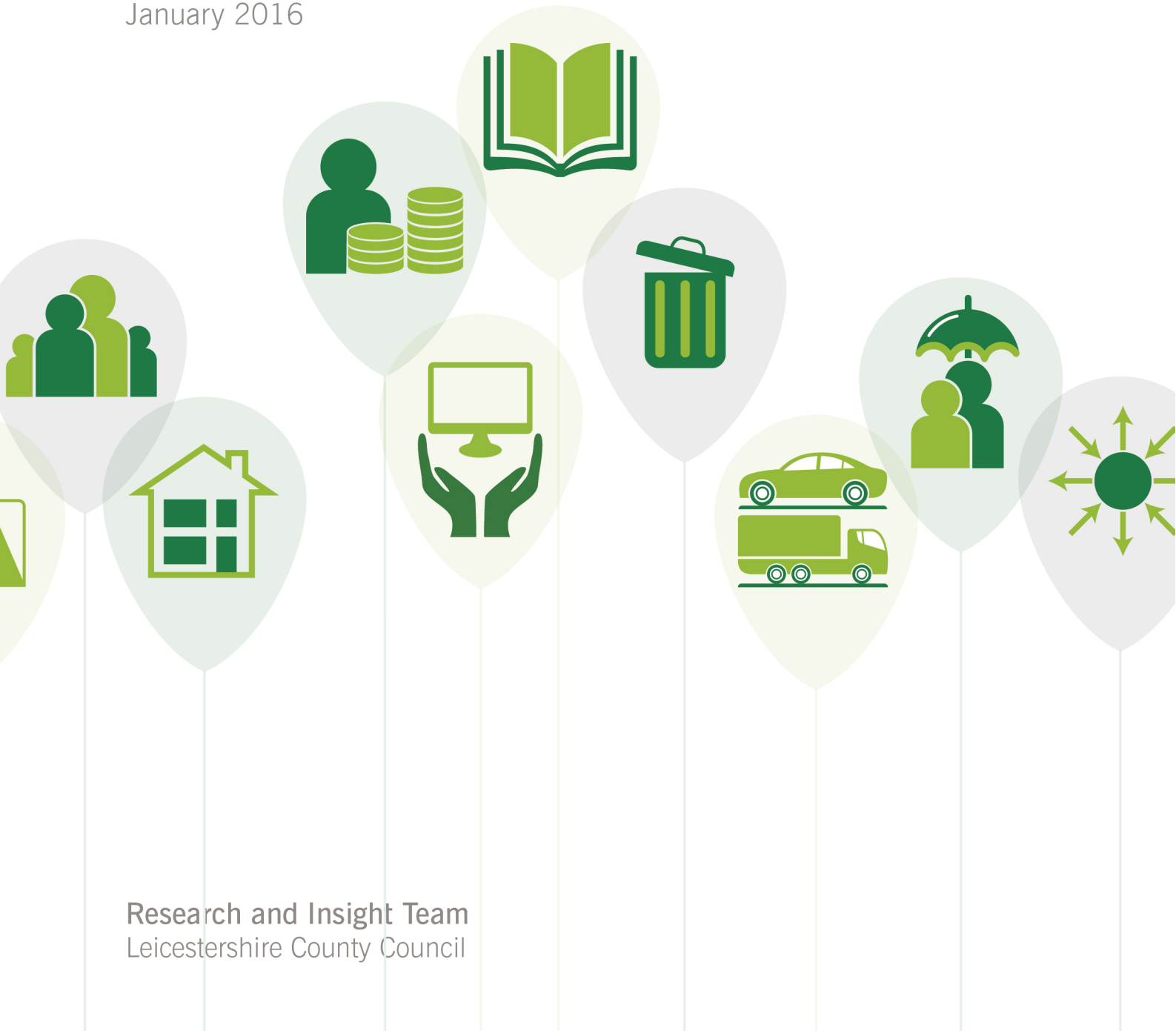




# Leicestershire's future

## Draft financial plan 2016 - 2020 Consultation results

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Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained within this report, Leicestershire County Council cannot be held responsible for any errors or omission relating to the data contained within the report.

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## Key findings

The key findings from the consultation on the draft financial plan 2016-20 are:

- In total, 217 responses to the survey were received.
- The majority of respondents (60%) thought the council should accept the Government's proposal of increasing council tax by 2% to be used exclusively for the funding of adult social care in Leicestershire
- A total council tax increase of 4% was the most frequently selected option (25%). However, 51% of respondents said they would be prepared to pay an increase in council tax of 4% or more. Almost one in five respondents said they did not want a council tax increase (19%).
- Some who disagreed with the social care precept were still prepared to pay an increase in council tax (21% of all respondents), suggesting that they either thought any council tax increase should be less than 2% or that perhaps any income generated should be available across all services.
- When asked for their views on how the budget had been allocated across services, 27% of respondents 'agreed', 44% 'disagreed' and 29% said they 'neither agreed nor disagreed'.
- Key messages from the open-ended questions include:
  - Reduce management costs and address staff performance
  - Concern about the impact on museums/culture/ leisure and library services
  - Merge with other councils and collaborate, integrate and join up services with other authorities
  - Need for further efficiency, e.g. in service delivery and council running costs
  - Recognition that the decisions are difficult but services should be protected
  - Concern about the long-term consequences of cuts
  - The need to challenge national government
- The findings from this consultation are in line with previous consultations, including the large scale budget consultation exercise which was carried out in 2013. Respondents have become more receptive over the last few years to council tax increases. However, in the latest consultation, fewer respondents have agreed with how the budget has been allocated, with more people now disagreeing than agreeing.
- 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 the 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 the East Midlands Chamber (see Appendix 3). Both organisations recognised the scale of the challenge, particularly the reductions in government grant. The Business Council was impressed by the aspirations in the re-organisation of adult social care. Although opposed to the council becoming a commercial supplier of goods and services, it was supportive of the council adopting a more commercial approach.
- The Business Council and the East Midlands Chamber urged the council to support businesses and economic growth (through a range of mechanisms), citing that this would help the council's financial situation through business rates retention. Both organisations stated that they were keen to be consulted on the council's future plans.

## 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 Strategy<sup>1</sup>.

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 2016-20 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 12<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

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 period 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, the voluntary and community sector (via Voluntary Action Leicestershire), Parish Councils and the Leicestershire Equalities Challenge Group.

<sup>1</sup>The detailed findings from the 2013 exercise are available on the county council's website [www.leics.gov.uk/future](http://www.leics.gov.uk/future).

## Communication

Awareness of the consultation was raised through three press releases and a lead story 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 such as Twitter, throughout the consultation period. Emails were issued to those who had registered for regular budget updates. The opportunity to view the 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 (including the Government's proposed 2% social care precept) 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?
- 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 (13.2 percentage point difference compared to the 2011 Census)
- An under-representation of Christians (12.9 percentage points)
- An under-representation of people with a long-standing illness or disability (4.1 percentage points)
- An under-representation of Asian or Asian British respondents (2.9 percentage points)

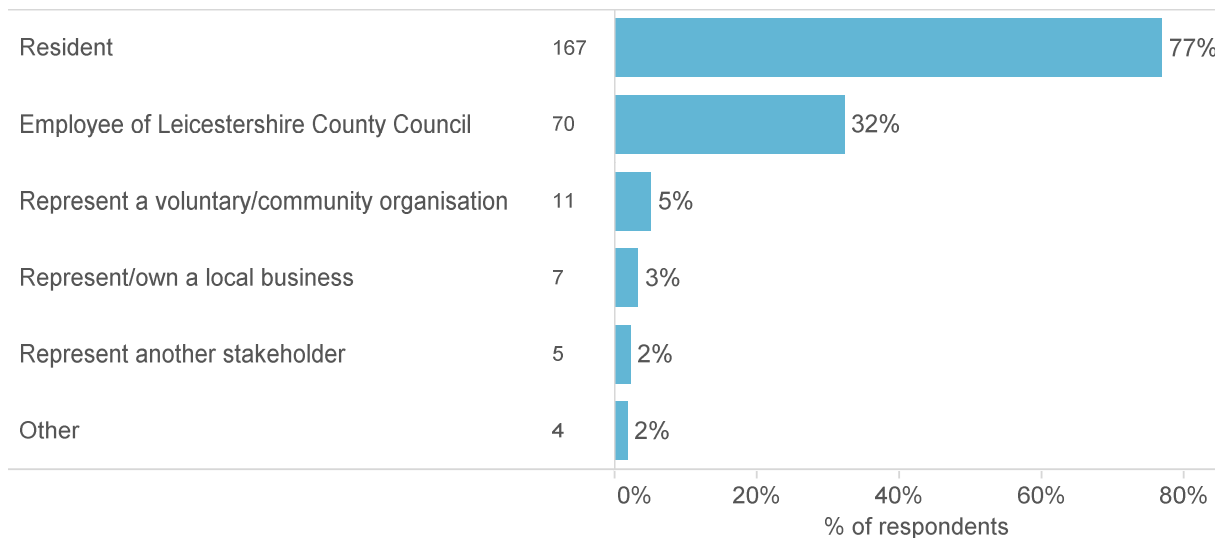
## Results

In total, 217 responses to the survey were received during the period 12<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

### 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 (77%) and/or as employees of Leicestershire County Council (LCC) (32%).

