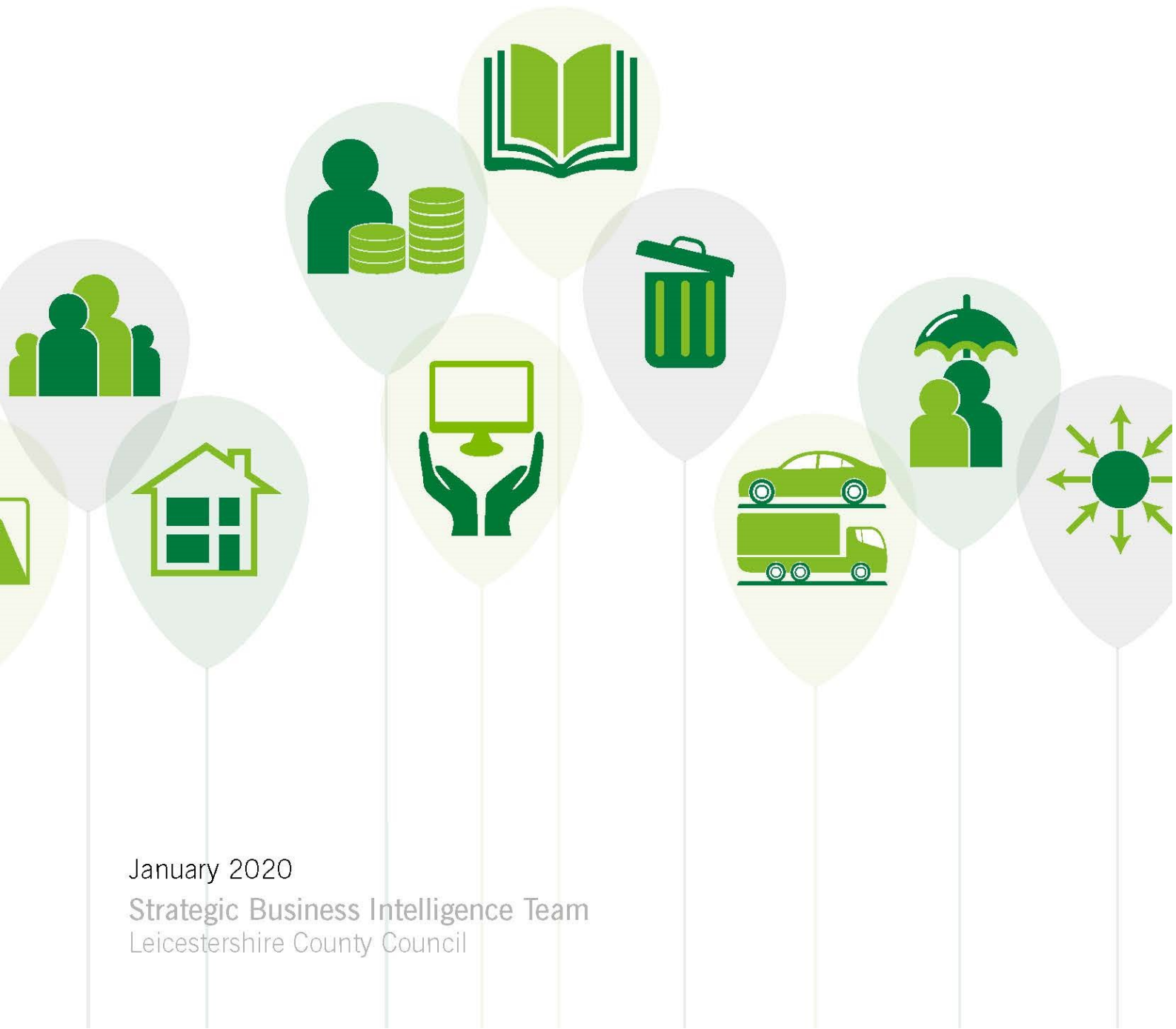


Provisional Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020-2024

Public 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

In total, 239 responses were received to the consultation survey, of which 65% were residents of Leicestershire and 60% were employees of Leicestershire County Council.

Excluding any social care precept, over a quarter of respondents (28%) were in favour of paying a Council Tax increase of 4% to fund county council services and 29% favoured an increase of 3%. A similar proportion (27%) were in favour of a 2% increase. Only 4% of respondents wanted a 1% increase, 9% preferred Council Tax to be frozen and 3% for Council Tax to be reduced.

Six in ten respondents (60%) were in favour of increasing Council Tax by a further 2% to fund adult social care in Leicestershire (the social care precept). However, the majority of residents (and not LCC employees) opposed the social care precept (58%).

By combining the responses to the questions about Council Tax and social care precept, 26% of respondents were in favour of a 6% increase in Council Tax (including the social care precept), 20% were in favour of a 5% increase and 17% preferred a 4% increase.

When respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with how the growth and savings had been allocated across services, 36% agreed and 32% disagreed (31% neither agreed nor disagreed).

Open comments regarding service reductions highlighted some key areas of concern, particularly service cuts to SEND and social care (adults or children's). Other responses reflected criticism of the proposal to increase Council Tax at a time of service reduction. Although many respondents indicated that they could not identify any areas where further efficiency savings could be made, several suggested that staff expenditure and highway maintenance expenditure were potential areas for savings. Some respondents suggested improving the council's approach to specific issues, including climate change and more generally its approach to budget management and service reductions.

Whilst several respondents were in agreement about the areas identified for growth, some expressed general concerns over the proposals to increase Council Tax to fund growth and the extra expenditure required to support new housing developments within the county. Others felt the council should plan to prioritise protecting SEND and social care services.

When respondents were asked for their comments on the council's capital programme, several expressed their support. Others felt the capital programme was a good idea providing it was used appropriately and spent wisely.

With regards to fairer funding, the majority of respondents (81%) agreed that the way funding is distributed between councils should be reviewed and several themes were identified within the open comments. Positive responses reflected the view that Leicestershire specifically is under-funded, that the current distribution of funding is unfair, and that the formula used to determine funding is outdated. Several respondents were concerned about the impact of maintaining the current funding arrangement.

In addition to the survey responses, a separate submission was received from the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP). The LLEP recognised the financial pressures facing the authority and outlined its support for the proposals, particularly those promoting economic growth.

Background

Leicestershire County Council's latest four year plan outlines the extremely challenging financial position facing the authority.

The draft four-year plan sets out the need for £80m of savings but also £16m of investment in tackling climate change, an extra £34m to support vulnerable people and £7m next year to top up road maintenance budgets.

To try and limit further cuts to services, the plans propose a Council Tax increase of 3.99%, which includes a 2% adult social care precept. The council also aim to make a range of one-off investments to support infrastructure for new homes features in the £600m capital programme.

The provisional Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020-24 reflects the above context and the consultation exercise on the budget plan was designed to provide an 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 and survey form were made available on the county council's website for the duration of the consultation period of 18th December 2019 to 19th January 2020.

This provided the opportunity for residents, staff, parish councils, stakeholders and other audiences to have their say. Paper copies of the survey and copies in alternative formats (including easy read) were initially available on request. However, following feedback received during the consultation an Easy Read version was also added to the website. The consultation was promoted to the East Midlands Chamber of Commerce (and via them to their members), the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership, Parish Councils and the Leicestershire Equalities Challenge Group.

Communication

A range of communications activity was used throughout the consultation period to encourage people to have their say, including: online content, intranet stories, Yammer posts, media releases (Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn posts) and direct emails to staff and businesses. This generated engagement across social media platforms and wide-ranging press coverage, and ultimately, helped to generate 239 responses.

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 comments about the areas identified for growth?
- Do you have any comments on the council's capital programme?
- Do you have any other comments about our draft budget proposals?

The questionnaire included a question on fair funding, asking respondents to what extent they agreed or disagreed that the way funding is distributed between councils should be reviewed. Respondents were also provided an opportunity to add comments to their response.

A range of demographic questions were also asked, namely: gender, gender identity at birth, 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 1 for the full questionnaire.

Analysis

Graphs and tables have been used to assist explanation and analysis. Question results have been reported based on those who provided a valid response, i.e. taking out the 'don't know' responses and no replies.

The responses of different demographic groups were also statistically analysed and significant differences are highlighted within the relevant sections of the report. See Appendix 4 for the full statistical analysis.

Results

In total, 239 responses to the survey were received.

Respondent profile

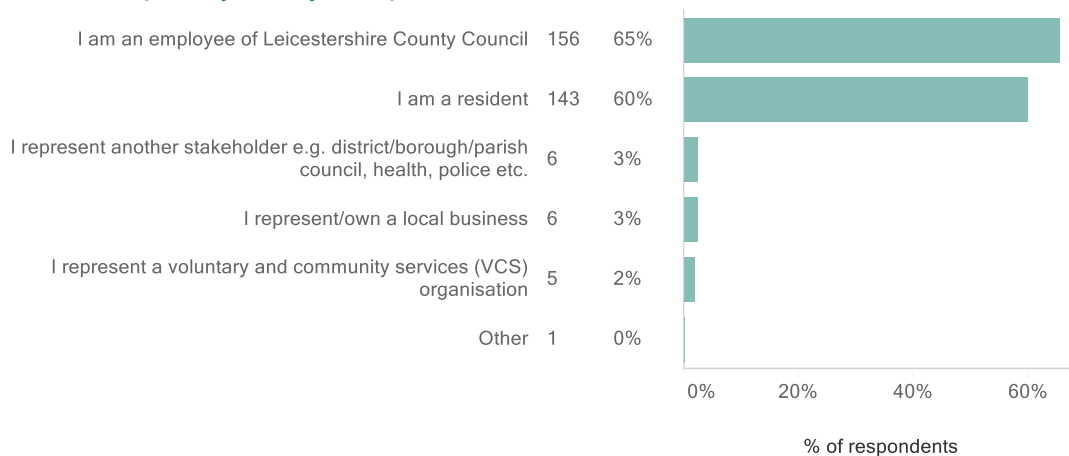
A full respondent profile can be found in Appendix 2.

Question 1 - Role

Respondents were asked in what capacity they were responding to the survey. Chart 1 below shows the breakdown. It shows that almost two thirds of people who completed the survey were responding as residents (65%) and over half were employees of Leicestershire County Council (LCC) (60%). Chart 2 shows 30% of respondents were residents but not employees of LCC, 36% were LCC employees and not residents, and 30% were both.

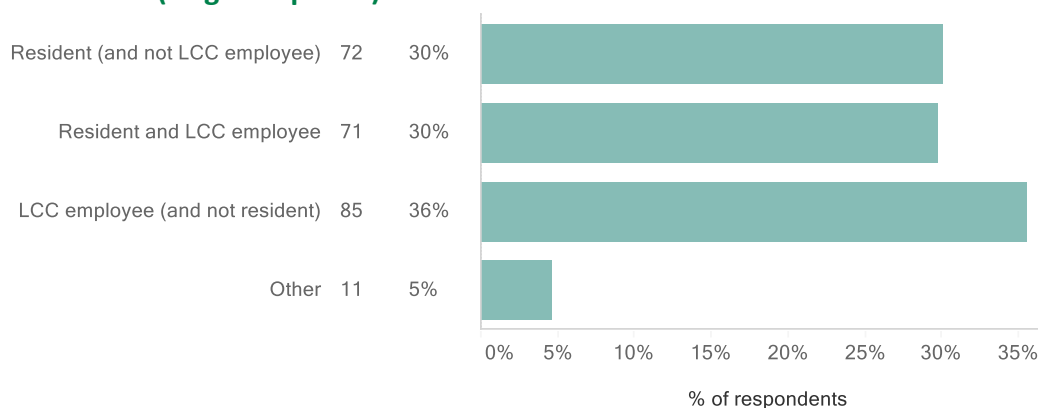
Throughout the analysis that follows, comparison has been made between the views from residents who are not LCC employees (72 respondents) and the views from those who work for the county council (156 respondents).

