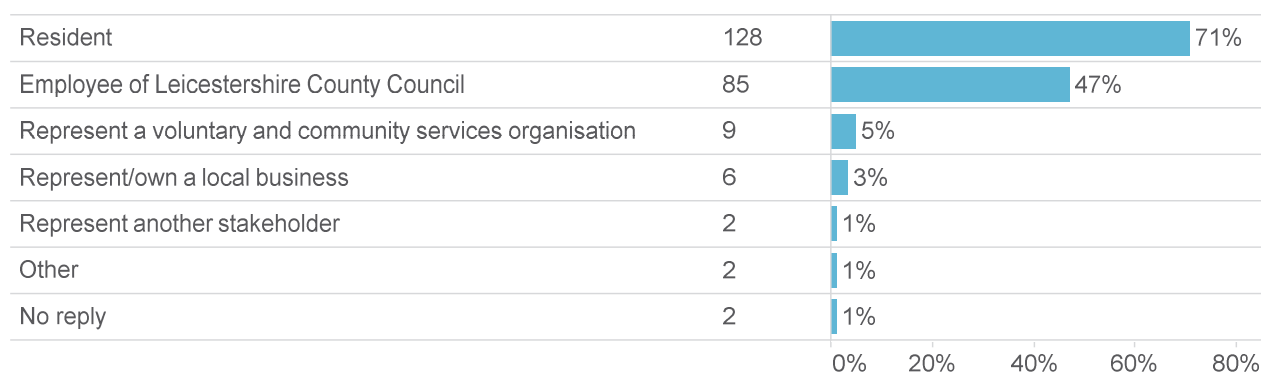
- An under-representation of those aged under 25 (12.5 percentage point difference compared to the 2011 Census)
- An over-representation of men (9.1% points)
- An under-representation of Christians (12.9% points)
- An over-representation of people with a long-standing illness disability (7.5% points)

Results

In total, 181 responses to the survey were received during the period 12th December 2014 to 12th January 2015.

Question 1 - role

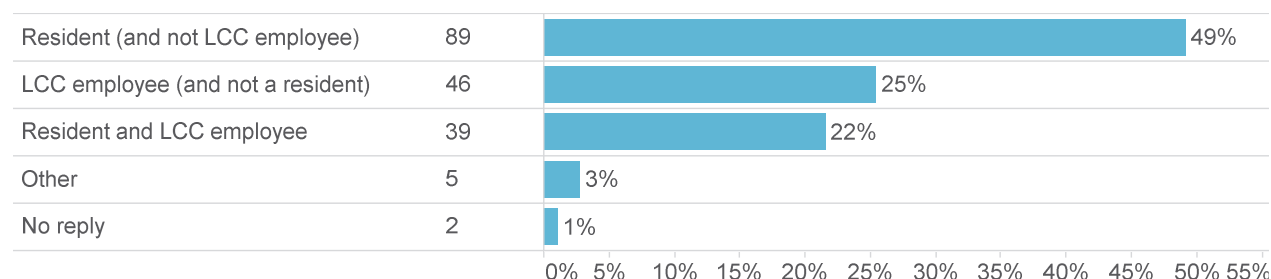
Respondents were asked in what capacity they were responding to the survey. Chart 1 below shows the breakdown (note that the percentages add up to more than 100% as more than one box could be ticked). It shows that most people who completed the survey were responding as residents of the county (71%) and/or as employees of Leicestershire County Council (47%).

Chart 1 - Role(s) in which people responded to the consultation (multiple response)

Base = 234 (multiple responses - therefore percentages sum to more than 100%)

Chart 2 shows that 49% of respondents are residents but not LCC employees, 25% are LCC employees but not residents, and 22% are both residents and employees.

Throughout the analysis that follows, comparison has been made between the views from residents who are not LCC employees (89 respondents) and the views from those who work for the county council (85 respondents).

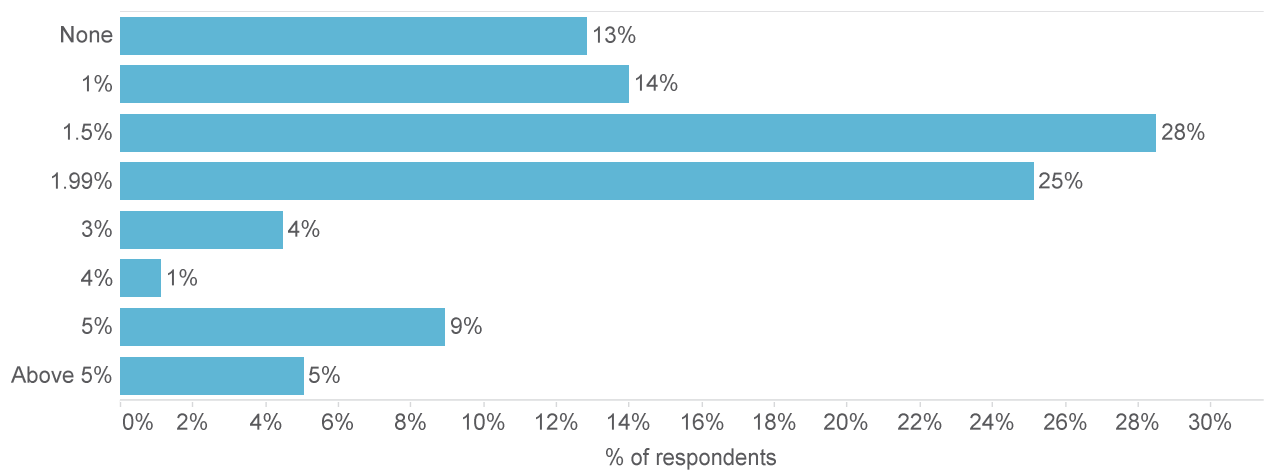
Chart 2 - Further analysis of respondent type (single response)

Base = 181

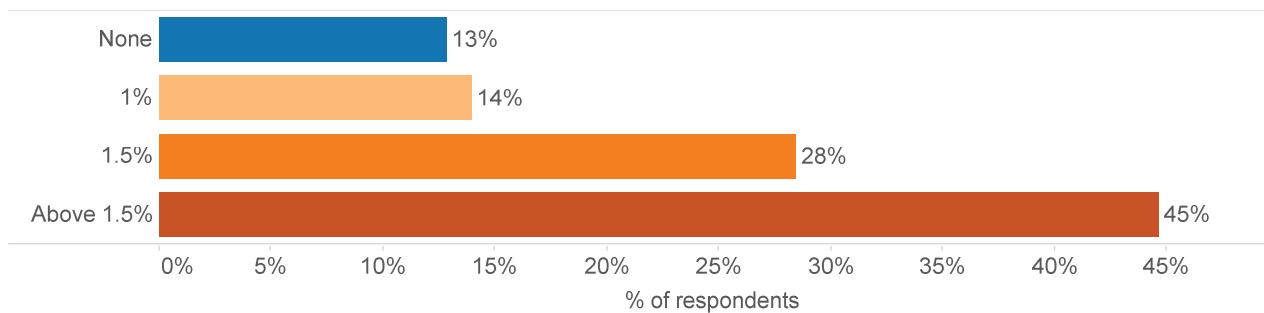
Question 2 - council tax

Respondents were asked what council tax increase they would be prepared to pay each year for the next four years. Chart 3 shows the overall response, and shows that a 1.5% increase (the council's proposed council tax increase for next year and the following three years) was the most frequently selected option (28%)