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

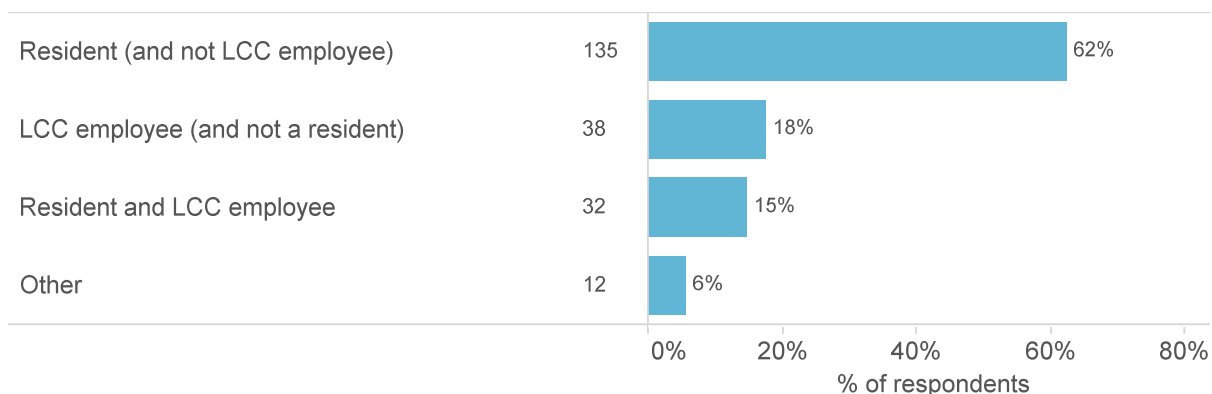


Base = 264 (multiple responses - therefore percentages sum to more than 100%)

Chart 2 shows that 62% of respondents are residents but not LCC employees, 18% are LCC employees but not residents, and 15% are both residents and employees.

Throughout the analysis that follows, comparison has been made between the views from residents who are not LCC employees (121 respondents) and the views from those who work for the county council (70 respondents).

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

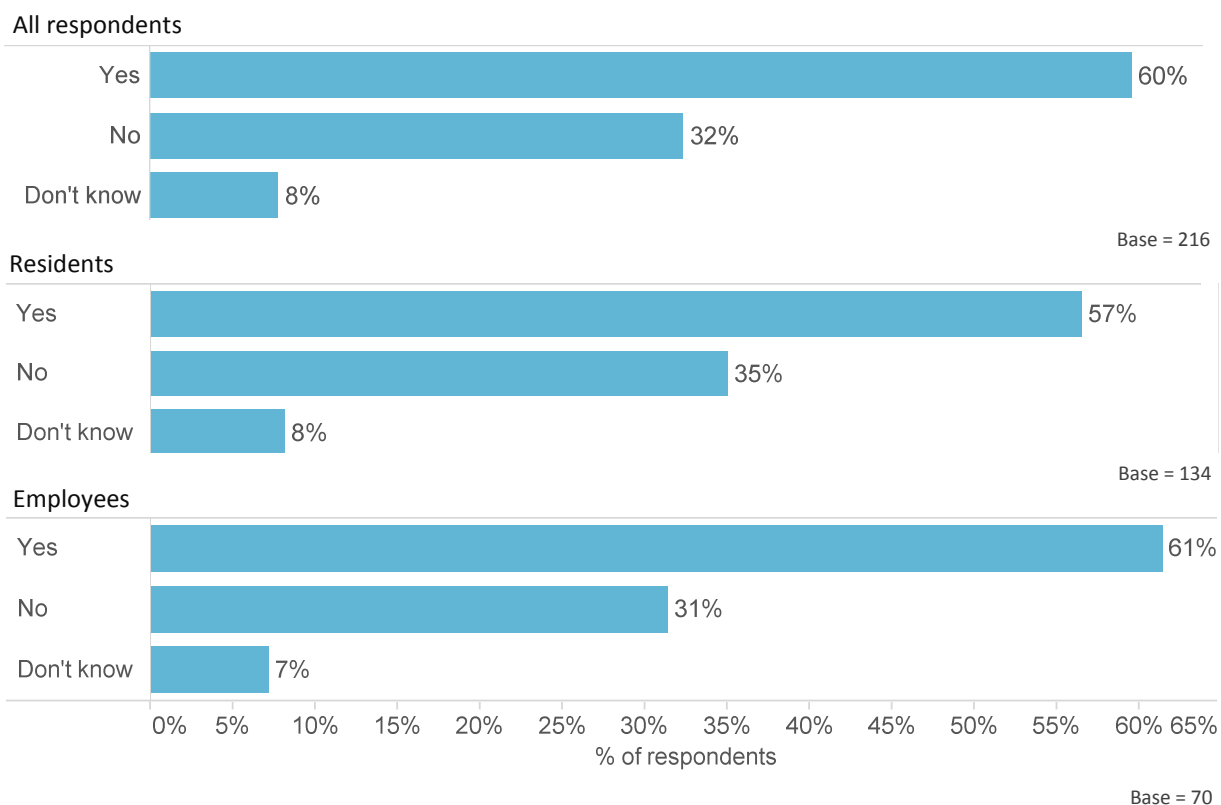


Base = 217

### Question 2 - Social care precept

Respondents were asked whether they thought the council should accept the government proposal of increasing council tax by 2% to be used exclusively for the funding of adult social care in Leicestershire. Chart 3 shows that overall, 60% were in favour of accepting the precept and this figure varied very little between residents and employees (57% and 61% respectively).

#### Chart 3 - Whether or not to accept the 2% social care precept



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.

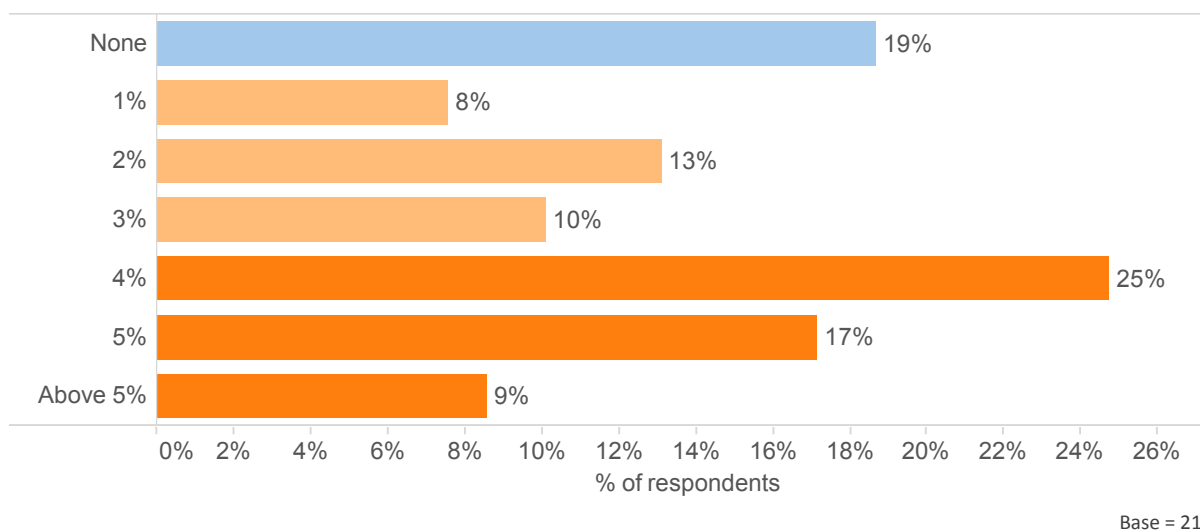
Statistical analysis by demographic group shows that female respondents were more likely to accept the 2% social care precept, whereas males were more likely to state that they did not know. LGBT<sup>2</sup> respondents were more likely to disagree with the proposal or to state they did not know.