Chart 1 - Role (multiple response)



Base = 239

Chart 2 - Role (single response)



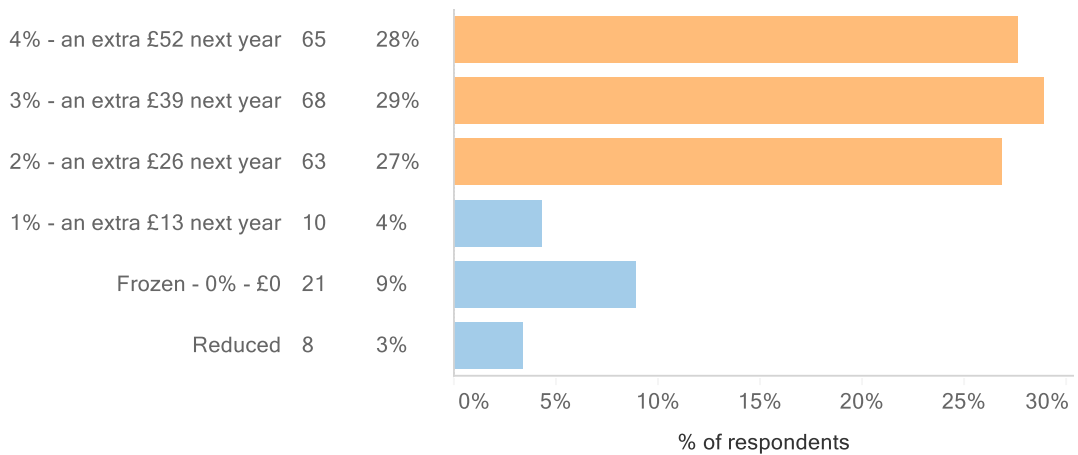
ase: 239

Question 2 - Council Tax increase (excl. social care precept)

Respondents were asked what Council Tax increase they would be prepared to pay to fund county council services, excluding the 2% social care precept. Chart 3 shows that 28% of respondents were in favour of paying an increase of 4%, 29% were in favour of paying an increase of 3% and 27% were in favour of paying an increase of 2%. There were 4% who said they were in favour of paying an increase of 1%.

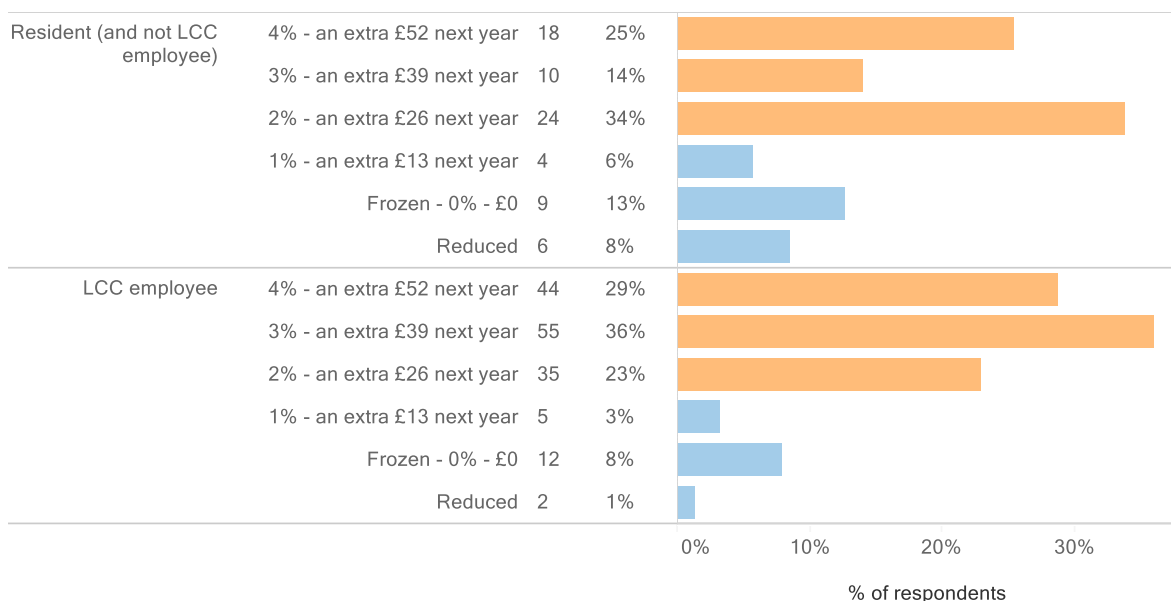
In contrast, there were 9% of respondents who said Council Tax should be ‘frozen’ (excluding any social care precept), even if it means significant cuts to services. There were also 3% who said Council Tax should be reduced, even if it means severe cuts to many services. There were no statistically significant differences in responses by role (Chart 4).

Chart 3 - Council Tax increase (excl. social care precept)



Base = 235

Chart 4 - Council Tax increase (excl. social care precept) - by role



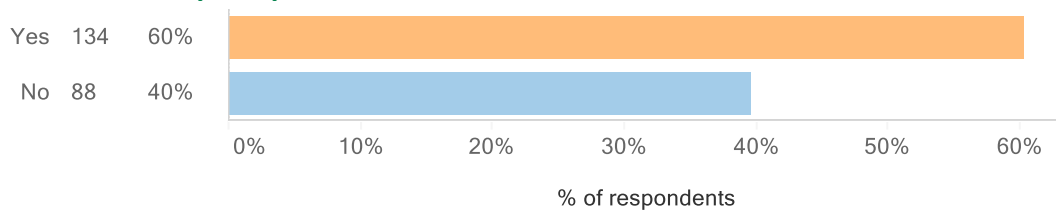
Resident base = 71
LCC employee base = 153

Question 3 - 2% social care precept

Respondents were asked whether they thought the county council should increase Council Tax by a further 2% (i.e. the Government's social care precept) to be used exclusively for the funding of adult social care in Leicestershire. Chart 5 shows that the majority of respondents (60%) favoured this increase. Chart 6 shows the majority of residents (and not LCC employees) opposed to the social care precept (58%).

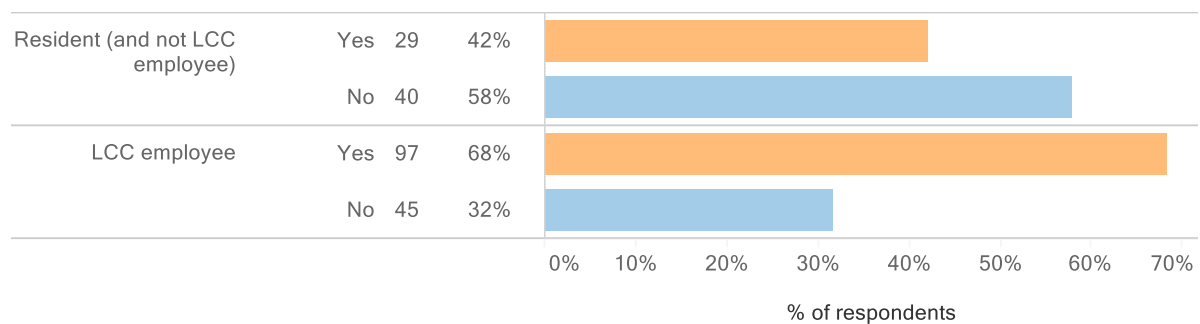
Statistical analysis shows that employees of Leicestershire County Council were significantly more likely to agree to the additional 2% social care precept (68%).

Chart 5 - 2% social care precept



Base = 222

Chart 6 - 2% social care precept - by role



Resident base = 69

LCC employee base = 142

Table 1 shows that just over a quarter of respondents (26%) favoured a general Council Tax increase of 4% and the additional 2% social care precept. Only 3% of those who preferred a general 4% Council Tax increase disagreed with the 2% social care precept. The next highest response was for a 3% increase in Council Tax plus the 2% social care precept (20%). A notable minority indicated a preference for a 2% general Council Tax increase but no additional social care precept (12%).

Table 1 - Q2 by Q3

Council Tax increase (excluding 2% 'social care precept')		2% Social Care Precept increase	
		Yes	No
4% - an extra £52 next year		26%	3%
3% - an extra £39 next year		20%	7%
2% - an extra £26 next year		14%	12%
1% - an extra £13 next year		0%	4%
Frozen - 0% - £0		0%	9%
Reduced			4%

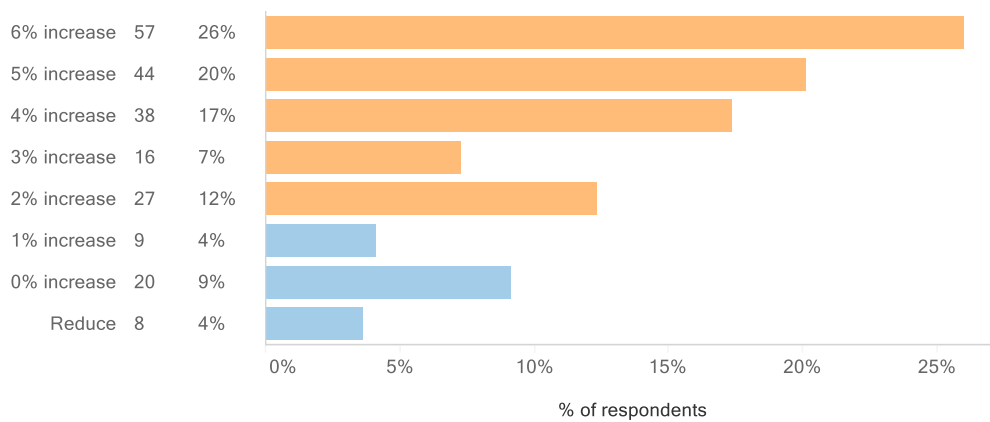
Base = 219

Total Council Tax increase

By combining the responses to the questions about Council Tax and social care precept, Chart 7 shows 26% of respondents were in favour of a 6% increase in Council Tax (including any social care precept) and 20% were in favour of a 5% increase. In contrast, 9% said they did not want any increase in Council Tax.