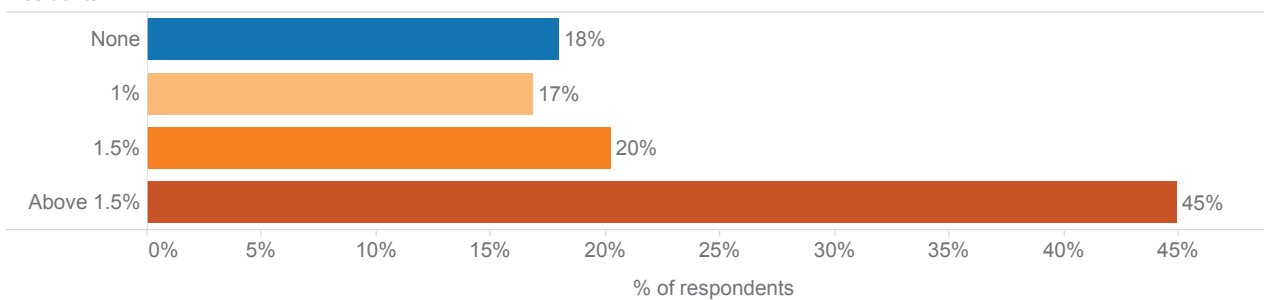
However, as can be seen in Chart 4, 45% of respondents said they would be prepared to pay more than a 1.5% increase. There is little difference in this figure for residents and employees (45% and 44% respectively), although more employees selected 1.5% as compared to residents, and a higher proportion of residents said 'none' or 1% as compared to employees (Chart 5).

Chart 3 - Level of Council Tax increase (all respondents)

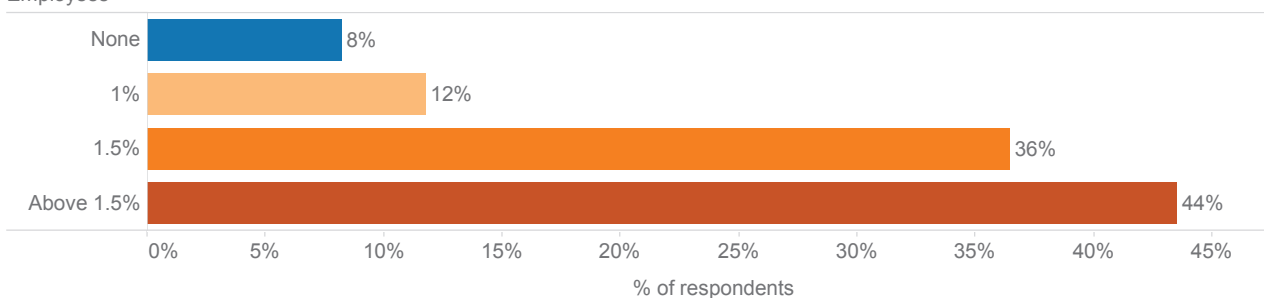
Base = 179

Chart 4 - Level of Council Tax increase - summary (all respondents)

Base = 179

Chart 5 - Level of Council Tax increase - summary (residents compared to employees)**Residents**

Base = 89

Employees

Base = 85

Using the demographic information collected about the respondents (see Appendix 1), together with statistical techniques, it is possible to see if there are any significant differences in views between groups.

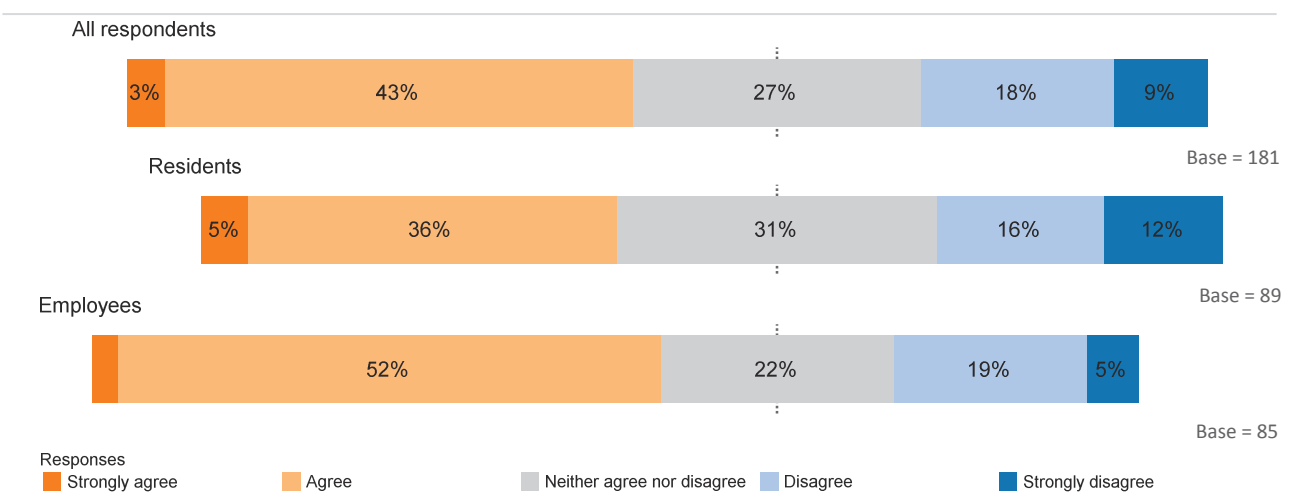
The analysis shows that men were significantly more likely than women to support a council tax increase of more than 1.5%. Whereas those respondents with a long-term limiting illness or disability were significantly less likely than others to support a council tax increase of more than 1.5%. Employees were more likely than residents to support a council tax increase of 1.5%. Whereas residents were more likely than employees to support no increase.

The results continue a trend over the last few years of a softening of views on council tax increases. The budget consultation in 2010 showed that 52% of respondents were not prepared to pay a council tax increase. For the consultation in 2013 this figure was 31% - now it is 13%. Conversely, the proportion of respondents willing to pay a council tax increase of 1.5% or more has gone up - from 27% in 2010, to 69% in 2013, to 73% now.

Question 3 - budget allocation

Respondents to the survey were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with how the budget had been allocated across services. The headline results show that overall 46% 'agreed', 27% 'disagreed', and 27% 'neither agreed nor disagreed' with how the budget had been allocated. There were some differences in views between residents and employees, although for both groups more respondents 'agreed' than 'disagreed' (Chart 6).

Chart 6 - Agreement/disagreement with how the budget has been allocated across services