### Question 3 - Council tax

Respondents were asked about the total council tax increase they would be prepared to pay next year (including the 2% social care precept if they agreed with this in the preceding question). Chart 4 shows the overall response. It shows that a 4% increase (the council’s proposed council tax increase, including the 2% social care precept) was the most



**Chart 4 - Total level of Council Tax increase (inc. social care precept if agreed) - all respondents**

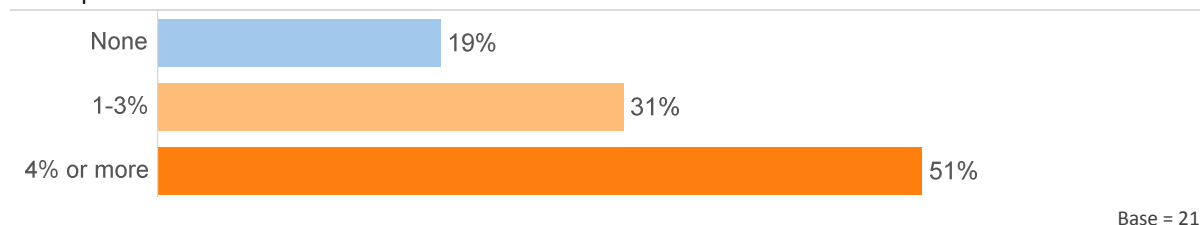


frequently selected option (25%). However, when the categories are combined (Chart 5) it can be seen that more than half of respondents (52%) were prepared to pay an increase of 4% or higher. Only 19% of respondents did not want any increase in council tax next year.

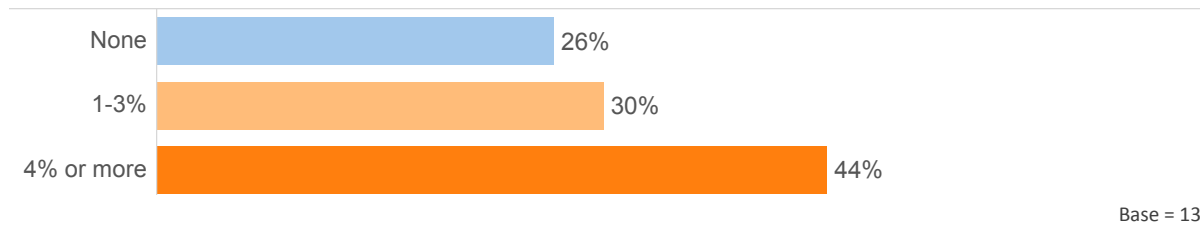
The overall pattern is the same for residents and employees, i.e. an increase of 4% or more is preferred (Chart 5). However, the proportion of residents who selected an increase of 4% or more is lower than the proportion of employees (44% compared to 62%). Also, a higher

**Chart 5 - Total level of Council Tax increase (inc. social care precept if agreed) - summary**

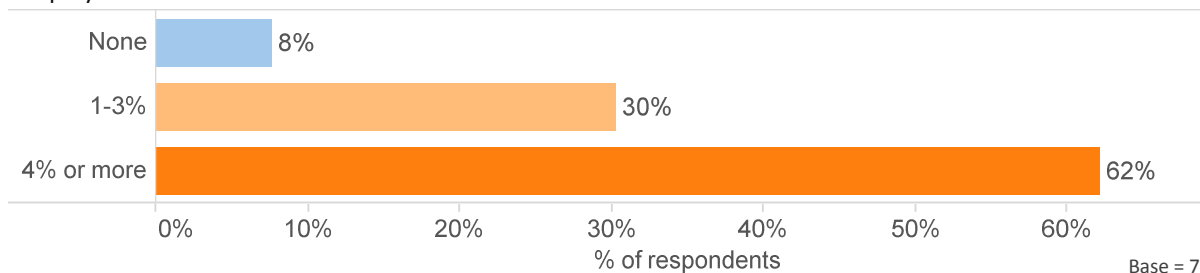
All respondents



Residents



Employees



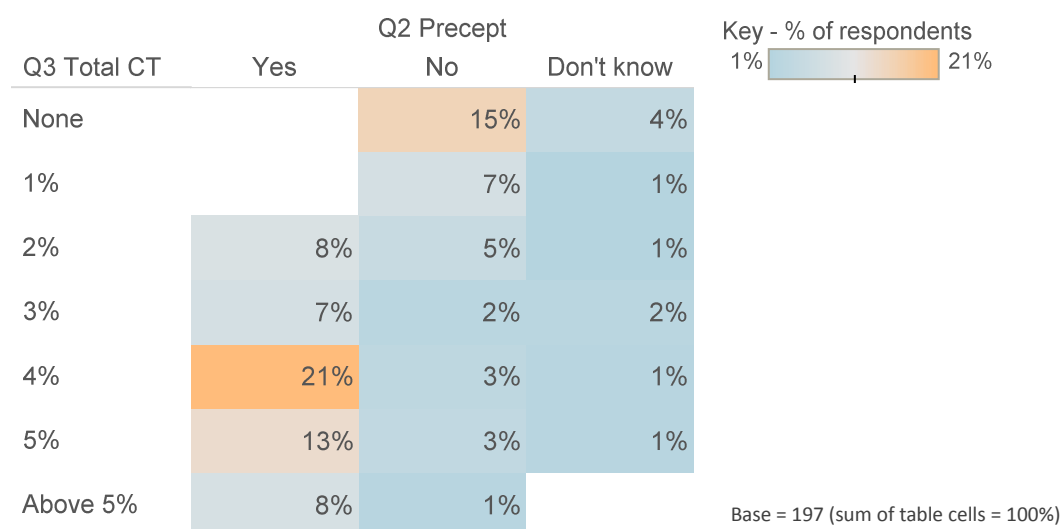
proportion of residents compared to employees said there should be no increase (26% compared to 8%).

Statistical analysis by demographic group shows that female respondents were more likely to agree with an increase of 4% or more, whereas male respondents were more likely to state that there should be no increase in council tax. It also shows that residents of the county who were not employees were more likely to state that there should be no increase in council tax, whereas employees who were not residents of the county were more likely to agree with an increase of 4% or more.

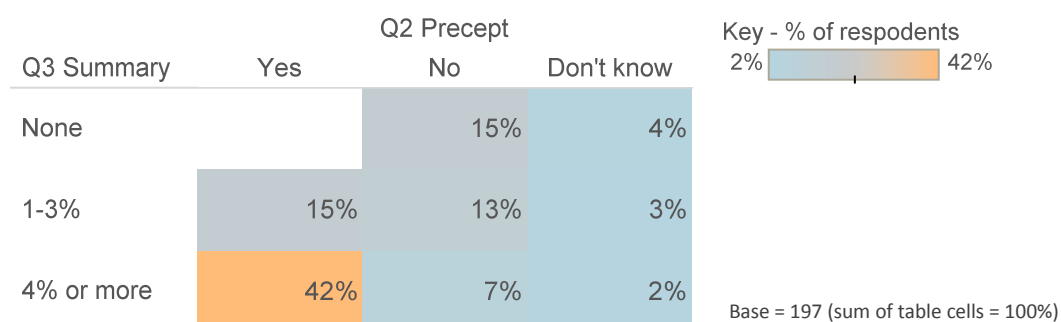
It is useful to look at how respondents answered both the social care precept question *and* the total council tax question. Charts 6 and 7 show the different combinations of responses to the two questions. The charts show that only 15% of respondents disagreed with the 2% social care precept *and* also said they did not want any council tax increase.