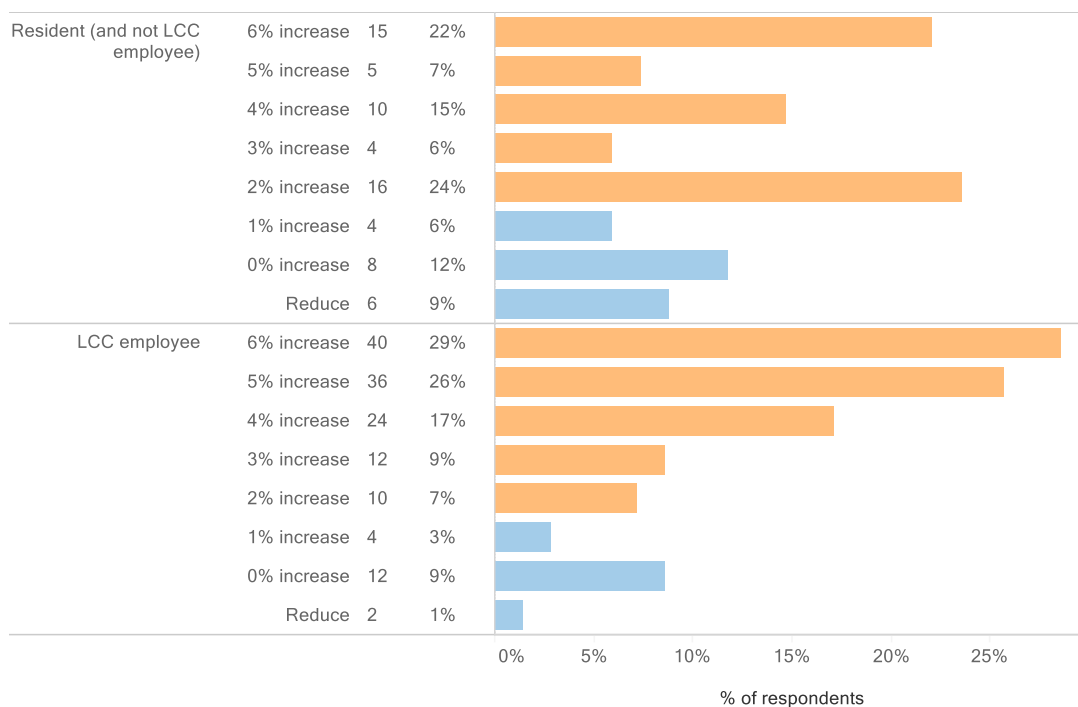
Statistical analysis shows that respondents who identified as an employee of Leicestershire County Council were significantly more likely to agree with a 5% increase in Council Tax (including any social care precept) (23%). Respondents who were not an employee of Leicestershire County Council were significantly more likely to agree with a 2% increase in Council Tax (including any social care precept) (20%) or for Council Tax to be reduced (7%).

Chart 7 - Total Council Tax increase



Base = 219

Chart 8 - Total Council Tax increase - by role



Resident base = 68
LCC employee base = 140

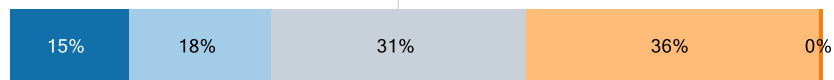
Please note that 8% of respondents did not provide a valid response to both questions (Q2 and Q3) (i.e. no response or responded 'don't know').

Question 4 - Growth and savings allocation

Respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with how the growth and savings had been allocated across services. Chart 9 shows 36% agreed, 32% disagreed and a notable proportion of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed (31%).

Statistical analysis shows that respondents who identified as an employee of Leicestershire County Council were significantly more likely to agree with how the growth and savings had been allocated across services (44%). Respondents who were significantly more likely to disagree were female (37%) or indicated that they had a disability (45%).

Chart 9 - Growth and savings allocation



Base = 233

Chart 10 - Growth and savings allocation - residents only



Base = 70

Chart 11 - Growth and savings allocation - LCC employees



Base = 153

Response

Strongly disagree

Tend to disagree

Neither agree nor disagree

Tend to agree

Strongly agree

Open-ended questions

This section of the consultation survey included seven open-ended questions. 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 comments about the areas identified for growth?
- Do you have any comments on the council's capital programme?
- Do you have any other comments about our draft budget proposals?
- To what extent do you agree or disagree that the way funding is distributed between councils should be reviewed? Why do you say this?

For each question, all comments were read by analysts and a coding frame was devised. The comments were then re-read, and thematically coded using the coding frame.

Q5 - Concerns about specific service reductions

Respondents were asked whether there were any specific service reductions that they disagreed with. Chart 12 lists the top 10 codes (see Appendix 3 for full list of codes).

When identifying service reductions that they disagreed with, a notable proportion of respondents were critical of the decision to increase Council Tax at a time of service reduction. Some of these respondents mentioned that an additional rise in Council Tax would not be feasible with their current wage.

Other respondents referenced SEND funding, with several suggesting the council should take preventative measures to ensure these services are not restricted or cut. Respondents specifically expressed concerns that a reduction in this area would impact the most vulnerable residents.

Waste management and the council’s commitment to controlling climate change was an emerging theme, with some respondents concerned that changes to waste management would encourage fly-tipping. Adults and children’s social care and highway maintenance represented other common themes amongst responses to this question.

“Services every year have been reduced and having affect on householders with increased council tax, as wage increases have not increased”

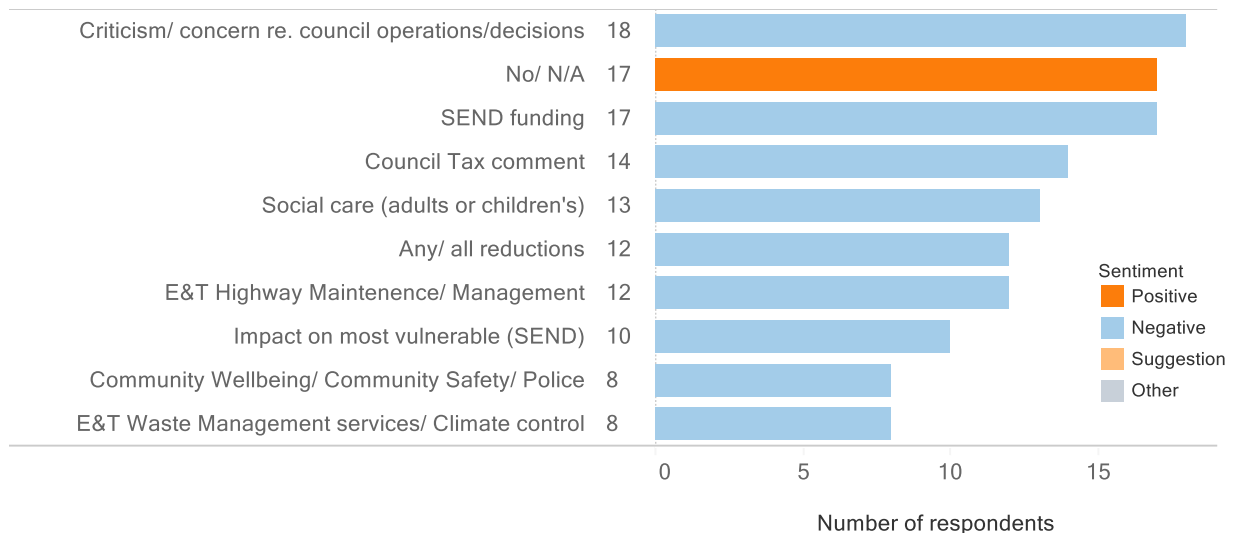
“There should be no reductions in SEN provision and all steps should be taken to ensure these services are not restricted/ cut”

“Yes—we should not be reducing any of the areas that support our vulnerable communities. The young, elderly and dependent”

“Absolutely not enough funding for climate breakdown mitigations and waste management (cleaning up all the litter along the roads for the start) and for water and air quality improvements”

“I am slightly concerned about the level of the proposed reduction in spending on adult social care”

Chart 12 - Concerns about specific service reductions - Top 10



Base = 117

Q6 - Suggested additional service reductions or charges

Respondents were asked whether there were any additional service reductions or charges that could be considered by the council. Chart 13 lists the top 10 codes (see Appendix 3 for full list of codes).

Although several respondents indicated that there were no areas where they thought further service reductions could be made, some suggestions were put forward. The most frequently referenced theme amongst these suggestions related to staff expenditure, including salaries, hours, management, market premia and the use of consultants. Other respondents suggested a reduction in highway maintenance and transport expenditure, including road repairs and transport projects.

Several respondents felt greater levels of income could be generated in the council, via increased charges and commercialisation of services. Other respondents were concerned about cuts to essential services, such as adult social care and SEND, while others criticised the council's proposal to increase Council Tax. Some respondents suggested improving the council's approach to specific issues, including climate change, waste management, and more generally its approach to budget management and service reductions.

"The market premia supplement should be applied fairly"

"Better trained staff and less agency staff will cost the council less. You pay outside contractors a lot more than in-house employees"

"Stop/cut back on growth projects and big highway schemes...Charge/increase waste charges at RHWS— make people pay for their waste"

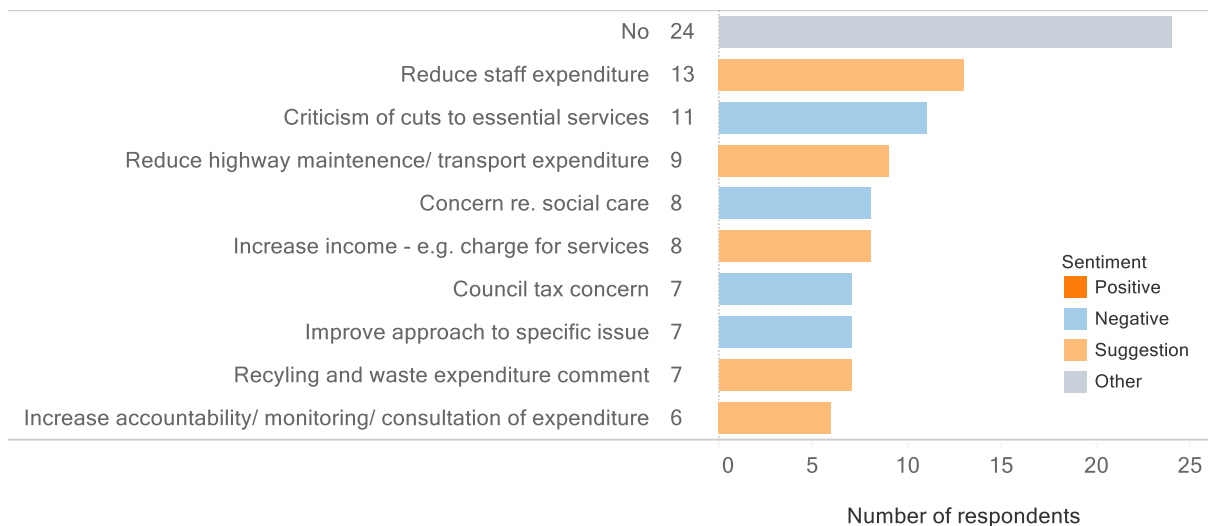
"More incentive with associated charges for driving—zone charge,. Reduced costs for park and ride and incentives for car share. Costs for sending to landfill with focus on construction and business"

"We should not be reducing local services. Efficiencies should be delivered where possible, but social care, adult care SEN provision should be increasing provision"

"Its not all about reductions. Its about using what we have more suitably"

"There should be a review of every service over a period time using a zero based budgeting model which is likely to squeeze out savings and waste"

Chart 13 - Suggested additional service reductions or charges - Top 10



Q7 - Areas for further efficiency savings

Respondents were asked if they thought there were any other areas where the council could make further efficiency savings without impacting on services. Chart 14 lists the top 10 codes (see Appendix 3 for full list of codes).

The most frequently referenced topic related to staffing. The majority of comments on this theme referenced management efficiencies and the use of consultants. Some comments under this theme also suggested a need to address staff performance, absence and the culture at the council. Although a reoccurring response was ‘no’, several respondents suggested other areas where the council could make additional savings without impacting services. Respondents made specific comments related to environment and transport, with some specific suggestions around increasing fines for fly-tippers and schemes to charge for car use, to encourage use of public transport.

Some respondents expressed general concerns about the impact of further cuts and savings, such as SEND and adult social care, and some identified service areas they thought in need of general efficiencies, such as IT. Others suggested reducing expenditure in the democratic process, such as councillor payments. There were various others who suggested areas for efficiency savings, such as shared services (including a unitary merger with the city and/or district councils).