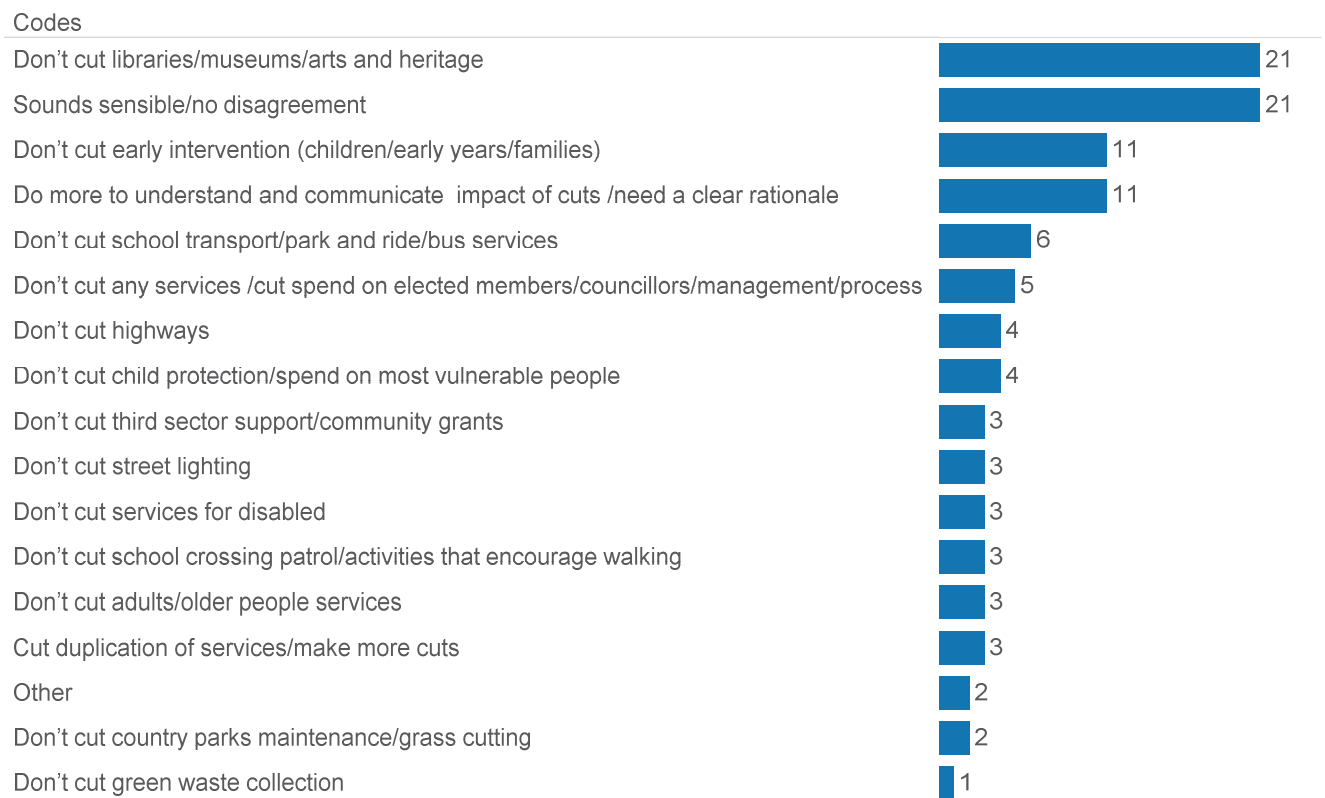
Statistical analysis by demographic group show that those respondents who care for a person aged 18 or over and those who represent a voluntary and community service were significantly more likely than others to either 'strongly disagree' or 'disagree' with how the budget has been allocated across county council services. Similarly, those respondents with a long-term limiting illness or disability were significantly less likely than others to 'strongly agree' or 'agree'.

Question 4 - areas where reductions are opposed

An open-ended question was asked to ascertain whether there were any specific service reductions that respondents disagreed with. The comments were read and a coding frame was created. Some comments contained more than one point of view - each specific point of view was coded using the coding frame.

For this question 93 comments were received containing 106 different points of view. Chart 7 shows the results.

Chart 7 - areas where reductions are opposed



The top four comments are described in more detail below:

Don't cut libraries/ museums/ arts and heritage (21)

Many respondents were concerned about specific cuts to libraries, museums, arts and heritage. There were some concerns about expectations for volunteers to run these services and worries that cuts would be irreversible.

"Feel very concerned about potential reductions in library services, these do act as a social lifeline to people, to lose this support in the 21st century is really tragic and I think there will be a knock on effect and social isolation/ problems as a result"

"I think it's unfair to target arts based services as seriously as is being suggested. Turning community libraries over to volunteers is insulting to skilled library staff and, quite frankly, naive. If you stop funding properly staffed libraries now you will cause damage to Leicestershire's library service from which it will never recover."

Sounds sensible/ no disagreement (21)

Many respondents said that there weren't any specific reductions that they disagreed with, and some commented that the allocation seemed reasonable given the difficult decisions that had to be made.

"I don't like any service reductions, but if they have to be made, the way the budget has been allocated seems reasonable"

Don't cut early intervention (children/ early years/ families) (11)

Many respondents were concerned about cuts to Early Intervention and Early Years Services, which may create issues in the future.

"More should be spent on early intervention including children and young people as well as vulnerable adults."

"Early years work needs to be a greater priority ...real danger that early intervention is further reduced - and we create further issues down the line."

"The Early Learning and Childcare Service performs a vital role in terms of early intervention and has many statutory duties. It carries out essential work with providers in the 0-5 sector to secure that children are school ready. Without continued funding, we will see standards drop, less progress and an increase in less than good OFSTED outcomes".

Do more to understand and communicate impact of cuts/ need a clear rationale (11)

There were a number of comments about being transparent and honest with staff and residents, ensuring that priorities were clear and the range of impacts were understood.

"As with earlier MTFS' and budget decisions, I feel there is no obvious rationale for the way you have allocated the savings targets. Where is the EHRIA to support these decisions - every other decision made by the Council has to produce such documents, but this and other evidence appears to be missing - again!"

"The consultation papers provide only a very high level view of how the council's budget is spent, masking all manner of sins. The previous consultation response is indicative of a disproportionate number of elderly residents responding and protecting their own interests at the expense of others."

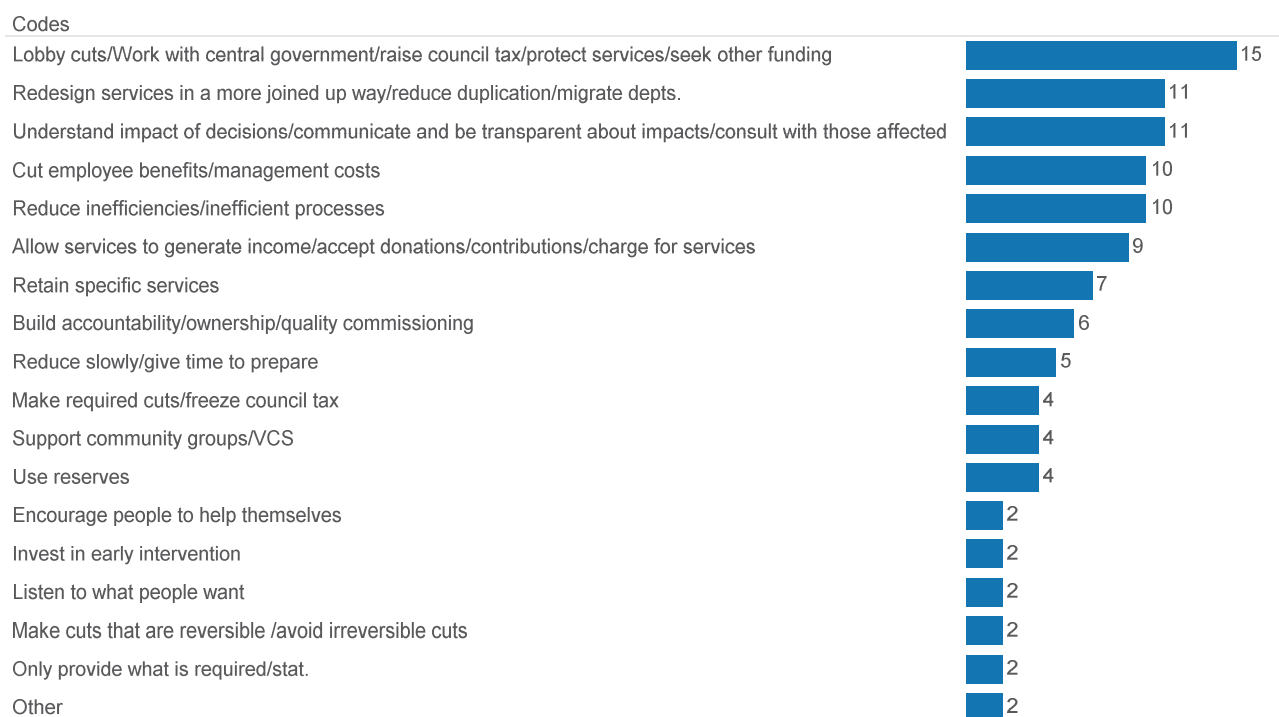
"There is a potential knock on effect for some reductions that perhaps haven't been considered, e.g. if we reduce school transport, have we evaluated what impact this will have on additional car users on the roads taking children to school? Have we joined these potential additional costs to the environment and transport department in increased traffic usage and further road maintenance?"