Chart 6 shows that the most popular response combination was ‘yes’ to the social care precept and then the selection of a 4% total council tax increase (including the 2% social care precept), which 21% of respondents chose.

**Chart 6 - Social care precept and total council tax increase**



**Chart 7 - Social care precept and total council tax increase - summary**



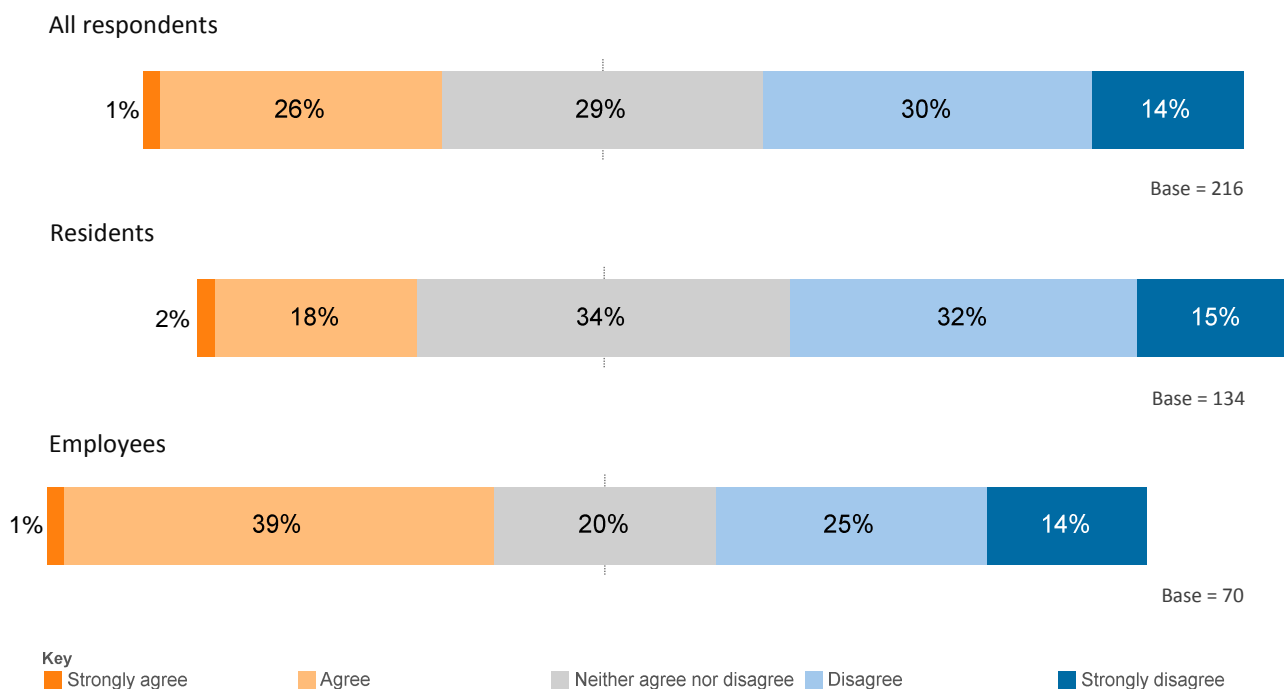
The charts also show that some who disagreed with the social care precept were still prepared to pay an increase in council tax (21% of all respondents), suggesting that they either thought any council tax increase should be less than 2% or that perhaps any income generated should be available across all services.

Chart 7 shows that, in summary, 42% of all respondents agreed with the social care precept and were prepared to pay a total council tax increase of 4% or higher.

#### Question 4 - 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 27% 'agreed', 44% 'disagreed', and 29% 'neither agreed nor disagreed' with how the budget had been allocated (Chart 8).

#### Chart 8 - Agreement/disagreement with how the budget has been allocated across services



A higher proportion of residents disagreed with how the budget had been allocated (47%) than agreed (20%). Employees, on the other hand, were more polarised, with 40% agreeing and 39% disagreeing. A higher proportion of residents than employees said they 'neither agreed nor disagreed' (34% compared to 20%).

Statistical analysis by demographic group showed that those respondents who cared for a person aged 17 or under were significantly more likely to disagree with how the budget has been allocated across services, and employees who were not a resident of the county were more likely to agree.

## Open-ended questions

The consultation survey included four open-ended questions. These were:

- Are there any specific service reductions you disagree with?
- 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?

As many of the questions are interlinked, the answers from respondents often spanned more than one question, for example, they may have made reference to services they did not want to see cut when identifying areas where they thought there could be further efficiency savings made. Therefore, the comments across all four questions have been read and coded together. Some comments contained more than one point of view - each specific point of view was coded using the coding frame. Three broad themes were identified, these were:

- Concerns about savings in certain areas
- Suggestions about making savings/efficiencies in certain areas
- Attitudes towards the budget, the consultation and other comments

These are explored in more detail below.

### Concerns about savings in certain areas

Chart 9 shows the coding of the open comments in this theme. The top seven comments are described in more detail below:

#### **Museums/ culture & leisure activities/ tourism (inc. Snibston) (24)**

Respondents disagreed with cuts to cultural services such as libraries and museums. The closure of Snibston Discovery Park and the decision not to replace this with a smaller mining museum was mentioned by 15 out of the 24 respondents, who said they were concerned about the effect on museums and culture.

*"The closure of educational and heritage sites outside of Leicester. The closure of Snibston Discovery Museum and its mining museum means that Coalville will lose its last links with the industry which founded it. They should stay open in order for the town to keep its heritage and identity."*

*"We are seeing massive reductions in the services we rely on for a quality of life that living in Leicestershire has always given before, Tidy towns - no litter, grass mown etc., leisure services, our libraries, museums, theatres etc. We need these things to enrich lives if not we will become a dull insular society."*

**Chart 9 - Concerns about savings in certain areas (coding of comments)**



### Consequences for social care & health (21)

Many respondents highlighted the risks of cutting services that may lead to increased costs in the future or for other services. Twenty-one respondents warned particularly of decisions, which may have long-term effects on services such as adult social care or the NHS. They were also concerned about the impact cuts may have on the general quality of life for individuals and communities.

*“Prevention is surely better than cure? Reductions in areas such as substance misuse and smoking and tobacco services could lead to preventable illness and premature deaths?”*

*“I understand the need to concentrate on those most at risk, but the dismantling of services that promote people's wellbeing, independence and quality of life worries me in that I feel it will only serve to cause problems further down the line.”*

### Libraries (20)

Twenty respondents opposed cuts to library services. These respondents were also more likely to mention that they disagreed with cuts to museums and other cultural services.

*“Reduction in library services. The most vulnerable people in our society depend on the*

*library, they may not speak to anybody all day but they can rely on a friendly greeting from the library. Libraries are also safe places for everyone. The library service reduces the burden on adult social care just by being there."*

*"Please do not cut the library service further. It is running on fresh air as it is."*

### **Public transport (16)**

Cuts to public transport were mentioned as a concern by 16 respondents, who were often worried about the impact of these cuts on those living in rural areas and vulnerable people who may not be able to drive.

*"The local transport plan suggests cuts in subsidised bus services but increased isolation can lead to mental and physical health problems and the ability to get out and about could be seen as a form of prevention. Similarly the right to free travel by bus pass is good for older people but only if bus services are available near to where they live. The use of a bus pass by people who can otherwise get about triggers journeys which would not otherwise be made which helps make some routes commercially viable or in need of reduced subsidy and helps keep services for those who do really need them."*

*"Cutting bus subsidies will impact on the elderly and people with disabilities and those who live in isolated rural areas. The numbers of buses will be cut during the day without the subsidy and all those affected will become more isolated, feel less well and need more support at home. This will impact on the adult social care budget."*

### **Young people/ children & families (14)**

Fourteen respondents expressed opposition to cuts that affect children, young people and families.