“Yes – apply market premia fairly—and stop appointing consultants to plug the gaps. Train our own, retain the experience”

“Raise income by imposing larger and stricter fines on litterers/ fly-tippers”

“Should introduce car charging scheme to move people off roads to public transport”

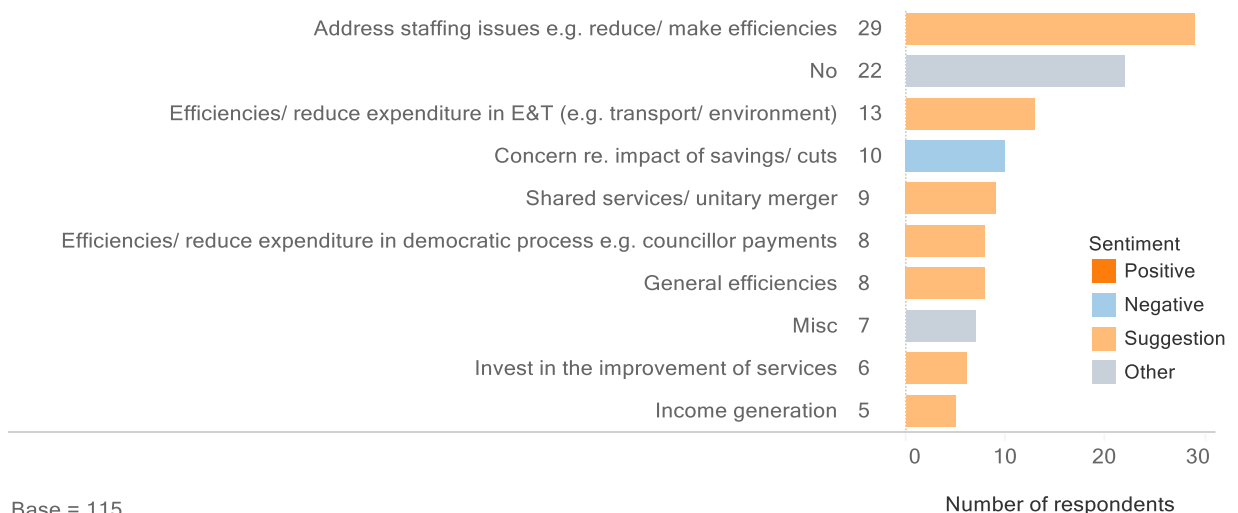
“Look at council tax banding rates so those leaving in more expensive housing pay more towards services; look at long term health and social care issues for those in SEND that are going to experience cuts to their service”

“Look at ICT and any efficiency savings that can be made there on purchasing of equipment”

“Councillors wages and expenses should be increased by no more than the rise in inflation”

“Creating a unitary authority, and/or providing some services joined with Leicester City Council”

Chart 14 - Areas for further efficiency savings - Top 10



Q8 - Areas identified for growth

Respondents were asked if they had any comments about the areas identified for growth. The responses for the top 10 codes are shown in Chart 15 (see Appendix 3 for full list of codes).

Although the most recurring response was 'no' or 'none,' several respondents identified social care and SEND to be areas in need of growth. Other respondents expressed concerns regarding the council's proposals to increase Council Tax to fund growth and the extra expenditure required to support new housing developments within Leicestershire. Others felt the council should plan to prioritise protecting SEND and social care services.

Whilst some respondents were critical of specific areas identified for growth, others were critical of the overall proposals or the decisions made with regards to the approach to growth. Other respondents were more positive about the proposed areas for growth. However, some said they lacked understanding of the question and requested more information to comment further.

"Leicestershire has a high ratio of Adults and children needing social care provision and these should only be invested in and strengthened"

"The money should be spent on practical environmental measures like clearing litter from the countryside (and prevention of fly-tipping)"

"Whilst building more houses obviously brings in cash windfalls and potential future council tax income, scale definitely needs to be considered"

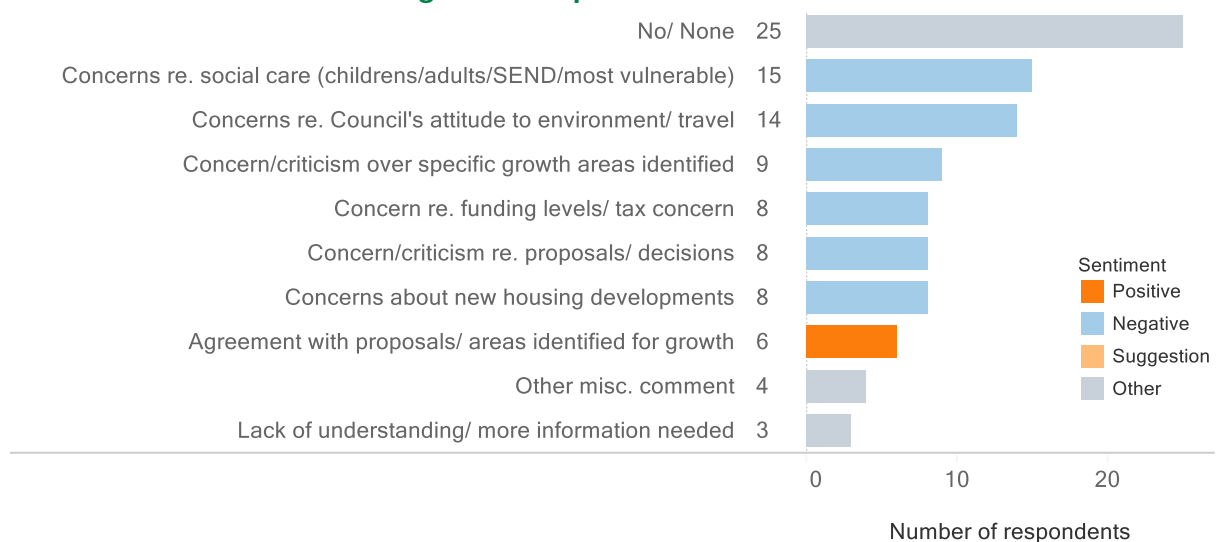
"Costs associated with housing growth should be the sole responsibility of the developer. Residents should not have to suffer tax rises to subsidise new roads etc. for new housing"

"I can't see how £16m on Climate Change can be justified when cuts to services are being made"

"Agree and promote further investment, but namely in ways to support self-sufficiency, sustainability etc. "

"It would have been helpful to list again what the areas for growth are"

Chart 15 - Areas identified for growth - Top 10



Base = 85

Q9 - Comments on the council's capital programme

Respondents were asked to provide any comments they had about the council's capital programme. Chart 16 shows the top 10 codes (see Appendix 3 for full list of codes).

Although the most frequent response was 'no/ none', there were several positive responses that supported the council's capital programme. Within these comments, respondents thought that the capital programme was a useful way of trying to mitigate the impact of further budget cuts.

Other respondents considered the capital programme to be a good idea, providing it is used appropriately, spent wisely and is beneficial for Leicestershire. Others made suggestions for the capital programme, with specific mentions of improving the efficiency of public transport and highway maintenance.

Negative responses reflected criticisms of the proposals and current cuts to services, and how this will impact SEND and the most vulnerable residents. Some respondents requested additional information as they did not feel they were provided with enough to comment. Others were concerned that the funding for the capital programme was ambitious.

"Very useful and a good way of trying to mitigate the impact of further budget cuts"

"Using our capital budgets has proved successful and whilst this carries some risks I think it is the right idea, and we could look at taking a little more risk to generate income"

"Good, as long as these capital projects are truly beneficial for Leicestershire"

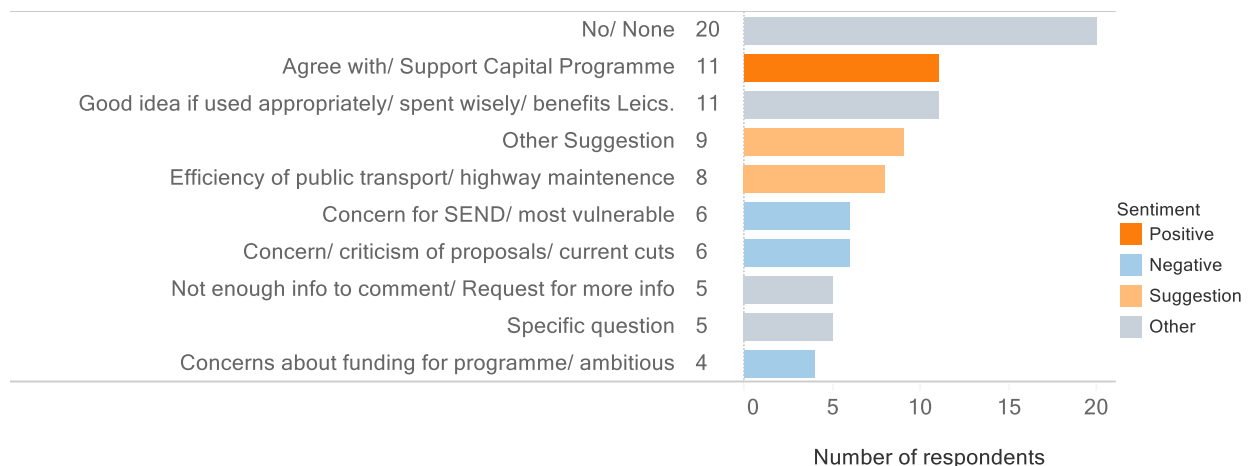
"Should be a better performing public transport system that negates the need for capital funding. With planned developments should be considering developer funding contributions to address issues"

"I don't agree with rising our charges to pay for the Melton road relief fund when our SEND budgets have been slashed. People should be a priority not traffic"

"The capital programme is important but I'm not convinced at the high level of funding when so many cuts are being made elsewhere. Is the balance right?"

"I don't feel I know enough to comment—maybe hold consultation to get ideas from those in the know"

Chart 16 - Comments on the councils capital programme - Top 10



Base = 87

Q10 - Any other comments

Respondents were asked to provide any other comments they had about the council's draft budget proposals. Chart 17 shows the top 10 codes (see Appendix 3 for full list of codes).

Apart from 'no,' 'none' or 'n/a' responses, several responses reflected concerns regarding the proposals and the impact they may have on specific services, such as social care and SEND. Other respondents also made negative references to Council Tax increases and others were critical of council services and staffing more generally.

Other respondents made a number of suggestions including: cutting budgets proportionately, prioritizing social care and SEND services, and more joined up working with Leicester City Council, district councils and external partnerships, such as East Midlands Shared Services (EMSS).

Positive responses reflected general support for the proposals and an understanding of the financial challenges the council faces.