Question 5 - mitigation

Respondents were asked how the council could mitigate any impact of the proposed changes to ensure the best possible outcomes.

In total, 88 comments were received containing 108 different points of view. Chart 8 shows the results from the coding of these comments.

Chart 8 - mitigation



The top six comments are described in more detail below:

Lobby cuts/ work with central government/ raise council tax/ protect services/ seek other funding (15)

The most common suggestion for mitigating impacts of cuts was to lobby central government or raise council tax to protect services.

“Why on earth are we not challenging central government about the distribution of budget for LCC? As we are the lowest funded county in the country, we surely have a right to challenge this constructively- if its already been challenged, all I can say is that we are not challenging this enough and more NEEDS TO BE DONE! Is that not why we elect councillors?”

“Raising Council Tax, which in my opinion should've been done before now, would have prevented some of the changes.”

Redesign services in a more joined up way/ reduce duplication/ migrate depts. (11)

Many respondents suggested that services could be redesigned in a more joined up way to reduce duplication.

“Migrate departments, do what other authorities are doing for instance People, Places etc.”

“Spend more time planning and coming up with a co-ordinated approach to deliver the best possible level of services for the lowest cost. There is a danger of 'over cutting' which then reduces the organisations capability to make changes to deliver savings in more innovative ways.”

Understand impact of decisions/ communicate and be transparent about impacts/ consult with those affected (11)

There were a number of comments about the need to understand and communicate the impact of decisions and consult with those affected.

"Provide a much clearer set of evidence and supporting documentation to show why you have made the choices you have and the known/predicted risks and impacts."

"Consult local services that are affected by these changes and cuts."

"We need to use data to measure the impact of service reductions to ensure they don't adversely impact on other departments and increasing the costs somewhere else. Particularly if that somewhere else is also working within reduced budgets. This means having the best possible analysis at the beginning of service redesign to work out what the impacts will be!"

Cut employee benefits/ management costs (10)

Many respondents suggested that staff benefits and management costs were reviewed and streamlined to keep front line staff.

"Reduce the amount of upper management that you have, and allow the front line staff and supervisors to carry on doing their roles"

"Consider a full management restructure. There seem to be a lot of people managing managers - surely there is an opportunity to streamline the tiers of management and keep the people who actually do work, rather than sit around talking at meetings?"

"Look at employee pay scales, benefits and pensions do they compare with external companies. Claw back redundancy pay if someone is subsequently re-employed by LCC. Is Chief exec paid more than Prime Minister?"

Reduce inefficiencies/ inefficient processes (10)

A number of comments referred to inefficiencies in services and inefficient processes. Many suggested that these should be looked at before cutting services.

"Reduce bureaucracy and political costs. Adopt a more logical approach to implementing change and new structures, and address obvious inefficiencies."

"The County Council should be looking within for efficiency savings before looking outwards. To my mind it makes more sense to keep all services up and running in a leaner organisation - that's what we've done at work."

Allow services to generate income/ accept donations/ contributions/ charge for services (9)

Some respondents felt that there should be more opportunities for services to generate income and options for people to self-fund.

"We should enable services to become business like, free up some of the restrictions e.g. allow services to generate income by providing services to self funders who would otherwise have restricted choice because of in house service eligibility criteria"

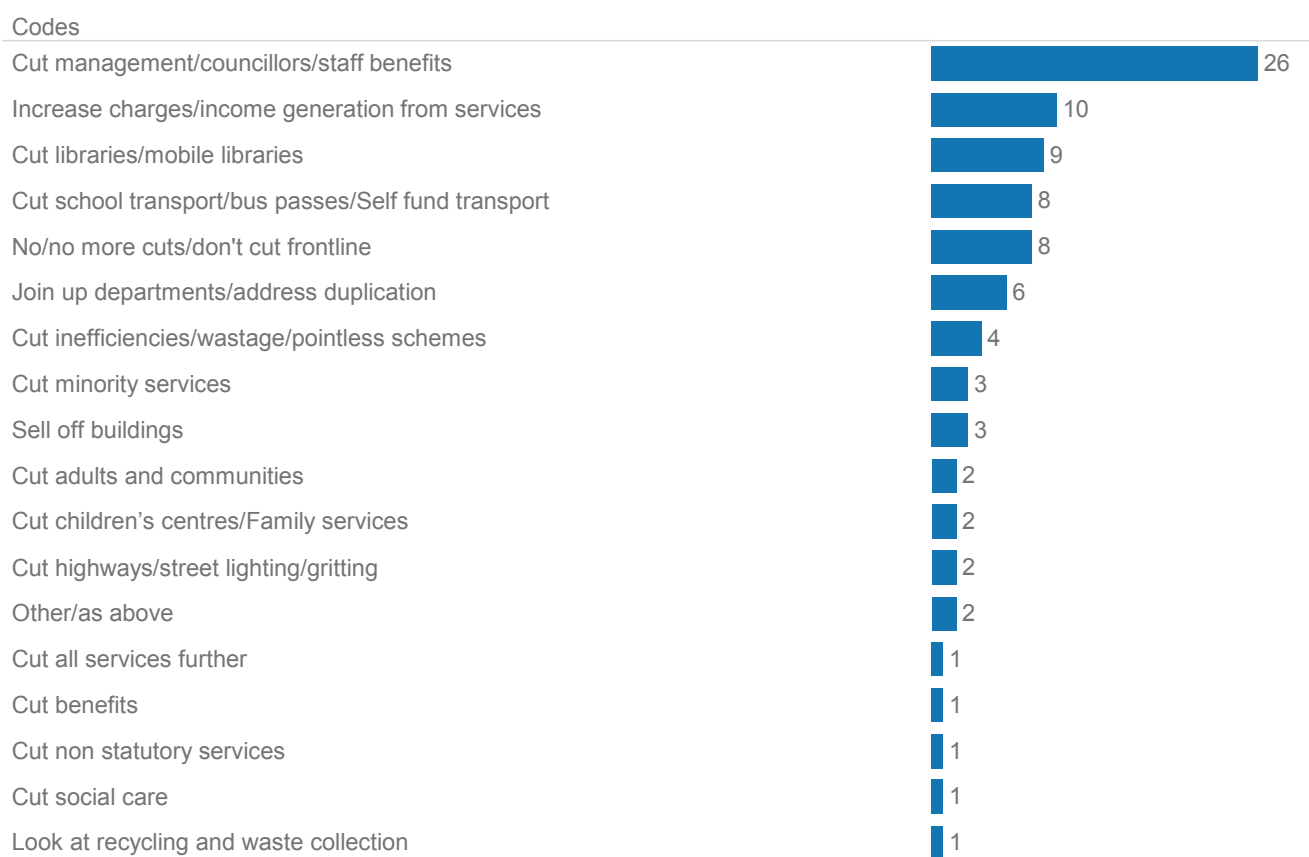
"Look to generate an increase in income from traded and paid for services where appropriate and to increase the sharing of more services with other neighbouring Councils e.g. Trading Standards, Legal and Registration Services. A more commercially based pricing structure could also be used when offering additional "paid for" services."