*"Cuts to the services offered to young people, and grant schemes offered to organisations with a vested interest in young people, are too far reaching and short sighted."*

*"I hugely disagree with the cut in Children's Social Care - particularly that for disabled children. Cutting the number of Short Breaks and changing the criteria for Direct Payment, will greatly affect families and will, in the medium and long term, cost LCC more as they have to provide crisis care rather than planned expenditure."*

*"Adoption services in particular are unable to cope with demand and are not providing the service needed for adopted children."*

### **Consequences (various & undefined) (11)**

As noted above, many respondents expressed concern about the consequences of the cuts that are proposed. In eleven cases, it was not further specified in which areas these consequences would be felt.

*"The short-term savings that are being proposed now will simply cost society more in the long-term as problems are pushed elsewhere for other sectors to deal with. The lack of any cohesive long-term thinking is an outrage."*

*"The loss of libraries will have long term adverse consequences."*

### **Road & highway maintenance/ transport (general) (11)**

Eleven respondents commented that they disagreed with cuts to transport and road maintenance and that this area should be prioritised.

*"There should be no reduction in roads and transport maintenance due to the increase in road traffic, Central Government, who get the funding from road taxes should allocate more to Leicestershire for the care of roads."*

*"I am concerned about reductions to highways and transport."*

*"Highways maintenance, safety, signing, inspections, quality of repairs has been poor in the last 5 years resulting in repeat works."*

### **Suggestions about making savings/efficiencies in certain areas**

Chart 10 shows the coding of the open comments in this theme. The top seven comments are described in more detail below:

#### **Management/ higher grade salaries: Cut salary, positions (29)**

Many respondents felt that cuts should be made in the running of the council and 29 proposed that this should happen by reducing the overall number of managers or reducing the salaries of managers and those with high salaries.

*"I would strongly suggest that senior council officers (including the Chief Executive) consider a salary cut. This would not only save money in administration, it would make a positive statement in terms of supporting or showing empathy [for] those members of staff who will sadly be losing their jobs."*

*"Top level management to take a tiered pay cut. (Grade 15+), 1% year one, 1% Year two"*

#### **Inefficiency: Staff performance & hiring decisions (21)**

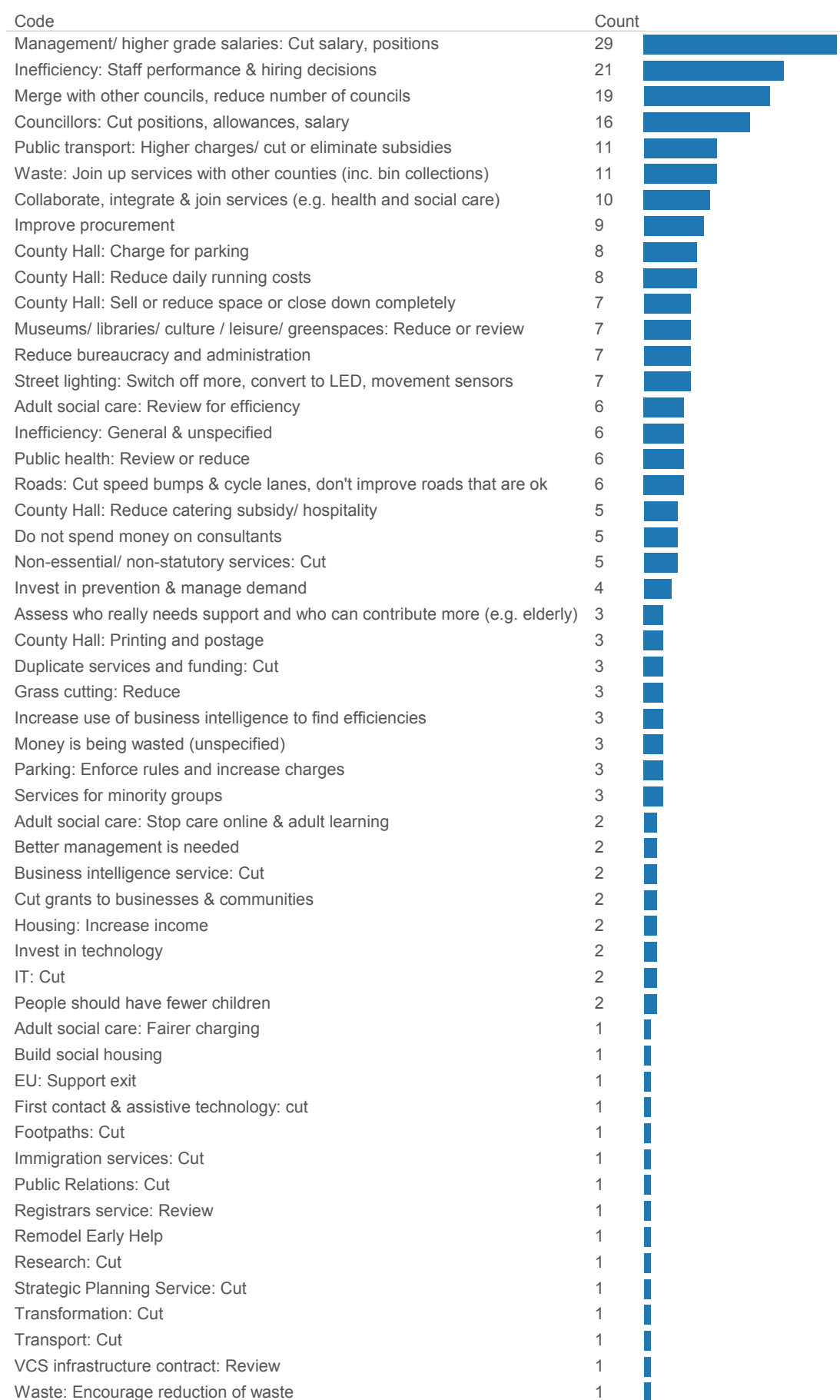
Closely related to the topic of management pay, staff in general was seen as an area where money is being wasted. Suggestions around staff cuts were varied amongst these 21 respondents. Whilst some proposed staff cuts in general or the use of volunteers in order to reduce costs, others commented that this was not necessarily the best approach and that hiring decisions had to be made more strategically. For instance, the hiring of agency staff was criticised. Others suggested a change in overall working hours per week or the alteration of employment terms and conditions.

*"There may be savings to be had by reducing the need for staff by making more use of voluntary help. They will need some support and direction but if officers could learn to trust the voluntary sector there is a lot of experience about in the retired population still fit enough and willing to undertake some roles."*

*"You cut staff to save money in all public sector jobs and then end up having to employ agency staff who cost more to hire than the people you already had employed"*

*"Make redundant some of the old retainers that simply do not do their job and employ*

**Chart 10 - Suggestions about making savings/efficiencies in certain areas (coding of comments)**





*some young enthusiastic people who would cost considerably less and bring a fresh approach to the council's services."*

*"Is it worth considering a reduction to the working week from 37 to 35 hours and amend the pay accordingly. This would give the council a huge saving."*

*"Get rid of staff who don't do their jobs properly and efficiently."*

### **Merge with other councils, reduce number of councils (19)**

Many respondents suggested that working more closely with other councils or counties could reduce costs. Nineteen respondents commented specifically, that a reduction in the number of councils should be considered.

*"Combine the city and county councils (as it was years ago) this would reduce the amount of buildings and staff needed and free up more money for essential things."*

*"Create unitary authorities in Leicestershire. It seems mad that borough councils join up with other borough councils in other authorities and not within Leicestershire."*

*"It seems to me that the scale of cuts you are faced with is so extreme that you have to consider a totally different approach to local government service provision in the county. As well as the county council there are 7 district councils also facing severe funding cuts. There should be fewer councils. I would suggest two unitary authorities - one in north Leicestershire based in Loughborough and one in south Leicestershire based in Market Harborough. You could then sell the County Hall site for housing which would raise about £40m."*

### **Councillors: Cut positions, allowances, salary (16)**

Along with cuts to management and staff, many participants felt that savings could be made by cutting the overall number of councillors or reducing their salary and allowances. This was seen to be a financial consideration but respondents also commented that councillors should lead by example.

*"There should be a significant reduction in the number of Councillors and their allowances. There are less staff/services/money to oversee, so why do you need the same number of Councillors at the top? They should lead by example."*

*"The allowances to Councillors be reduced by the increase in Council Tax i.e. 3.9%. All allowances above the basic allowance i.e. special responsibilities, be limited to £1,000, and no payment of more than one special allowance irrespective of the special responsibilities."*

### **Public transport: Higher charges/ cut or eliminate subsidies (11)**

Eleven respondents suggested that efficiencies should be made in the provision of public transport. Free transport should only be provided for those most at need, such as disabled school children or elderly people without a car. Free bus travel for the elderly should be stopped and individuals should instead pay a small fee towards each trip or pay to receive their free passes.