"Definitely consider the funding for climate change and definitely do not lower the budget for special education needs children and families"

"Tax rises are resorted to too readily, savings should be a much more significant area"

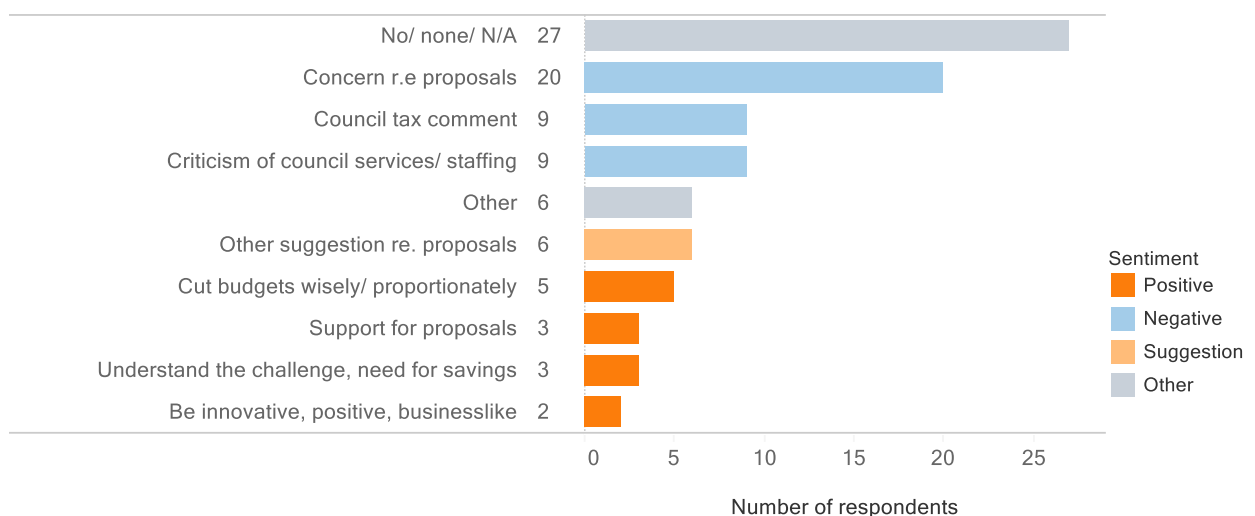
"Do it wisely so it doesn't affect some people disproportionately to others"

"Expand East Midlands Shared Services (EMSS) - there are huge opportunities to become the specialist payroll provider of choice across the public sector"

"Further efficiencies from the massive number of employees must be achievable through better joined up working. Work better and share services with Districts"

"Our senior officers and elected members have a very difficult job to do in very difficult circumstances...The level of funding that Leicestershire receives is grossly unfair"

Chart 17 - Any other comments - Top 10



Base = 73

Fairer Funding

The questionnaire explained that Leicestershire remains the lowest-funded county in the country and that the county council is continuing to lead calls for fair funding. Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed that the way funding is distributed between councils should be reviewed. Chart 18 shows that 81% agreed and 10% disagreed. There was no statistically significant difference in responses by role (Charts 18 and 19).

It was also noted during the analysis that caution may be required when interpreting the 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' responses as seven of the 23 respondents who selected 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' provided comments indicating support for a review of the way funding is distributed between councils, suggesting that the response scale for this question may have been misunderstood when the question was being completed.

Chart 18 - Fair Funding



Base = 236

Chart 19 - Fair Funding—residents only



Base = 72

Chart 20 - Fair Funding—LCC employees



Base = 153

Response
 ■ Strongly disagree ■ Tend to disagree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Tend to agree ■ Strongly agree

Q11 - Open-ended comments on fair funding

Respondents were asked to provide comments for their answer to the question regarding fairer funding. Chart 21 shows the results for the top 10 codes assigned to these responses.

The response to this question was largely positive, and respondents raised a number of points. By far, the most reoccurring response identified the current distribution of local authority funding as unfair, with many respondents referencing the government to be at fault.

Often, respondents felt that Leicestershire is disproportionately underfunded relative to other authorities. Respondents cited their criticism of the current funding formula, considering it to be systematically unfair. Several respondents felt concerned about the impact of maintaining the current funding arrangement, namely due to service cuts. Others felt they required more information to make an informed comment.

Some concerns were also highlighted by respondents, criticising the approach taken by the council, disagreeing that a funding review is needed, and querying the feasibility or likelihood of being able to secure fairer funding.

Several respondents voiced general support for council decisions and an understanding for the financial challenges the council faces.

“There needs to be a review of local authority funding. It is not fair that Leicestershire people should suffer more from the impact of Government policies”

“I feel that it is not ‘fair’, that our Council by being ‘responsible’ and in managing the budget to the best of their ability but are almost being punished for doing so, in receiving such a smaller amount”

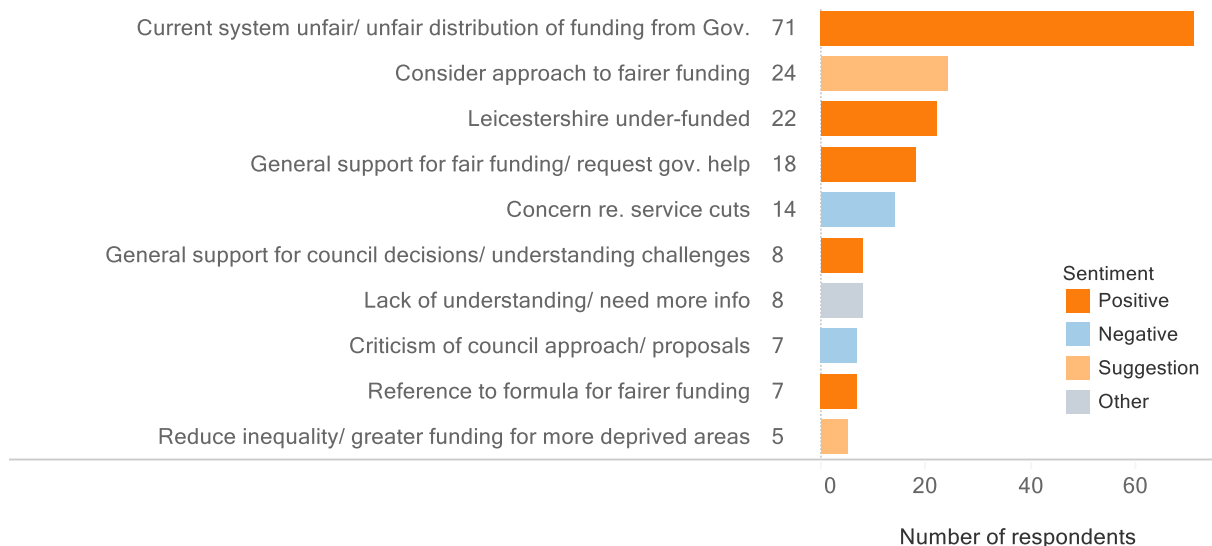
“Do think the current formula isn’t fair however, I do not feel comparing Leicestershire with London Boroughs is comparative”

“Fully agree. Please spend a small amount of money making this public knowledge and lobbying central government”

“Funding should be more evenly distributed over the county, anomalies should be looked into and adjusted if necessary”

“Funding should be allocated fairly and transparently. We need to understand how the current arrangement was set up and how it can be improved in the future”

Chart 21 - Comments regarding fair funding (Q11)



Base = 119

Other consultation response

In addition to the survey, a separate submission was received from the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (see Appendix 5 for the response in full).

The Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) expressed support for the proposals and recognised the financial pressure facing the authority, highlighting their support of the council's position regarding fairer funding. The LLEP commended the savings made since 2010, and supported the areas of planned savings and the proposed Council Tax rise of 3.99%.

The LLEP also highlighted their continued support for projects that promote economic growth and the council's proposals for a range of one-off investments to support infrastructure for new homes, featured in the £600m capital programme; including the proposed highway schemes, supported –living developments and the continued rollout of superfast broadband. The response also recognised the importance of the health and social care sector, supporting the proposals for growth in social care.

Appendix 1 - Questionnaire



Have your say on our draft budget plans 2020 - 2024

Background

Pressure is building as demand for support and infrastructure soars. By planning ahead, we've saved £210m since 2010 but a surge in demand for social care and special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) support, combined with inflation, is driving up costs by £117m.

Our four-year plan sets out the need for £80m of savings but also £16m of investment in tackling climate change, an extra £34m to support vulnerable people and £7m next year to top up road maintenance budgets.

We conducted a large-scale consultation over the summer on the council's priorities. We have listened and our plans reflect what you told us. We will continue to take these results on board as we develop the detailed spending and savings plans and review our budget plans in future years.

Over the next four years, we estimate we need to save £80m (made up of £24m of detailed savings, a plan to reduce SEND costs by £17m and a £39m gap) although there's a great deal of uncertainty about the future funding for local government.

We're proposing a total Council Tax rise of 3.99% for next year, including a 2% precept to be invested in adult social care. The increase would reduce the impact on services by generating £12m to invest in supporting vulnerable people. A decision will be taken each year for any future increases. Under current Government rules a local referendum would need to be held for any increase above 2% in 2020/21 (excluding the social care precept).

A range of one-off investments to support infrastructure for new homes features in the £600m capital programme. This includes building Melton relief road, creating 6,400 more school places - 5,900 mainstream and 500 SEND - expanding adult social care accommodation and rolling out high-speed broadband.

We have published our 2020-2024 spending plans 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 budget proposals web page before completing the survey.

The closing date for the consultation is midnight 19 January 2020.

Thank you for your assistance. Your views are important to us.

If completing on a phone or tablet do not use the back button on your device as you may lose your response.

Please note: Your responses to the main part of the survey (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

Growing demand for county council services - plus general price rises (inflation) - are increasing the cost of delivering services. Council Tax is the county council's main source of income and annual increases contribute towards covering these costs.

Assuming no further Government cuts an increase in Council Tax about 1% above the level of inflation would help maintain services at a similar level to now (inflation is currently around 2%).

In recent years Council Tax increases have been higher than ordinarily required to help reduce the impact of Government cuts.

The county council is planning to increase Council Tax by 3.99% next year (2020/21). A decision will be taken each year for any future increases. The proposed 3.99% increase would include 2% for the 'social care precept' which the Government introduced in 2016/17 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 1.99% 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 2019/20 is currently £1,292 per year for a band D property*. An increase of 3.99% would mean an increase in band D Council Tax of £52 per year on that bill (or £4.30 per month). Every additional 1% increase in Council Tax generates an additional £3m of income each year and reduces our total savings requirement. Every additional 1% costs each household in a band D property an additional £13 per year (or £1.08 per month) on their Council Tax bill.

Government policy is to prevent councils from making increases that they deem to be excessive.

- Q2 What Council Tax increase would you be prepared to pay to fund county council services (excluding the 2% for the 'social care precept')?

The figures in brackets show what this increase would be next year for a household in a band D property.

Council Tax (excluding the 2% for the 'social care precept') should be...

- ...increased significantly above the rate of inflation to improve services (4% - an extra £52 next year)
- ...increased slightly above the rate of inflation to maintain services (3% - an extra £39 next year)
- ...increased in line with inflation even if it means some service cuts (2% - an extra £26 next year)
- ...increased below inflation even if it means significant cuts to some services (1% - an extra £13 next year)
- ...frozen even if it means significant cuts to many services (0% - £0)
- ...reduced even if it means severe cuts to many services
- Don't know
- Q3 Do you think the county council should increase Council Tax by a further 2% (the government's 'social care precept') to be used exclusively for the funding of adult social care in Leicestershire? This would cost an additional £26 per year (£2.15 per month) for a band D property.
- Yes
- No
- Don't know

- Q4 Overall, to what extent do you agree or disagree with how the growth and savings have been allocated across our services?

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

- Q5 Are there any specific service reductions you disagree with?

Characters left: left

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

Characters left: left

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

Characters left: left

Q8 Do you have any comments about the areas identified for growth?

Characters left: left

The council's capital programme is expected to total about £600m over the four year period. Capital funding (which can't be used to fund day to day services) is used to invest in vital infrastructure and other assets essential to support delivery of council services. Some of the expenditure will result in future income streams and cost reductions which will free up funding for vital front line services.

Q9 Do you have any comments on the council's capital programme?

Characters left: left

Q10 Do you have any other comments about our draft budget proposals?