Question 6 - additional reductions or charges

Ideas were sought for any additional service reductions or charges respondents thought the council should consider.

For this question 83 comments were received and 90 points of view were coded. Chart 9 shows the results.

Chart 9 - additional reductions or charges



The top five comments are described in more detail below:

Cut management/ councillors/ staff benefits (26)

The most common response to additional service reductions was to cut management costs, councillors and staff benefits.

"Too many staff, too much holiday entitlement – this could never happen in a normal business"

"Scrap the gold plated pensions for council workers, move all employees onto defined

contribution schemes"

"Cut some of the higher up councillors at county hall"

Increase charges/income generation from services (10)

Many respondents suggested that there should be more opportunities to charge for services and generate income.

"Develop parts of the council as service providers - e.g. - ICT, learning and development - these have potential for income generation - including hiring out council rooms for weekend/evening events"

"I think there could be more opportunities to sell our services. There are many commercial businesses that we could easily replicate. We perhaps need to invest in commercially aware legal services that could help departments set up social enterprises. Perhaps we need to be less risk averse."

Cut libraries/ mobile libraries (9)

Some respondents suggested reductions to the spend on libraries through cutting services, using the building better or focusing on a smaller number of libraries.

"Whilst regrettable, I think that mobile libraries could be scrapped. They appeal to very much a minority of the population and the overheads they incur cannot be justified"

"Further reductions in Libraries/ better use of library buildings that do remain open."

"Close all village libraries, investing in quality libraries in market towns, maybe with an enhanced library van service."

Reduce school transport/ transport/ self fund transport (8)

Some respondents suggested reductions to concessionary travel such as school transport and bus passes.

"Reduce bus passes so that only those who need them have them i.e. over 70 year olds or those who can't drive for medical reasons."

"Transport but make better use of community transport possibilities"

"Reduce school transport costs. If parents want their children to [attend] a school which is not within walking distance let them pay the travel cost for their children to attend. Should not be rate paying funding used."

No/ no more cuts/ don't cut front line (8)

A number of respondents stated that they did not feel there were any other service reductions to consider.

"Absolutely not, we have been cut to the bone ."

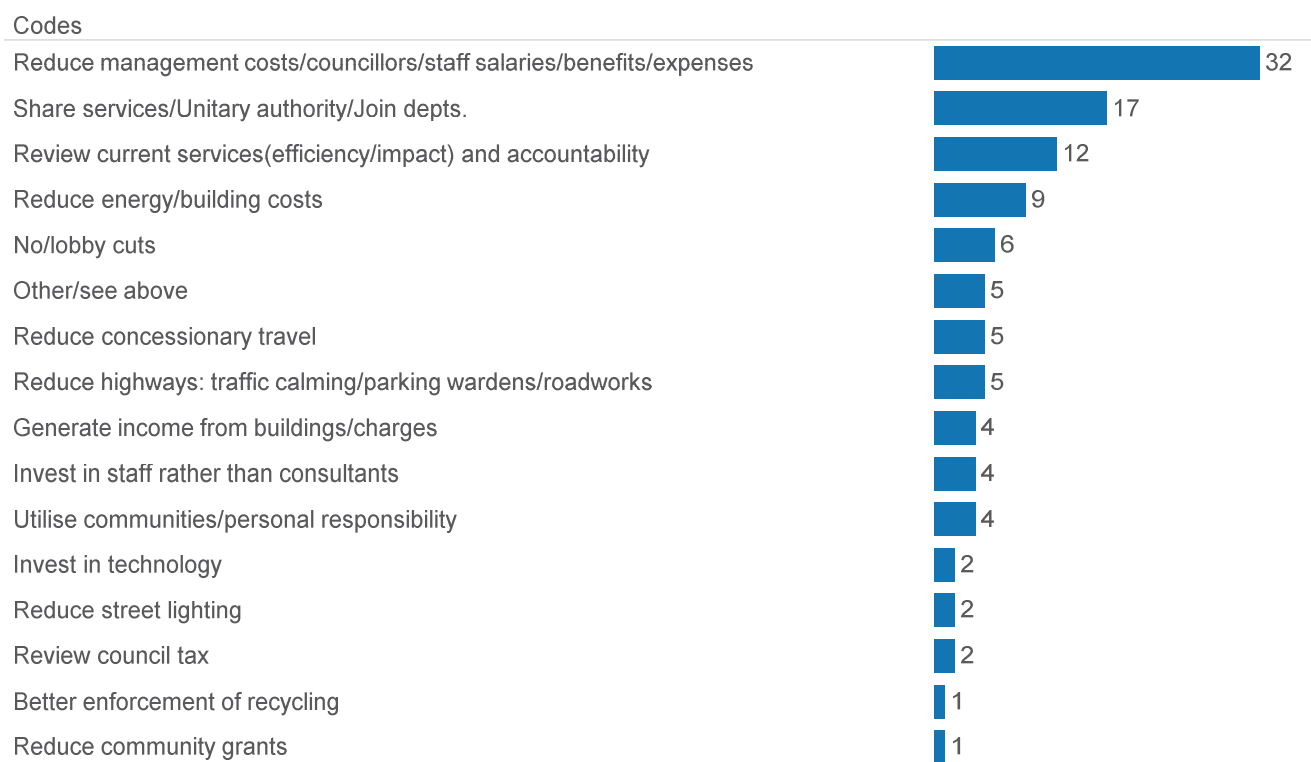
"Raise Council Tax as high as you can - an extra £20-£30 per year will not be noticed by most households, but loss of frontline services will."

Question 7 - areas for further efficiencies

Respondents were asked whether they thought there were any areas the council could make further efficiency savings without impacting on services.

This question received the highest number of comments (102) which contained 111 points of view. Chart 10 shows the results.

Chart 10 - areas for further efficiencies



The top four comments are described in more detail below:

Reduce management costs/ councillors/ staff salaries/ benefits/ expenses (32)

The most common response to ideas for further efficiency savings was around reducing management costs.

"Freeze all Councillor allowances. Pay no additional allowances except to the three main party leaders. Reduce the number of Councillors. Review middle and senior management to reduce numbers by integrating departments."

"Reducing the head count for senior managers in the Council, with considerable savings in salaries, pensions and expenses."

"Cap the salaries at the top of the council to £75,000 and reduce the number of assistant directors"

Share services/ unitary authority/ join departments (17)

Many respondents suggested that further efficiencies could be made through sharing services, joining departments or becoming a unitary authority.

"A unitary authority would save £30m pa and only cost £12m to deliver. Councilors voting on their own jobs....I think there is a serious conflict of interest here and a decision in the best interest of the public is never going to be achieved."

"There are still unlimited options for shared services within the East Midlands region whilst there will always be a need for the front line services to be local many services and back room functions such as legal, finance, ICT, waste management could be shared with other area's"

"Share services with City Council and districts, as a pre-cursor to unitary councils."

Review efficiency of current services (efficiency/impact) and accountability (12)

Some respondents suggested that efficiencies could be found by reviewing all the current services, processes and budgets to identify improvements.