*"Free unrestricted bus travel is no longer affordable and needs to be limited in its*

*application, travel on a free card should be limited to travel within the county boundaries, I know of people who travel for pleasure as far away as Scotland because it is free, not an abuse apparently as it is allowed, but hardly within the spirit of subsidised travel. I also believe that a fixed payment of 50p for each subsidised travel journey is fair and affordable and could be easily managed by the bus providers."*

*"Subsidy to bus operators, buses that serve my locality on the whole are empty or single figure occupancy, most families have at least 1 car nowadays. The public transport service is so unreliable."*

**Waste: Increase charges/ reduce bin collections/ join services with other counties (11)**

There was some confusion about district and county responsibilities with regard to waste services. Eleven respondents felt that efficiency savings could be made by joining up waste services over a larger geographical area, increasing charges for individuals or reducing bin collection frequency.

*"Waste collection. Partnerships with Derbyshire, Notts, Northants etc. should pool resources. Why does each county require its own waste department when a single larger one can do that job more cost effectively."*

*"Reducing black waste collection to every three weeks. If managed correctly recycling rates should increase therefore creating extra revenue for both the councils & the service provider."*

*"Charge for waste permits"*

**Collaborate, integrate & join services (e.g. health and social care) (10)**

Respondents suggested that services should be joined up in order to reduce costs. This included suggestions to merge services between different districts, combine departments and integrate services such as health and social care.

*"Explore if departments can be merged - e.g. A&C with Public Health, Chief Execs with Corporate Resources?"*

*"Ensure that health and social care are better integrated and that care in the community is supported."*

*"Further integration with local partners including other local authorities and NHS partners such as CCGs."*

### Attitudes towards the budget, the consultation and other comments

Chart 11 shows the coding of the open comments in this theme. The top four comments are described in more detail below:

#### The council has difficult decisions to make (13)

Many respondents expressed that they understood the difficult position the council was in and were sympathetic. These comments were often accompanied by the view that central government was to blame and that Leicestershire had been unfairly treated in the grant allocation.

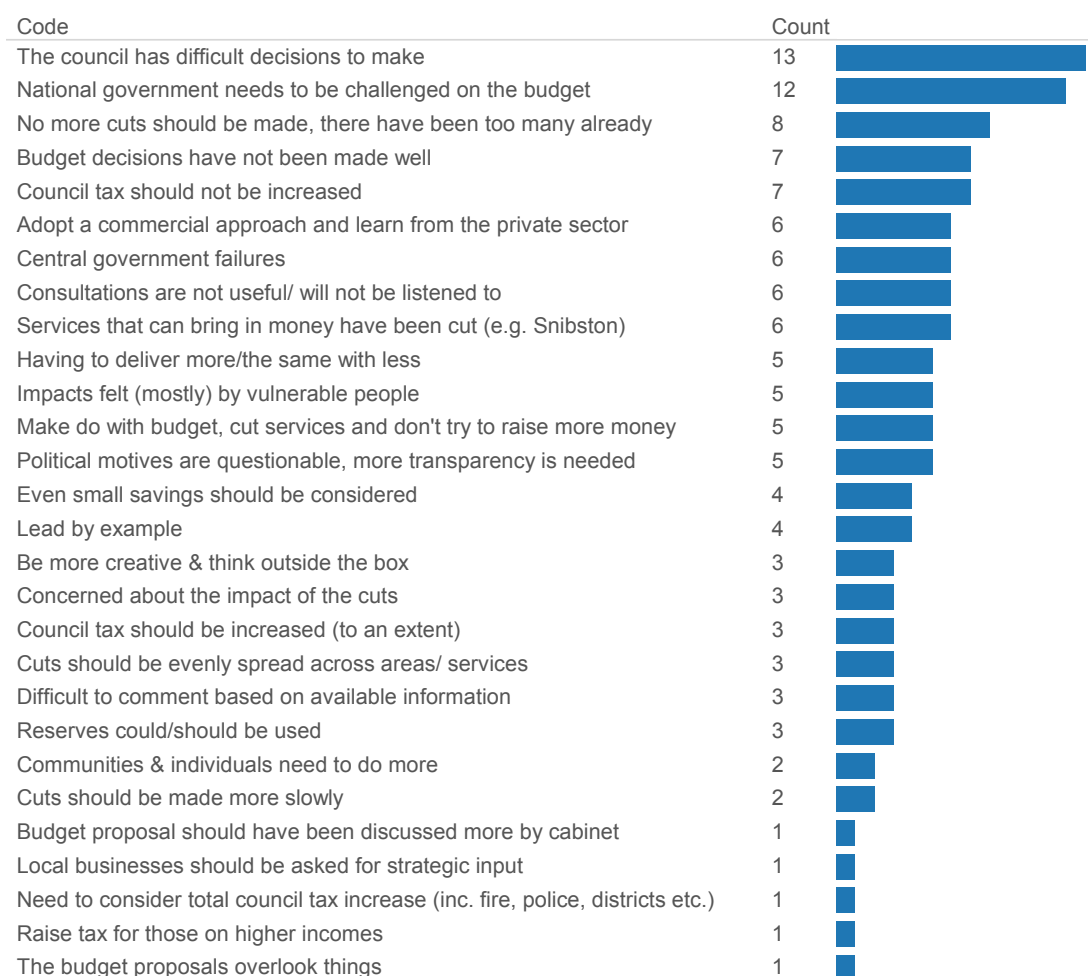
*"You are obviously struggling with very difficult financial constraints imposed on you by an uncaring government."*

*"You have a hard job to do and are making the best of it."*

*"Only that I appreciate the situation and find it immensely worrying for the future of the people of Leicestershire - and frustrating that our local MPs seem to want to wash their hands of it."*

*"Unfortunately not - it has to be done - but it is most unfair that Leicestershire is hit so hard."*

**Chart 11 - Attitudes towards the budget, the consultation and other comments (coding of comments)**



### **National government needs to be challenged on the budget (12)**

Following on from the above theme, twelve respondents suggested that the grant allocations by central government should be challenged and the council should not just accept what they had been given.

*"No! How about standing up to the government and asking for a fair share of the budget rather than being the worst funded council in the country."*

*"I understand the unfair distribution of government monies to councils and I would hope you are doing more than lobbying the 'string pullers'. I suggest threaten the government that we will go bankrupt rather than inflict these grossly inflated increases on Council Tax payers."*

*"No - the county council must tell the government that before the government asks for cut backs on services MPs salaries must be cut , their expenses reduced and attendance fees for the Lords cut , waste of government spending must end or ministers replaced . Why should children, old folk the poor and unemployed suffer when MPs are rolling in it."*

### **No more cuts should be made, there have been too many already (8)**

Respondents expressed their dismay at the scope of cuts that have already been made and felt that a limit had been reached and further cuts were not acceptable. This often went along with comments that the budget should not be blindly accepted but that the council should instead challenge central government and request better funding.

*"Services have been reduced too much already, soon there won't be any public services left."*

*"Is there any point where the council simply cannot make any more savings? What happens then? Only certain services are legal requirements but the county would surely be a worse place if only the bare minimum was provided."*

### **Budget decisions have not been made well (7)**

Conversely, about the same number of respondents made it clear that they were not satisfied with the way in which decisions have been made so far.

*"They are the difficult decisions you were elected to make, it's poor management simply to chase more money. Reduce services."*

*"Honestly I cannot understand the logic behind the people who make these incredibly stupid decisions."*

*"Don't you fools get it - No No No to any rise in Council tax. Inflation is near zero % and this unimaginative council is bereft of any ideas other than to pour more tax payers' money down the drain. The very fact that a rise is being tabled by this administration shows they have failed to properly embrace the austerity situation and have not learned ANY lessons. An utter dereliction of duty by a management team bereft of any skill or imagination."*

### **Council tax should not be increased (7)**

Seven respondents expressed their opposition to a rise in council tax. Stating that savings needed to be made instead of trying to secure additional funds for the council. It was also commented that an increase in council tax would be difficult to afford for people whose incomes have been negatively affected over the last years.