Characters left: left

Fairer Funding

Leicestershire remains the lowest-funded county in the country. If it was funded at the same level as Surrey, it would be £100 million per year better off, or £300 million if compared to Camden. Faced with an extremely challenging financial situation, we're continuing to lead calls for fair funding.

Q11 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the way funding is distributed between councils should be reviewed?

- | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Why do you say this?

Characters remaining: left

About you

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

We would therefore be grateful if you would answer the following questions. You are under no obligation to provide the information requested, but it would help us greatly if you did.

Q12 What is your gender identity?

- Male
- Female
- Other (e.g. pangender, non-binary etc.)

Q13 Is your gender identity the same as the gender you were assigned at birth?

- Yes
 No

Q14 What was your age on your last birthday?

Q15 What is your postcode? This will help us understand views in different areas

Q16 Are you a parent/carer of a child or young person aged 17 or under?

- Yes
 No

Q17 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

Q18 Do you have any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity?

- Yes
 No

Q19 What is your ethnic group?

- White
 Mixed
 Asian or Asian British
 Black or Black British
 Other ethnic group

Q20 What is your religion or belief?

- No religion
 Christian (all denominations)
 Buddhist
 Hindu
 Jewish
 Muslim
 Sikh
 Any other religion or belief

Q21 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

Please click the button below to send us your response.

Thank you for your time. Your views will be considered before the budget is finalised in February.

Data Protection: Personal data supplied on this form will be held on computer and will be used in accordance with current Data Protection Legislation. 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 personal information collected in 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 2 - Respondent profile

Age	Survey Responses			2011 Census (16+)
	239	% Ex NR*	% Inc NR*	%
Under 15	0	0.0	0.0	
15-24	7	3.3	2.9	14.3%
25-34	31	14.6	13.0	13.2%
35-44	57	26.8	23.8	17.2%
45-54	69	32.4	28.9	17.8%
55-64	41	19.2	17.2	15.9%
65-74	7	3.3	2.9	11.6%
75-84	0	0.5	0.0	7.2%
85 or above	1	0.0	0.4	2.8
No reply	26		10.9	

Gender identity*	Survey Responses			2011 Census (16+)
	239	% Ex NR*	% Inc NR*	%
Male	100	45.5	48.	49.0%
Female	116	52.7	41.8	51.0%
Other (e.g. pangender, nonbinary etc.)	4	1.8	1.7	
No reply	19		7.9	

*2011 Census asks for respondent gender

Do you have a long-standing illness or disability?*	Survey Responses			2011 Census (16+)
	239	% Ex NR*	% Inc NR*	%
Yes	46	21.2	19.2	19.1%
No	171	78.8	71.5	80.9%
No reply	22		9.2	

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

Ethnicity	Survey Responses			2011 Census (16+)
	239	% Ex NR*	% Inc NR*	%
White	200	91.7	83.7	92.2%
Mixed	5	2.3	2.1	0.8%
Asian or Asian British	8	3.7	3.3	6.0%
Black or Black British	2	0.9	0.8	0.6%
Other ethnic group	3	1.4	1.3	0.4%
No reply	21		8.8	

Sexual orientation	Survey Responses			2011 Census (16+)
	239	% Ex NR*	% Inc NR*	%
Bisexual	5	2.4	2.1	
Gay	6	2.9	2.5	
Heterosexual/straight	187	89.5	78.2	(Not applicable)
Lesbian	3	1.4	1.3	
Other	8	3.8	3.3	
No reply	30		12.6	

*NR = No reply

What is your religion?	239	Survey Responses		2011 Census (16+)
		% Ex NR*	% Inc NR*	%
No religion	91	42.5	38.1	25.3%
Christian (All denominations)	109	50.9	45.6	62.6%
Buddhist	1	0.5	0.4	0.3%
Hindu	4	1.9	1.7	2.8%
Jewish	1	0.5	0.4	0.1%
Muslim	2	0.9	0.8	1.2%
Sikh	1	0.5	0.4	1.2%
Any other religion or belief	5	2.3	2.1	0.4%
No reply	25		10.5	6.3%

Are you a parent or carer of a young person aged 17 or under?	239	Survey Responses		2011 Census (16+)
		% Ex NR*	% Inc NR*	%
Yes	86	38.7	36.0	(Census data includes all people cared for regardless of age)
No	136	61.3	56.9	
No reply	17		7.1	

Are you a carer of a person aged 18 or over?	239	Survey Responses		2011 Census (16+)
		% Ex NR*	% Inc NR*	%
Yes	30	13.5	12.6	(Census data includes all people cared for regardless of age)
No	192	86.5	80.3	
No reply	17		7.1	

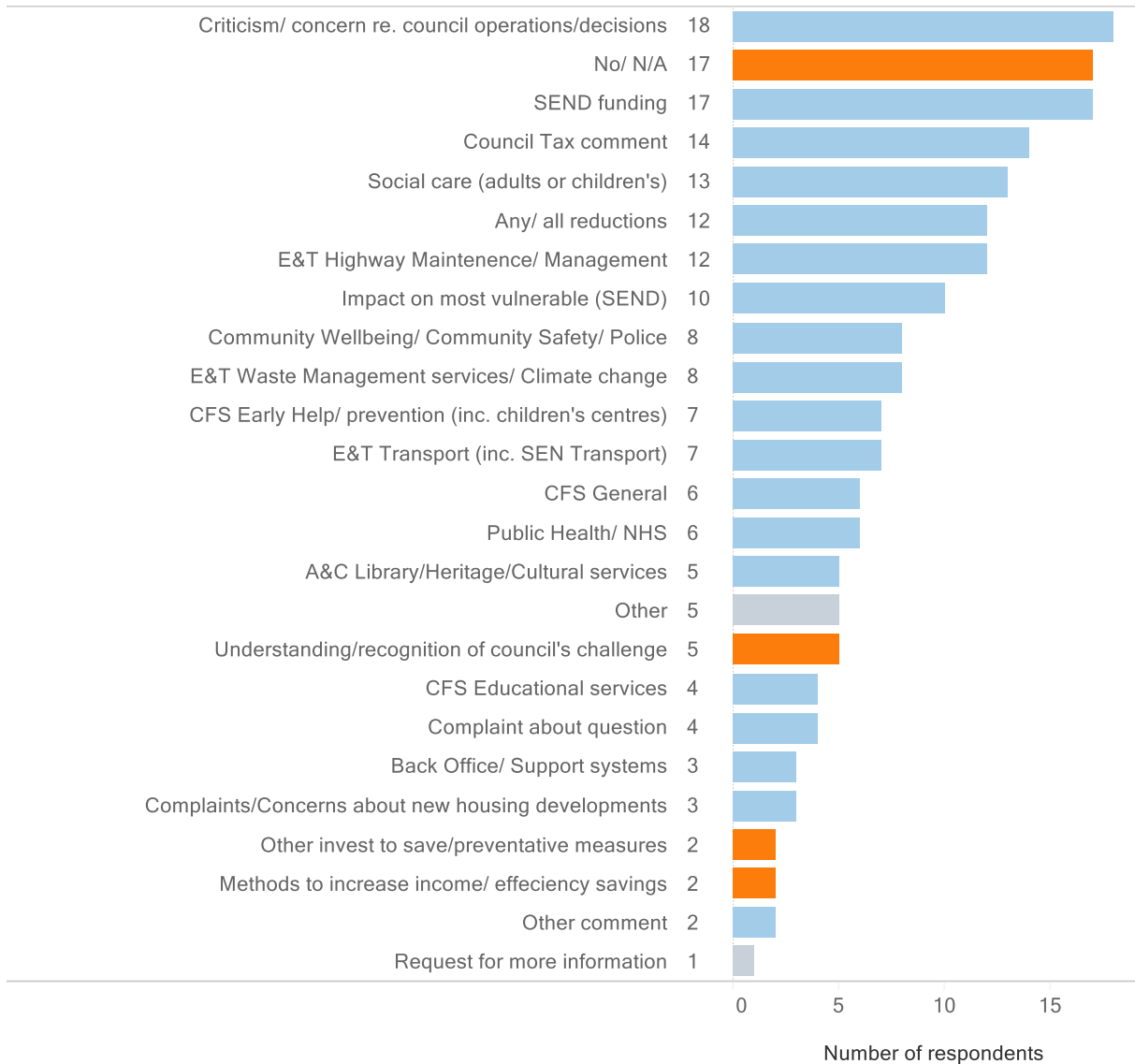
District	239	Survey Responses		2011 Census (16+)
		% Ex M/O [#]	% Inc M/O [#]	%
Blaby	31	18.2	13.0	14.3%
Charnwood	38	22.4	15.9	25.9%
Harborough	18	10.6	7.5	12.9%
Hinckley & Bosworth	28	1.5	11.7	16.2%
Melton	28	16.5	11.7	7.7%
North West Leicestershire	17	10.0	7.1	14.2%
Oadby & Wigston	10	5.9	4.2	8.7%
Missing/Invalid Postcode	48		20.1	
Other authority	21		8.8	

*NR = No reply

[#]M/O = Missing/invalid or Other Authority postcode

Appendix 3 - All open comment codes

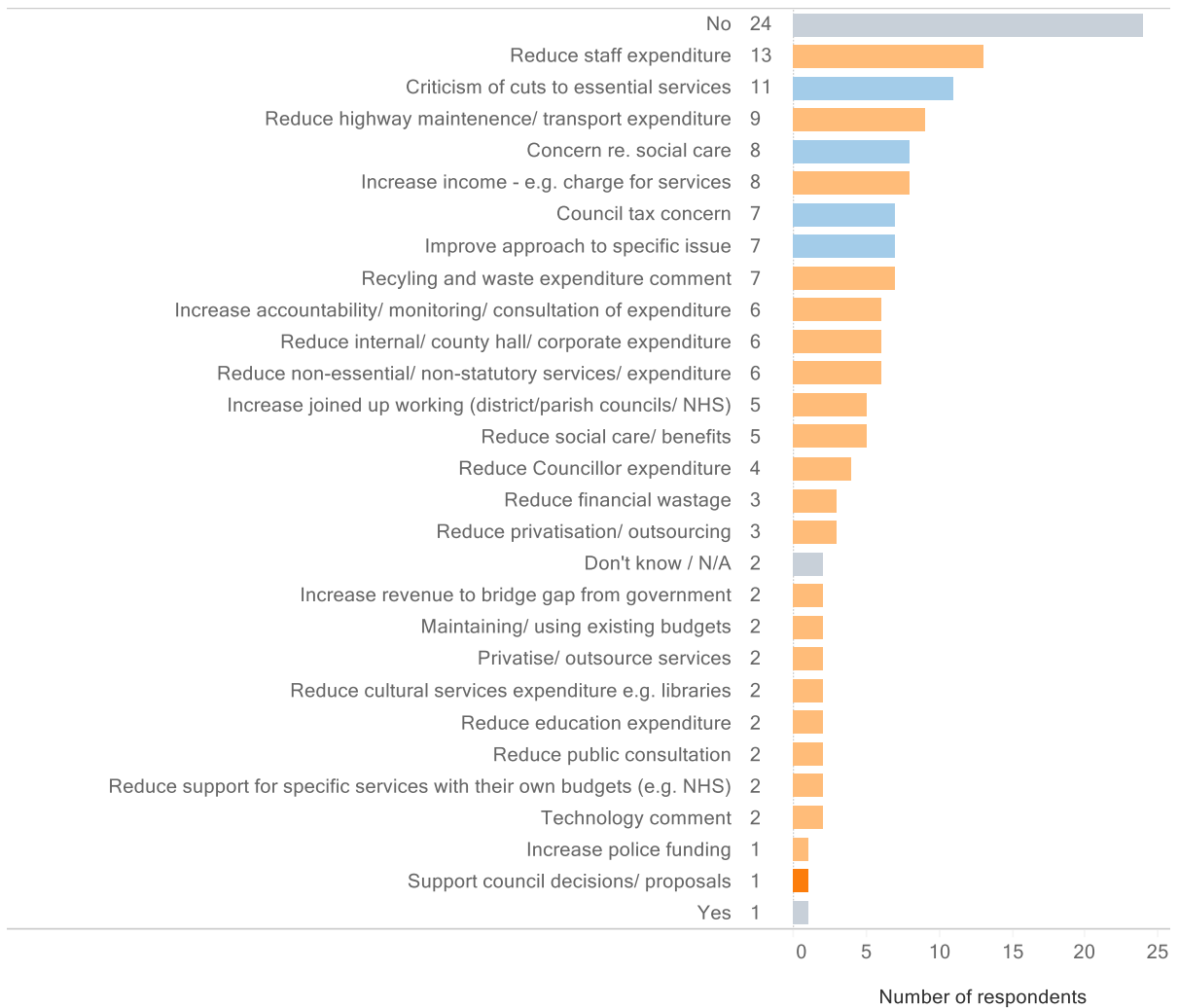
Q5 - Are there any specific service reductions you disagree with?