"Adult & Social Care is the council's largest budget, yet seems a growth area, can we manage our services and commissioning better to keep costs down or increase income"

"We are inefficient due to prioritizing processes above outcomes, e.g. processes are unnecessarily hierarchical. Although a project is underway (work analysis), this project is itself being carried out badly and will not identify inefficient practices. I suggest that if managers and decision makers want to make improvements, they should come and talk to us so they understand the problems"

Reduce energy/building costs (9)

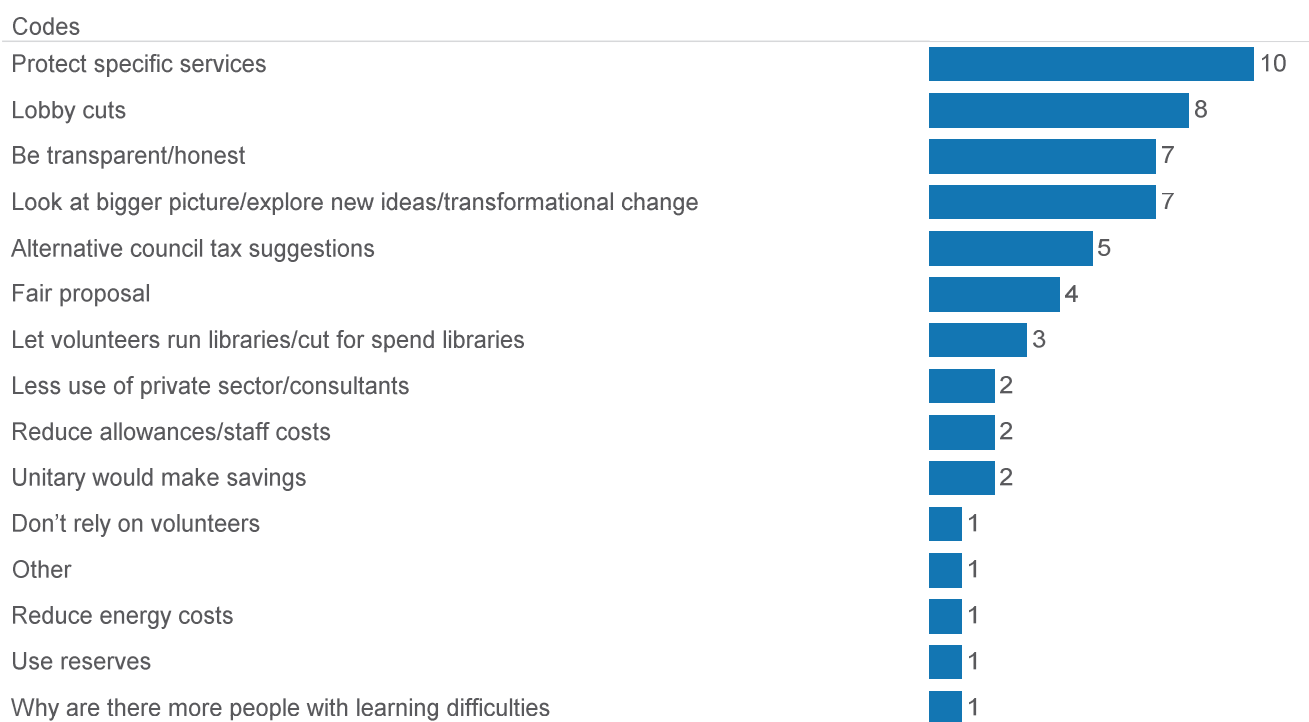
Some respondents suggested that efficiencies could be made by reducing energy costs at County Hall.

"Look at every possible means of minimising operating costs of the county hall building. Just by way of example, whenever I pass the building of an evening and out of normal office hours it is generally a blaze of light. Is it really necessary for all of these lights to be left on at night?"

Question 8 - any other comments

Finally, respondents were given the opportunity to leave any other comments they had about the council's draft budget proposals.

Many respondents used this question to reiterate views expressed earlier in the questionnaire. In total, 67 comments were received, accounting for 55 points of view being coded. Chart 11 shows the results.

Chart 11 - any other comments

The top four comments are described in more detail below:

Protect specific services (10)

A number of respondents highlighted the importance of protecting specific services, or service areas, in the additional comments. These included school crossing patrols, libraries, highway maintenance, museum collections, bus passes, adults and communities, frontline services, and services for those most in need.

"My concern is the suggestion that cutting school crossing patrols. These staff perform a very important function. Cutting this would mean more and more parents driving their children to school and causing further problems."

"I think that frontline services should not have been targeted!"

Lobby cuts (8)

Many respondents suggested that the council should challenge central government regarding the scale of the cuts and ensure that Leicestershire was funded fairly.

"It's a very tough budget and more should be done to challenge the government to release more money to spend locally"

"We continually hear that Leicestershire is a relatively poorly funded authority. This should be challenged through judicial review if there is genuine unfairness in the process. Nicey-nicey discussions with local MPs is unlikely to achieve real reward"

Be transparent/honest (7)

A number of respondents added that transparency and honesty was important.

"We must inform residents of Leicestershire exactly what will happen if we have to make the required service cuts. John Sinnott was very straight forward in our meetings with him, this should be relayed to the whole of Leicestershire."

"Whilst balancing the books is fundamental; there needs to be an honest assessment of what the priorities are for [the] organization. Are we here solely to balance the books or do we wish to strive for using our influence in the most effective manner to seed the personal and economic development of residents and businesses in [order] to make Leicestershire a successful county and a good place to live"

"Continue to consult with employees and community"

Look at bigger picture/ explore new ideas/ transformational change (7)

Some respondents also felt that there was a need to look at the bigger picture and explore wider transformational change rather than salami slicing services.

"No, it is always difficult to have to cut services to the bone, but looking at the bigger picture can help"

"[There] are budget cuts not related to transformational change. They should be based upon priority outcomes for residents instead of the silo approach based upon departments"

"Avoid salami slicing services and instead take difficult decisions to eliminate functions entirely"

Appendix 1 - Respondent profile

Age	Survey Responses			2011 Census (16+)
	181	% Inc NR	% Ex NR	%
15-24	3	1.7%	1.8%	14.3%
25-34	33	18.2%	19.8%	13.2%
35-44	32	17.7%	19.2%	17.2%
45-54	34	18.8%	20.4%	17.8%
55-64	29	16.0%	17.4%	15.9%
65-74	28	15.5%	16.8%	11.6%
75-84	7	3.9%	4.2%	7.2%
85 and over	1	0.6%	0.6%	2.9%
No reply	14	7.7%		

Gender	Survey Responses			2011 Census (16+)
	181	% Inc NR	% Ex NR	%
Male	100	55.2%	58.1%	49.0%
Female	72	39.8%	41.9%	51.0%
No reply	9	5.0%		

Do you have a long-standing illness or disability?*	Survey Responses			2011 Census (16+)
	181	% Inc NR	% Ex NR	%
Yes	46	25.4%	26.6%	19.1%
No	127	70.2%	73.4%	80.9%
No reply	8	4.4%		

*2001 Census asks if respondents if day-to-day activities limited a lot

Ethnicity	Survey Responses			2011 Census (16+)
	181	% Inc NR	% Ex NR	%
White	149	82.3%	90.3%	92.2%
Mixed	4	2.2%	2.4%	0.8%
Asian or Asian British	8	4.4%	4.8%	6.0%
Black or Black British	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%
Other ethnic group	4	2.2%	2.4%	0.4%
No reply	16	8.8%		

Sexual orientation	Survey Responses			2011 Census (16+)
	181	% Inc NR	% Ex NR	%
Bisexual	6	3.3%	4.0%	(Not applicable)
Gay	4	2.2%	2.6%	
Heterosexual/straight	137	75.7%	90.7%	
Lesbian	3	1.7%	2.0%	
Other	1	0.6%	0.7%	
No reply	30	16.5%		