*"Savings must be made to ensure that there are no increases in council tax."*

*"As many of us have received no or very low pay increases in the last few years where are we supposed to find the extra cash to pay the hike in council tax?"*

*"We have been given a 5 year break from tax increases, you now want to bump it up by 4%, it seems pointless to me having the break, it would've been better to keep a consistent increase rather than nothing for 5 years then a 4% jump out of nowhere."*

### **Other consultation responses**

In addition to the survey, letters were received from the Leicester Shire Business Council and the East Midlands Chamber (see Appendix 3). Both organisations recognised the scale of the challenge and the external pressures facing the council, particularly the continuing reductions in grant from central government. The Business Council commended the council's efforts and was impressed by the aspirations in the re-organisation of adult social care. They were also supportive of the council's initiative to adopt a more commercial approach. However, they thought that the council becoming a commercial supplier of goods and services would be ill-advised.

The East Midlands Chamber expressed the hope that the county council and other authorities would work closely with the business community to understand the needs of businesses and how they can be supported for growth. They argued that the relationship between business growth and a financially robust and sustainable authority must be a central consideration when considering future spending and savings, particularly given the potential changes to business rates retention and pooling. They were also keen to stress the importance of a well-managed transport system as a key facilitator of growth and they urged the council to be bold and joined-up in its thinking around transport management and improvement projects.

The Business Council expressed support for the work of the LLEP and their role in enhancing the area's ability to create wealth, and they want to see the council continue to support their work. However, they also expressed disappointment in the council's proposed reduction in funding of tourism promotion because of the link with local wealth creation and employment. The Business Council also raised concerns about the impact of changes to parking and trade waste on local businesses.

Both the Business Council and the East Midlands Chamber stated that they were keen to be consulted on future plans, particularly around the business support budget, parking and also the council's intention to have a more commercial focus.

## Appendix 1 - Respondent profile

Age	Survey Responses			2011 Census (16+)
	217	% Inc NR*	% Ex NR*	%
15-24	2	0.9%	1.1%	14.3%
25-34	25	11.5%	13.2%	13.2%
35-44	41	18.9%	21.6%	17.2%
45-54	50	23.0%	26.3%	17.8%
55-64	31	14.3%	16.3%	15.9%
65-74	32	14.7%	16.8%	11.6%
75-84	6	2.8%	3.2%	7.2%
85 and over	3	1.4%	1.6%	2.9%
No reply	27	12.4%		

Gender	Survey Responses			2011 Census (16+)
	217	% Inc NR*	% Ex NR*	%
Male	106	48.8%	52.0%	49.0%
Female	98	45.2%	48.0%	51.0%
No reply	13	6.0%		

Do you have a long-standing illness or disability?*	Survey Responses			2011 Census (16+)
	217	% Inc NR*	% Ex NR*	%
Yes	26	13.1%	15.0%	19.1%
No	147	73.9%	85.0%	80.9%
No reply	26	13.1%		

\*2011 Census asks if respondents day-to-day activities are limited a lot

Ethnicity	Survey Responses			2011 Census (16+)
	217	% Inc NR*	% Ex NR*	%
White	180	82.9%	94.2%	92.2%
Mixed	1	0.5%	0.5%	0.8%
Asian or Asian British	6	2.8%	3.1%	6.0%
Black or Black British	1	0.5%	0.5%	0.6%
Other ethnic group	3	1.4%	1.6%	0.4%
No reply	26	12.0%		

Sexual orientation	Survey Responses			2011 Census (16+)
	217	% Inc NR*	% Ex NR8	%
Bisexual	6	2.8%	3.4%	(Not applicable)
Gay	7	3.2%	3.9%	
Heterosexual/straight	161	74.2%	89.9%	
Lesbian	0	0.0%	0.0%	
Other	5	2.3%	2.8%	
No reply	38	17.5%		

\*NR = No reply

## Leicestershire's future - Consultation on draft financial plan 2016-20

What is your religion?	217	Survey Responses		2011 Census (16+)
		% Inc NR*	% Ex NR*	%
No religion	88	40.4%	46.3%	25.3%
Christian (All denominations)	89	40.8%	46.8%	62.6%
Buddhist	2	0.9%	1.1%	0.3%
Hindu	3	1.4%	1.6%	2.8%
Jewish	2	0.9%	1.1%	0.1%
Muslim	1	0.5%	0.5%	1.2%
Sikh	1	0.5%	0.5%	1.2%
Any other religion or belief	4	1.8%	2.1%	0.4%
No reply	28	12.8%		6.3%

Are you a parent or carer of a young person aged 17 or under?	217	Survey Responses		2011 Census (16+)
		% Inc NR*	% Ex NR*	%
Yes	57	26.3%	28.8%	(Census data includes all people cared for regardless of age)
No	141	65.0%	71.2%	
No reply	19	8.8%		

Are you a carer of a person aged 18 or over?	217	Survey Responses		2011 Census (16+)
		% Inc NR*	% Ex NR*	%
Yes	25	11.5%	12.9%	(Census data includes all people cared for regardless of age)
No	169	77.9%	87.1%	
No reply	23	10.6%		

District	217	Survey Responses		2011 Census (16+)
		% Inc NR*	% Ex NR*	%
Blaby	33	15.2%	20.0%	14.3%
Charnwood	52	24.0%	31.5%	25.9%
Harborough	18	8.3%	10.9%	12.9%
Hinckley & Bosworth	18	8.3%	10.9%	16.2%
Melton	10	4.6%	6.1%	7.7%
North West Leicestershire	29	13.4%	17.6%	14.2%
Oadby & Wigston	5	2.3%	3.0%	8.7%
Missing/Invalid Postcode	43	19.8%		
Leicester	5	2.3%		
Other	4	1.8%		

\*NR = No reply

## Appendix 2 - Questionnaire



# Have your say on our draft budget plans 2016 - 2020

## Background

In 2013 we consulted you on budget reductions and new ways of working and asked for your views on our spending plans. Your views were taken into account when the 2014-2018 and 2015-2019 budgets were set.

Since then the financial situation has worsened.

This worsening situation has been reflected in our draft budget for 2016-20, which includes further savings to meet new pressures over the next four years.

The draft budget for 2016-20 has now been published for consultation.

If you have any comments about the draft budget proposals, we would like to hear from you. Your views will be taken into consideration when the council finalises its spending plans. We would encourage you to read the summary document before completing the survey.

---

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 'other' below



## Our proposals

Council Tax was frozen by the county council in four of the last five years. Last year there was an increase of 2%. The county council is planning to increase Council Tax by 4% next year (2016/17).

The proposed 4% increase would include a 2% 'social care precept' which the Government introduced to allow local authorities to raise additional council tax to be used exclusively for the funding of services for vulnerable adults. It is proposed that the other 2% is used to help cover the costs of increasing demand and reduce the need to make service reductions in other areas.

The Council Tax bill for county council services in 2015/16 is currently £1,084 per year for a band D property\*. An increase of 4% would mean an average increase in Council Tax of £43 per year on that bill (or £3.60 per month).

Every additional 1% increase in Council Tax generates an additional £2.3m 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 (or £0.92 per month) on their Council Tax bill.

Under current Government rules a local referendum would need to be held for any increase above 2% (or 4% including the 2% 'social care precept'). It is estimated that it would cost £1m to hold a referendum..

\*The Valuation Office decides which council tax band a property is in. It is based on what the property's market value was on 1 April 1991. For a band D property this was between £68,001 to £88,000.

**Q2** Do you think the county council should accept the government proposal of increasing council tax by 2% to be used exclusively for the funding of adult social care in Leicestershire?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

The county council is proposing an additional 2% on top of the 2% 'social care precept' to help cover the costs of increasing demand and reduce the need to make service reductions in other areas.

**Q3** In total, what Council Tax increase would you be prepared to pay (including the 2% 'social care precept' if you agreed to this in the question above)? The figures in brackets show what this increase would be next year for a household in a band D property.