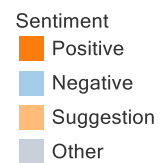
Base = 117

Sentiment
 Positive
 Negative
 Suggestion
 Other

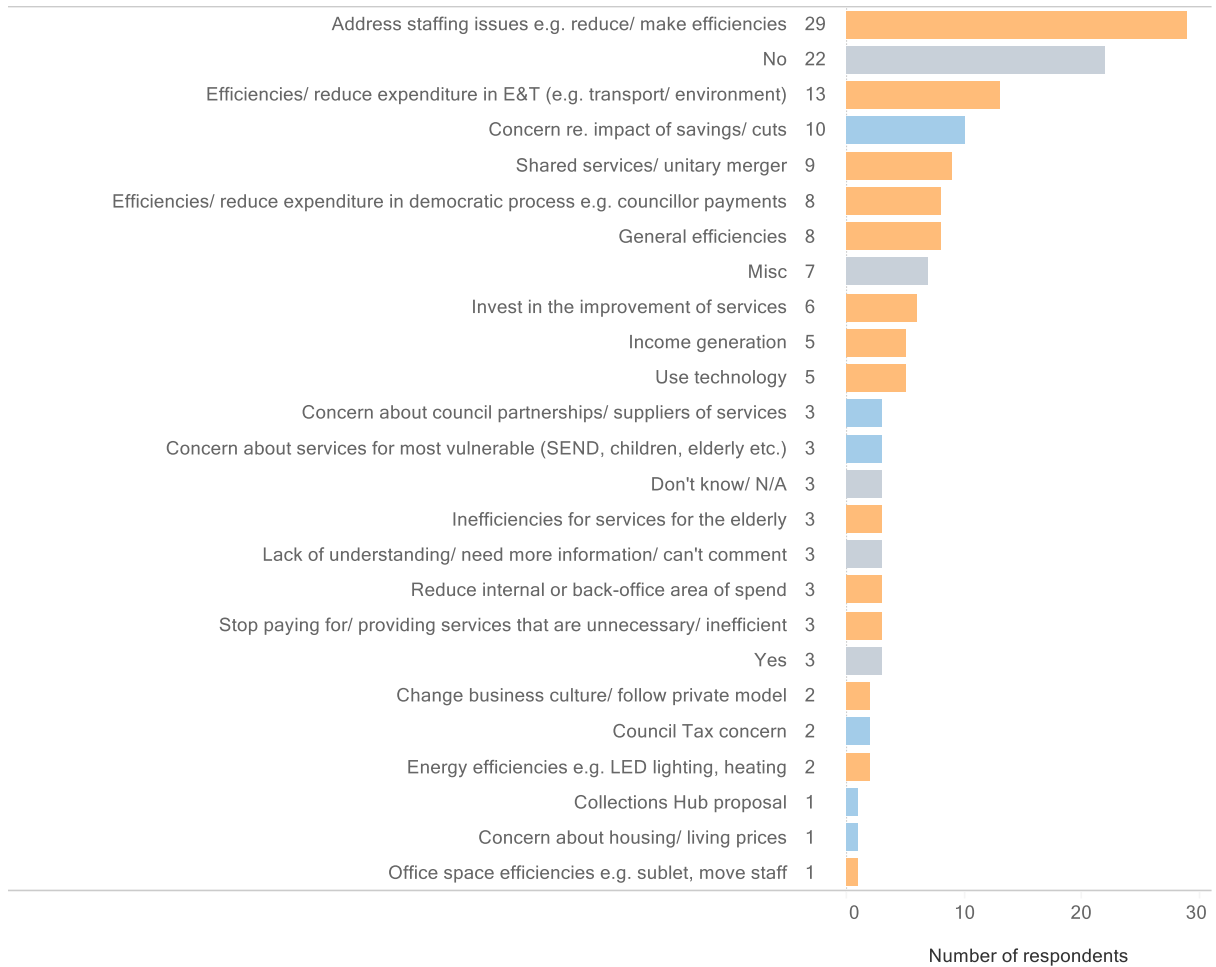
Q6 - Are there any additional service reductions or charges you think we should consider?



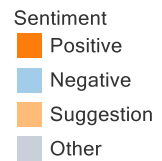
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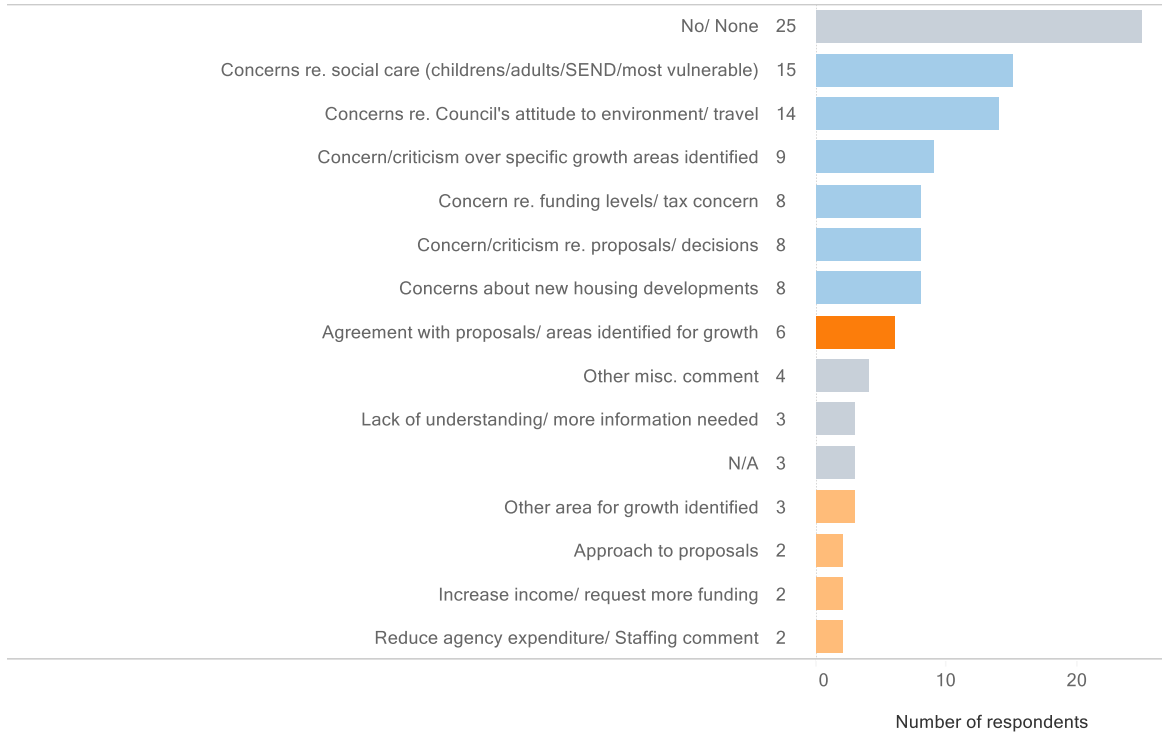
Q7 - Are there any areas where you think we could make further efficiency savings without impacting on services?



Base = 115

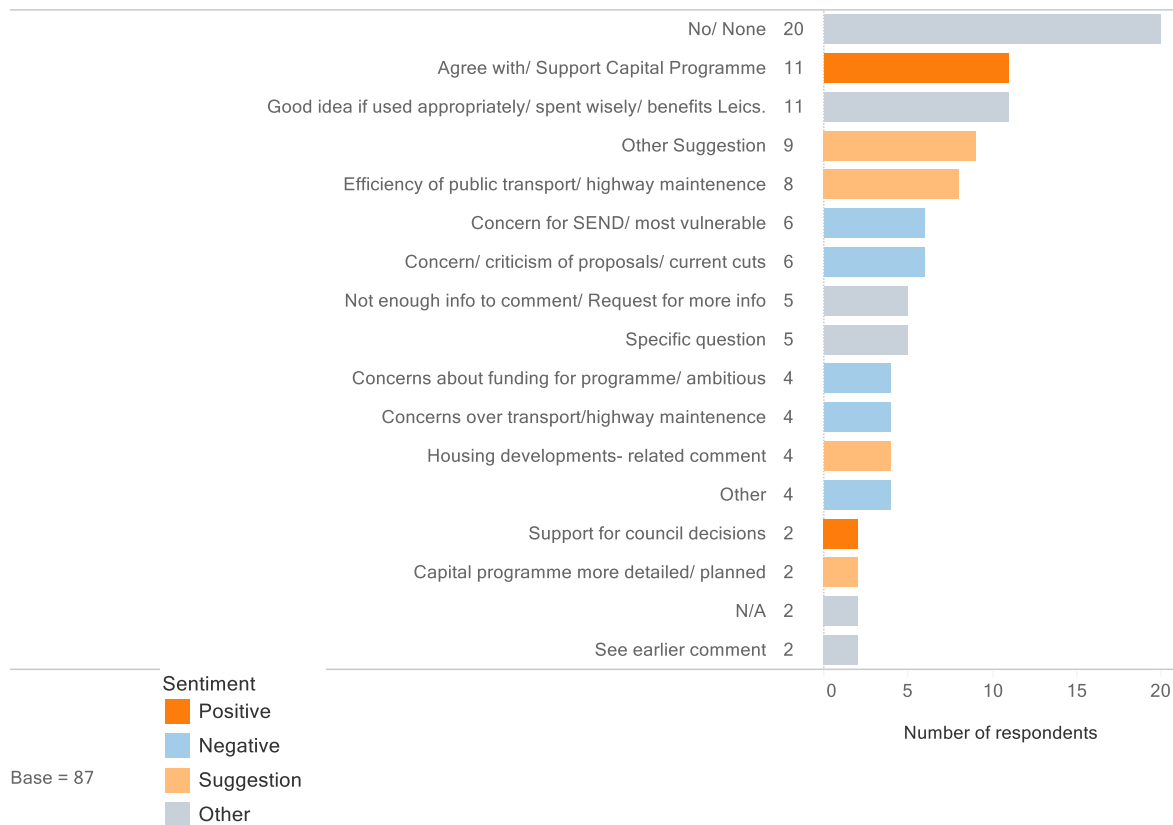


Q8 - Do you have any comments about the areas identified for growth?