What is your religion?	181	Survey Responses		2011 Census (16+)
		% Inc NR	% Ex NR	%
No religion	71	39.2%	42.0%	25.3%
Christian (All denominations)	84	46.4%	49.7%	62.6%
Buddhist	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%
Hindu	6	3.3%	3.6%	2.8%
Jewish	1	0.6%	0.6%	0.1%
Muslim	1	0.6%	0.6%	1.2%
Sikh	0	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%
Any other religion or belief	6	3.3%	3.6%	0.4%
No reply	12	6.6%		6.3%

Are you a parent or carer of a young person aged 17 or under?	181	Survey Responses		2011 Census (16+)
		% Inc NR	% Ex NR	%
Yes	56	30.9%	32.7%	(Census data includes all people cared for regardless of age)
No	115	63.5%	67.3%	
No reply	10	5.6%		

Are you a carer of a person aged 18 or over?	181	Survey Responses		2011 Census (16+)
		% Inc NR	% Ex NR	%
Yes	24	13.3%	14.0%	(Census data includes all people cared for regardless of age)
No	148	81.8%	86.0%	
No reply	9	4.9%		

District	181	Survey Responses		2011 Census (16+)
		% Inc NR	% Ex NR	%
Blaby	19	10.5%	17.0%	14.3%
Charnwood	22	12.2%	19.6%	25.9%
Harborough	10	5.5%	8.9%	12.9%
Hinckley & Bosworth	29	16.0%	25.9%	16.2%
Melton	3	1.7%	2.7%	7.7%
North West Leicestershire	22	12.2%	19.6%	14.2%
Oadby & Wigston	7	3.9%	6.3%	8.7%
Missing/Invalid Postcode	66	36.5%		
Leicester	3	1.7%		

Appendix 2 - Questionnaire

This form should take 10-15 minutes to complete.
Thank you in advance for your time.

Have your say on our draft budget plans 2015 - 2019

- Please read the supporting information provided before completing the survey.
- Please read the instructions for answering each question carefully.
- This survey should take about 10-15 minutes to complete. Thank you in advance for your time.
- **Only one survey can be submitted per computer.**
- If you have any other queries regarding the survey or if you require an alternative format or help in understanding it in your language, please contact **0116 305 0001** or email: future@leics.gov.uk

Please note: Your responses to the main part of the survey (Q1 to Q8, including your comments) may be released to the general public in full under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Any responses to the questions in the 'About you' section of the questionnaire will be held securely and will not be subject to release under Freedom of Information legislation, nor passed on to any third party.

Your role

Q1 In which role(s) are you responding to this consultation? Please tick all applicable

- ☐ I am a resident
 - ☐ I represent/own a local business
 - ☐ I represent a voluntary and community services (VCS) organisation
 - ☐ I represent another stakeholder e.g. district/borough/parish council, health, police etc.
 - ☐ I am an employee of Leicestershire County Council
 - ☐ Other (please specify below)
-
-

Our proposals

Council Tax has been frozen by the county council for the last four years. The county council is planning to increase Council Tax by 1.5% for 2015/16 and the following three years. The Council Tax bill for county council services in 2014/15 is currently £1,063 per year for a band D property. An increase of 1.5% will mean an average increase in Council Tax of £16 per year on that bill.

Every additional 1% increase in Council Tax generates an additional £2.2m of income each year and reduces our total savings requirement. Every additional 1% costs each household in a band D property on average an additional £11 per year on their Council Tax bill.

Under current Government rules a local referendum would need to be held for any increase above 2%. It is estimated that it would cost £1m to hold a referendum.

Q2 What Council Tax increase would you be prepared to pay each year for the next four years?
The figures in brackets show what this increase would be next year for a household in a band D property. Please tick one option only

- ☐ None
- ☐ 1% (an additional £11)
- ☐ 1.5% (an additional £16). This is our proposal for next year and the following three years.
- ☐ 1.99% (an additional £21). This is the maximum we expect we will be able to raise council tax before a referendum is required.
- ☐ 3% (an additional £32)
- ☐ 4% (an additional £43)
- ☐ 5% (an additional £53)
- ☐ Above 5%

Q3 Overall, to what extent do you agree or disagree with how the budget has been allocated across our services? Please tick one option only

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q4 Are there any specific service reductions you disagree with?

.....

.....

.....

.....

Q5 How could we mitigate any impact of our proposed changes to ensure the best possible outcomes?

Q6 Are there any additional service reductions or charges you think we should consider?

Q7 Are there any areas where you think we could make further efficiency savings without impacting on services?

Q8 Do you have any other comments about our draft budget proposals?

About you

Leicestershire County Council is committed to ensuring that its services, policies and practices are free from discrimination and prejudice and that they meet the needs of all sections of the community.

We would be grateful if you would answer the questions below. You are under no obligation to provide the information requested, but it would help us greatly if you did. Information will be used to inform service development to ensure that what we are providing is fair and effective.

This information will not be disclosed in the event of an Freedom of Information request.

Q9 Are you male or female? Please tick one option only

- ☐ Male
☐ Female

Q10 Do you identify as transgender? For the purposes of this question 'Transgender' is defined as an individual who lives, or wants to live, full time in the gender opposite to that they were assigned at birth. Please tick one option only

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Q11 What was your age on your last birthday?

Q12 Are you a parent/carer of a child or young person aged 17 or under? Please tick one option only

☐ Yes

☐ No

Q13 Are you a carer of a person aged 18 or over? Please tick one option only

☐ Yes

☐ No

A carer is someone of any age who provides unpaid support to family or friends who could not manage without this help

Q14 Do you have any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity? Please tick one option only

☐ Yes

☐ No

Q15 What is your ethnic group? Please tick one option only

☐ White

☐ Mixed

☐ Asian or Asian British

☐ Black or Black British

☐ Other ethnic group

Q16 What is your religion or belief? Please tick one option only

☐ No religion

☐ Christian (all denominations)

☐ Buddhist

☐ Hindu

☐ Jewish

☐ Muslim

☐ Sikh

☐ Any other religion or belief

Q17 Sexual Orientation. Many people face discrimination because of their sexual orientation and for this reason we have decided to ask this monitoring question. You do not have to answer it but we would be grateful if you could tick the box next to the category which describes your sexual orientation:

- ☐ Bisexual
☐ Gay
☐ Heterosexual / Straight
☐ Lesbian
☐ Other

Q18 What is your postcode? This will help us understand views in different areas

Thank you for your time.

Data Protection:

Personal data supplied on this form will be held on computer and will be used in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. The information you provide will be used for statistical analysis, management, planning and the provision of services by the County Council and its partners. Leicestershire County Council will not share any information collected from the 'About you' section of this survey with its partners. The information will be held in accordance with the Council's records management and retention policy. Information which is not in the 'About you' section of the questionnaire may be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Appendix 3- Stakeholder responses

LEICESTER SHIRE BUSINESS COUNCIL

The collective voice of businesses in the City and County

23 January 2015

Tom Purnell
Assistant Chief Executive
Leicestershire County Council
County Hall
Glenfield
Leicester LE3 8RA

Dear Tom,

Medium Term Financial Strategy - Consultation

Thank you for sight of the County's Medium Term Financial Strategy, which members of this Council have now had a chance to consider.

a. Central funds

First, we are struck by the continuing extent of the squeeze that you are subject to, and are disappointed that there still seems to be no recognition by central government of the scale of under-funding this county experiences.

b. Match funding

We note the warning about a diminishing ability to provide match-funding with considerable concern. Having seen how the various bidding processes for economic development funds work through EUSIF, ERDF, Growth Deals, City Deals, etc., it seems to us that such limitations will place a leveraged handicap on our ability to find the money to help the area reach its economic potential for creating jobs and wealth and standard of living for its residents.