- None
- 1% (an additional £11)
- 2% (an additional £22).
- 3% (an additional £33)
- 4% (an additional £43) - the council's proposed increase (including the 2% 'social care precept')
- 5% (an additional £54)
- Above 5%

Q4 Overall, to what extent do you agree or disagree with how the budget has been allocated across our services?

- |                          |                          |                            |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 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"/> |

Q5 Are there any specific service reductions you disagree with?

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 a Freedom of Information request.

Q9 Are you male or female?

- Male  
 Female

Q10 Gender Identity: A person has an internal, deeply held sense of their own gender. For trans people, their own sense of who they are does not match the sex that society assigns to them when they are born.

Is your gender identity the same as the gender you were assigned at birth?

- Yes  
 No

Q11 What was your age on your last birthday?

Q12 What is your postcode? This will help us understand views in different areas

Q13 Are you a parent/carer of a child or young person aged 17 or under?

Yes

No

Q14 Are you a carer of a person aged 18 or over?

Yes

No

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

Q15 Do you have any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity?

Yes

No

Q16 What is your ethnic group?

White

Asian or Asian British

Other ethnic group

Mixed

Black or Black British

Q17 What is your religion or belief?

No religion

Buddhist

Muslim

Christian (all denominations)

Hindu

Sikh

Jewish

Any other religion or belief

Q18 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

Heterosexual / Straight

Other

Gay

Lesbian

**Thank you for your time. Your views will be considered before the budget is finalised in February. Please return by midnight on Monday 25th January 2016 to:** Budget Consultation, Room 300B, Leicestershire County Council, Have Your Say, FREEPOST NAT 18685, Leicester, LE3 8XR. No stamp is required

**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

#### **Budget Consultation – Leicestershire County Council 2016-17**

We are struck by the scale of challenge the Council is undertaking in seeking to make savings building up to almost £60 million per annum by 2019/20. The management effort required to achieve this level of change will be huge, and is to be commended.

We are particularly impressed by the aspirations in the re-organisation of adult social care, a topic we have commented on in previous years. To seek to realise annual savings of £18.5 million in the face of rising demand is also impressive.

There are a few areas of concern to us, however.

#### **1. Commercial income.**

We note that the Council is developing plans to increase “Commercial income” by £2million p.a. by 2019/20. We understand that there are several strands to this project. To the extent that this income arises from a more commercial approach to the way the Council charges for its services and manages its contracts and assets, we support this initiative.

We voice a concern, however, that temptations may arise under current circumstances for the Council to generate revenue by trading on its own account as a commercial supplier of goods or services. We would regard any moves in this direction to be ill-advised and counter-productive, and would seek further consultation on the issue should it arise.

#### **2. Economic Development**

We note that there is a projected saving of £300k p.a. sought from “Stop providing funding for economic development activity to external agencies”. We understand that this contains two main elements;

- a. A relatively small (£56k) amount of money to the LLEP. While small in the overall scheme of things, we would be very concerned indeed if this were a token of an attitude within the Council whereby the LLEP was seen as an “external agency” rather than an integral part of the local mechanism enhancing the area’s ability to create the wealth on which this budget, and much else, depends.
- b. The majority of the balance arises from reduction in funding of tourism promotion. Recognising that tourism is agreed by the Council and the LLEP to be a key sector for the development of the local economy, we are disappointed at this reduction in the Council’s support for the development of this major source of local wealth creation and employment.

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

### 3. Parking

We note a goal of raising £600k p.a. from a "County-wide parking strategy". To the extent that this strategy may include introduction of/increases in parking charges in shopping areas, we would warn that the state of "the High Street" is so fragile, to a large extent exacerbated by the impact of business rates, that such action could well be counter-productive. Now that the Council will be in a position to retain business rates, there is a real danger that parking initiatives will shrink the business rating base faster than they raise parking income.

We also note reference to potential charging for on-street parking. We draw the Council's attention to Leicester City's experience of residential parking schemes in the vicinity of shopping areas. These had the unintended consequences of sharply reducing parking capacity for shoppers with a direct effect on trade. We therefore urge the Council to undertake detailed consultation with businesses prior to implementation of such schemes.

### 4. Trade waste

We note a projected increase in revenue of £150k p.a. from trade waste. To the extent that this increase arises from upping charges, we suggest that it may be counter-productive by further incentivising fly-tipping.

Whetstone is the only depot that accepts much trade waste. This is distant, inconvenient and expensive for businesses in many parts of the County. As a counter proposal, we suggest that the Council considers making it easier for businesses to dispose of trade waste by making more facilities capable of accepting it. We believe that easier access would reduce fly-tipping, increase volumes thereby increasing income, and offer businesses a sense of better value in the face of any increase in charging rates.

**Tim Watt**  
Chairman

**21 January 2016**

Leicester: 1 Mill Lane, Leicester, LE2 7HU  
 0333 320 0333 | info@emc-dnl.co.uk | www.emc-dnl.co.uk  
 @EMChamberNews



25th January 2016

**East Midlands Chamber (Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire) response to Leicestershire County Council Budget Consultation, from 2016-2020**

East Midlands Chamber (Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire) is the second largest Chamber in the country, with 3,800 members. It is the leading voice for business across the East Midlands and its members come from across the business sectors. In Leicestershire and Leicester the Chamber has over 800 business members.

**Chamber comments in response to proposed financial plan 2016-2020**

The Chamber welcomes the opportunity to respond to the draft financial plan. It recognises the external pressures faced in creating this financial plan, with continued reductions in funding from central Government. The Chamber also acknowledges the previous years in which the County Council has successfully reduced expenditure while an environment in Leicestershire conducive to business growth has been maintained. This has been demonstrated by recent UK-leading employment and investment figures in the county.

The best way to secure long-term, sustainable growth, is to support and encourage businesses that are looking to expand in the county. Growth in this respect brings jobs, investment and puts more money into the local economy, which in turn creates more opportunities for others and reduces the demands on some council services. Under potential changes to how business rates retention and pooling will operate business success in Leicestershire over the coming four years will directly translate into greater income for both the county and individual districts and boroughs within it.

The above, coupled with the proposal for a combined authority and the potential changes this will bring for coordinating growth efforts across the county, means that now more than ever the County Council and its constituent authorities need to be working closely with the business community to understand its needs and how it can be best supported for growth. This relationship between business growth and a financially robust and sustainable authority must be a central consideration when considering future spending and savings – at present it is not clear whether the proposals are wholly cognisant of this point.

The Chamber acknowledges the forecast savings of £58.8m over the period, and the fact that just under 50% of this comes from efficiencies, with an emphasis on becoming more digital as an authority.

.....Continued

Our Patrons:



Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ltd (incorporating Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce and Industry), trading as East Midlands Chamber (Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire). Registered office: Commerce Centre, Canal Wharf, Chesterfield, S41 7NA. Registered No. 1785710 Limited by Guarantee.



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There is currently relatively little information available under proposed savings from business support budget – this is something the Chamber would like to have further consultation on, whether this is through the Transformation Programme or otherwise.

A key facilitator of growth is an accessible and well managed transport system and the Chamber recognises the commitment in the proposals to Transport Asset Management and the five major schemes, supported by the LEP. In particular, investment in major schemes not only unlocks future growth, it also creates direct jobs in the construction phase and enhances productivity through smoother flowing traffic. As far as is possible, the Chamber would urge the County to be both bold and joined-up in its thinking around transport management and improvement projects.

**Thank you again for the opportunity to respond to this consultation. To discuss this submission further please contact Chris Hobson, Director of Policy and External Affairs, [chris.hobson@emc-dnl.co.uk](mailto:chris.hobson@emc-dnl.co.uk) / 07764 431025.**

Our Patrons:



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## 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

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Web: [www.lsr-online.org](http://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 ઓવરશ્યા કરીશું.

નેવર ટ્રવાનું દિસ જાણવારી નું સમજણ દિચ રુઝ મદદ ચાહીદી રૈ ઝાં વિરખા વરવે 0116 305 6803 નંબર ડે ફોન કરે અડે અસીં ટ્રવાડી મદદ છદી વિસે ડા પૂર્ષય વર દવાંગો।

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 اور ہم آپ کی مدد کے لئے کسی کا انتظام کر دیں گے۔ 0116 305 6803

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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