As an illustration, one current area of particular interest to the Business Council is the improvement of the Midland Mainline. We understand that a major (and much-needed) project to upgrade Market Harborough Station and car park is in the balance, and would need match-funding from partners, including the County, to get it to happen. Is this at risk?

c. Health & Social Care

Bearing in mind the very tight funding position and the consequences such as those just mentioned,

The Business Council expresses the collective voice of six membership-based business organisations on behalf of their members in the City and County of Leicestershire; CBI, FSB, IoD, LABA, Leicester Business Voice & Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce
Administrative address; 38 Digby Close, Tilton-on-the-Hill, Leics LE7 9LL. Tel 0116 259 7707 e-mail; Maxine.Aldred@fsb.org.uk

LEICESTER SHIRE BUSINESS COUNCIL

The collective voice of businesses in the City and County

we note the scale of savings being scheduled in the area of health and social care. As high-lighted last year, this has to be a key area for major gains in both performance and cost. The numbers presented here show that a lot of good foundation work has been done on the way to realising them. However, it is not clear from the information presented the extent to which these plans address the sector's organisational complexity that was described last year. To the extent that this issue has not yet been addressed, we would urge the County and its partners to redouble efforts to wring cost out of the sector's structural overheads to assist other areas of the budget.

d. Unitary status

Continuing with the issues discussed last year, we note that there seems to be no mention in the MTFS of progress towards realising the potential savings that were outlined as achievable by moving towards unitary status. It seems to us that failure to save the tens of £millions estimated will result in disproportionate damage to the economic prospects of the area as described above.

e. Economic development

Nevertheless, we commend the County's commitment so far to the extension of super-fast broadband to the rural areas of the County, and to addressing the "final 5%" issue.

We also commend the investment in the next phase of the Loughborough Science Park. However, the match-funding concern raised above equally applies to major potentially wealth-creating projects like this. Will there be constraints on the future ability to develop such important assets?

f. Revenue contribution to the economy

We note three specific issues under the revenue plans;

1. It appears that planned expenditure on road maintenance is set to decline year on year by £1 million per year for three years. Although it is suggested that funds should become available from other directions to compensate, we want to emphasise the importance to the local economy of having a first class road network. Given the fact that the county's premier industry sector is logistics, and our major inward investment selling point is our centrality and transport connectivity, we suggest that any reduction in road maintenance will be disproportionately damaging and counter-productive.
2. The suggested removal of funds from "external agencies", i.e. the LLEP and tourism promotional activity, strikes us as counter-productive salami-slicing. The agreed SEP, to which we are all committed and the LLEP is charged with executing on our behalf, identifies tourism as one of the area's priority economic growth sectors. It therefore seems perverse to switch off funds for the LLEP and tourism.

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3. We note the plan to find £600k of revenue in 2017/18 from a county-wide parking strategy. This topic is potentially very sensitive to commercial interests across the spectrum and can do a lot of damage to local small businesses if implemented wrongly. We look forward to being able to participate in detailed early consultation on the design of schemes.

We hope this response is as helpful as it is intended to be.

Yours sincerely,

Tim Watt

Chairman

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Administrative address; 38 Digby Close, Tilton-on-the-Hill, Leics LE7 9LL. Tel 0116 259 7707 e-mail; Maxine.Aldred@fsb.org.uk



Tom Purnell
Assistant Chief Executive
Chief Executives Department
Leicestershire County Council
County Hall
Glenfield
Leicestershire LE3 8RA

Jan 22nd 2015

Dear Tom,

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2014-15 TO 2018-19

Many thanks for your letter dated January 16, the contents of which are noted.

Leicester Shire Promotions enjoys a highly effective and productive relationship with the County Council and we are keen to be a proactive partner in working with you and other relevant partners to ensure that the excellent work can continue.

We fully recognise the financial pressures being faced by the authority and are greatly encouraged by your confirmation of the importance of this sector to the local economy, jobs and growth.

Through work we have been doing with Visit England, we believe there remains a clear economic case for destinations to continue to provide intervention in the Tourism and Hospitality sector and we are able to demonstrate an effective case in favour of maintaining a dedicated, specialist vehicle, the Destination Management Organisation, for delivering that intervention.

We welcome your commitment to the sector and look forward to working together with you, the LEP and other partners to use the transition period between the current arrangement and the withdrawal of County Council funding to find an innovative and effective way to ensure the momentum gained is able to continue in the new environment in which we are all working.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Martin Peters".

Martin Peters
Chief Executive

About the Research and Insight Team

The team provides research and insight support to the council, working with both internal departments and partner organisations.

The team provides assistance with:

- Asset Mapping
- Benchmarking
- Business case development
- Community profiling
- Consultation
- Cost benefit analysis
- Journey mapping
- Data management
- Data cleaning/matching
- Data visualisation/ Tableau
- Engagement
- Ethnography
- Factor/cluster analysis
- Focus groups/workshops
- Forecasts/modelling
- Literature reviews
- GIS Mapping/ Mapinfo
- Needs analysis
- Profiling
- Questionnaire design
- Randomised control trials
- Segmentation
- Social Return on Investment/evaluations
- Statistical analysis/SPSS
- Surveys (all formats)/ SNAP
- Voting handsets
- Web analytics
- Web usability testing

Contact

Jo Miller and Rob Radburn
Research & Insight Team Leaders (Job Share)

Research & Insight Team
Strategy, Partnerships & Communities
Leicestershire County Council
County Hall, Glenfield
Leicester LE3 8RA

Tel: 0116 305 7341 / 0116 305 6891

Email: jo.miller@leics.gov.uk / robert.radburn@leics.gov.uk

Web: www.lsr-online.org

If you require information contained in this leaflet in another version e.g. large print, Braille, tape or alternative language please telephone: 0116 305 6803, Fax: 0116 305 7271 or Minicom: 0116 305 6160.

જો આપ આ માહિતી આપની ભાષામાં સમજવામાં થોડી મદદ ઇચ્છતાં હો તો 0116 305 6803 નંબર પર ફોન કરશો અને અમે આપને મદદ કરવા અવસ્થા કરીશું.

ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਣ ਵਿਚ ਕੁਝ ਮਦਦ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ 0116 305 6803 ਨੰਬਰ ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ ਅਤੇ ਅਸੀਂ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਮਦਦ ਲਈ ਕਿਸੇ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਕਰ ਦਵਾਂਗੇ।

এই তথ্য নিজের ভাষায় বুঝার জন্য আপনার যদি কোন সাহায্যের প্রয়োজন হয়, তবে 0116 305 6803 এই নম্বরে ফোন করলে আমরা উপযুক্ত ব্যক্তির ব্যবস্থা করবো।

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات سمجھنے میں کچھ مدد درکار ہے تو براہ مہربانی اس نمبر پر کال کریں 0116 305 6803 اور ہم آپ کی مدد کے لئے کسی کا انتظام کر دیں گے۔

假如閣下需要幫助，用你的語言去明白這些資訊，請致電 0116 305 6803，我們會安排有關人員為你提供幫助。

Jeżeli potrzebujesz pomocy w zrozumieniu tej informacji w Twoim języku, zadzwoń pod numer 0116 305 6803, a my Ci dopomożemy.

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