Base = 85

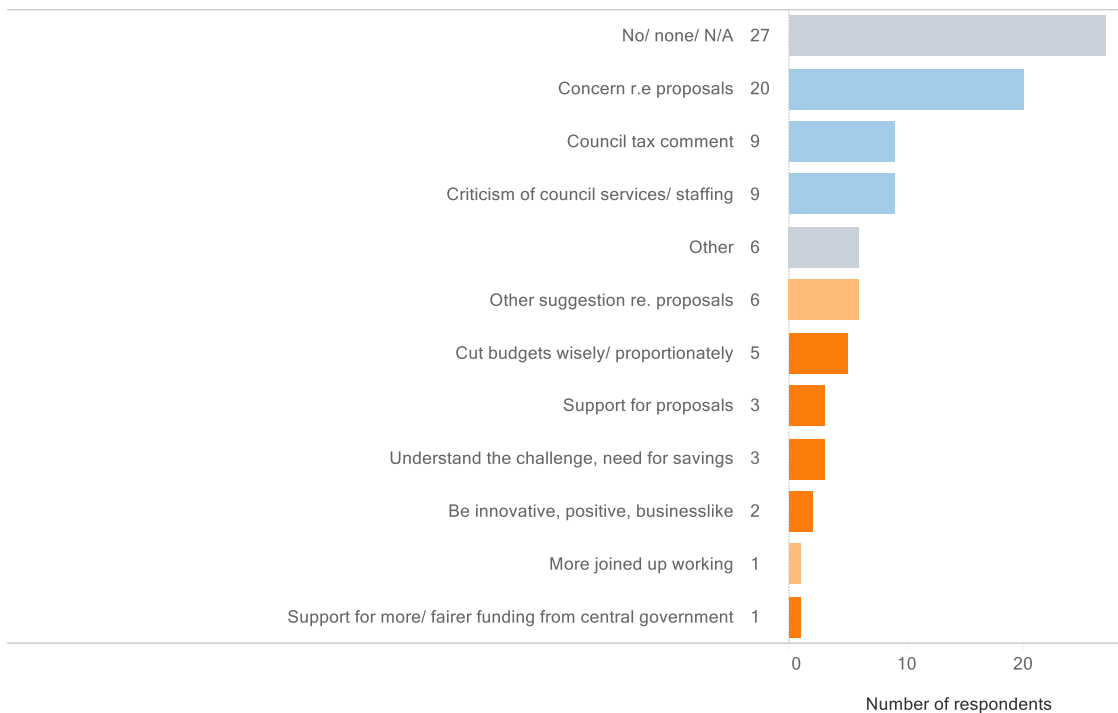
Q9 - Do you have any other comments on the council's capital programme?



Base = 87

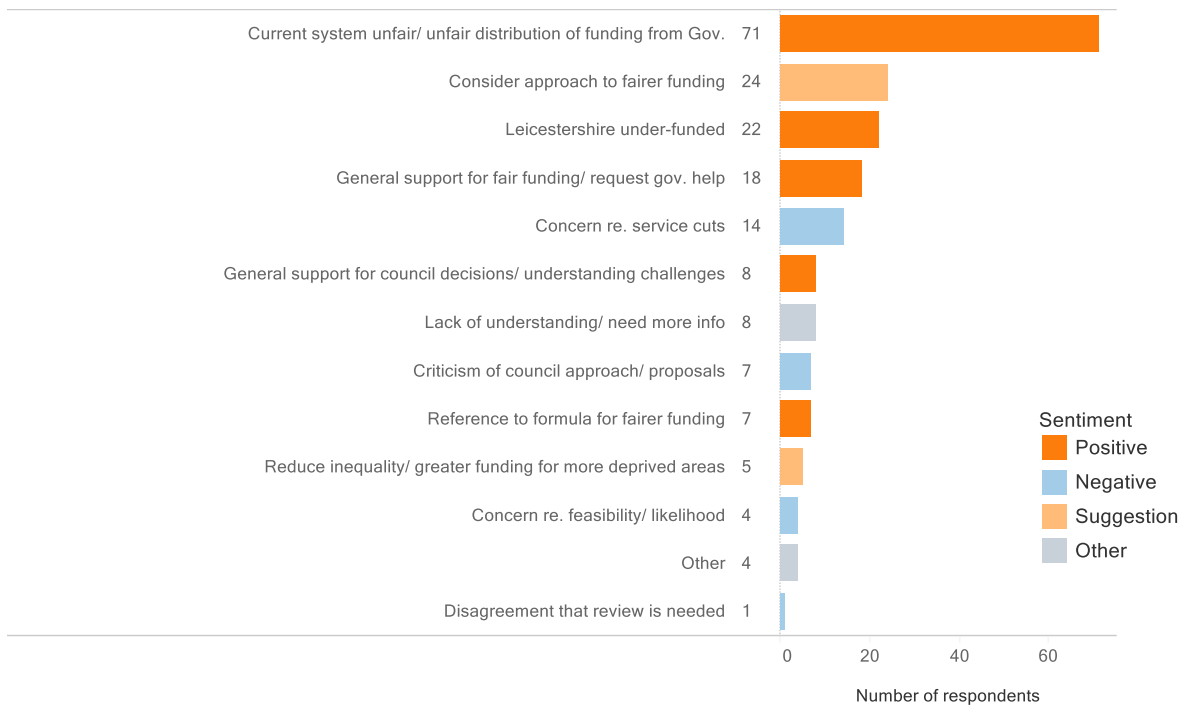
Sentiment
 Positive
 Negative
 Suggestion
 Other

Q10 - Do you have any other comments about our draft budget proposals?



Base = 73

Q11a - Why do you say this (in response to Q10 regarding Fair Funding)



Base = 119

Appendix 4 - Statistical Analysis

How to read these tables

These tables allow you to statistically compare a response by a specific demographic group against the overall respondent sample. The statistical test used to identify statistical significance is called chi-square.

Statistical significance using chi-square tests is determined by looking at the difference between the expected and observed proportion of respondents. For example if 50% of the whole sample said 'agree' for a given question, the expected proportion of any demographic (e.g. males) saying 'agree' is 50%. The expected proportion is then compared to the actual/observed proportion of the demographic who said 'agree', and a measure of statistical significance is calculated.

To maximise statistical reliability, responses were aggregated where appropriate. For example, Matrix 4 displays the statistical analysis for Question 4. Responses were aggregated into 'Agree' = ('Strongly agree' and 'Tend to agree') and 'Disagree' = ('Strongly disagree' and 'Disagree').

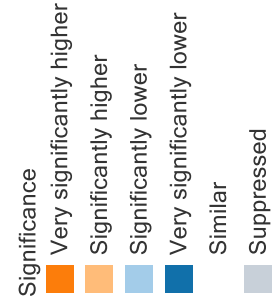
Matrix 1
Q2- "What Council Tax increase would you be prepared to pay to fund county council services (excluding the 2% for the 'social care precept'?)"

Response	Leicestershire County Council Employee		Gender identity		Age group				Disability		Parent/Carer of person under 17		Carer of person over 18		
	Average %	Yes - An employee of LCC	No - not an LCC employee	Female	Male	Prefer to self-describe	Under 34	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 +	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Above inflation (3-4%)	56%	63	41	58	58	47	58	58	57	48	58	55	57	60	56
In line with inflation (2%)	26%	22	34	26	23	26	19	28	24	26	25	23	26	23	26
Below inflation (1%), frozen or reduced	16%	12	24	15	17	24	23	12	16	22	16	21	15	17	17
Don't know	2%	2	1	2	2	3	0	3	2	4	1	1	2	0	2



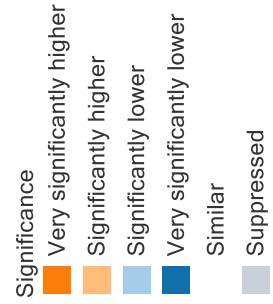
Matrix 2
Q3: “Do you think the county council should increase Council Tax by a further 2% (the government’s ‘social care precept’) to be used exclusively for the funding of adult social care in Leicestershire?”

Response	Average %	Leicestershire County Council Employee		Gender identity		Age group				Disability		Parent/Carer of person under 17		Carer of person over 18	
		Yes - An employee of LCC	No - Not an employee of LCC	Female	Male	Under 34	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 +	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Yes	60%	68	46	65	56	52	59	65	57	44	64	63	58		60
No	40%	32	54	35	44	48	41	35	43	56	36	37	42		40



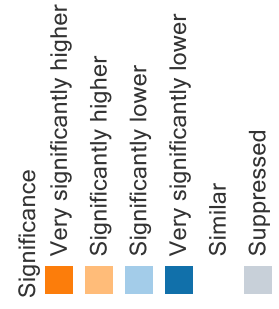
Matrix 3
Q2 and Q3 Combined: Total Council Tax Increase

Response	Average %	Leicestershire County Council Employee		Gender identity			Age group				Disability		Parent/Carer of person under 17		Carer of person over 18	
		Yes - An employee of LCC	No - Not an employee of LCC	Female	Male	Prefer to self-describe	Under 34	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 +	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
6% increase	26%	26	20	25	26		11	25	26	35	17	26	26	24	27	24
5% increase	20%	23	10	21	16		21	16	19	14	20	18	17	18	27	17
4% increase	17%	15	17	16	13		11	12	20	8	7	17	14	15	10	16
3% increase	7%	8	5	4	10		11	7	7	4	7	7	6	7	3	7
2% increase	12%	6	20	10	10		11	9	9	16	17	9	8	13	13	10
1% increase	4%	3	6	5	0		3	5	3	4	4	4	5	3	3	4
0% increase	9%	8	10	8	11		16	12	3	10	15	7	9	9	7	9
Reduce	4%	1	7	1	6		3	4	6	2	2	4	6	2	7	3



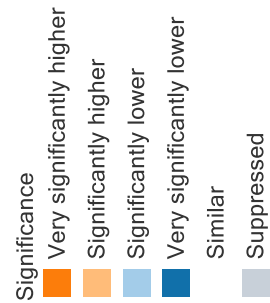
Matrix 4
Q4: “Overall, to what extent do you agree or disagree with how the growth and savings have been allocated across our services?”

Response	Average %	Leicestershire County Council Employee		Gender identity			Age group			Disability		Parent/Carer of person under 17		Carer of person over 18		
		Yes - An employee of LCC	No - Not an employee of LCC	Female	Male	Prefer to self-describe	Under 34	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 +	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Agree	36%	44	21	33	43		34	23	46	41	32	38	30	41		36
Neither agree nor disagree	31%	34	26	30	35		32	38	31	24	23	35	32	32		33
Disagree	32%	22	53	37	22		34	39	23	35	45	27	38	27		31



Matrix 5
Q11: “To what extent do you agree or disagree that the way funding is distributed between councils should be reviewed?”

Response	Average %	Leicestershire County Council Employee		Gender identity		Age group				Disability		Parent/Carer of person under 17		Carer of person over 18		
		Yes - An employee of LCC	No - Not an employee of LCC	Female	Male	Prefer to self-describe	Under 34	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 +	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Yes	60%	32	54	35	44		48	41	35	43	56	36	37	42		40
No	40%	68	46	65	56		52	59	65	57	44	64	63	58		60



Appendix 5 - Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership Response

From: Mandip Rai
Sent: 20 January 2020 15:46
To: Tom Purnell
Subject: RE: Leicestershire County Council - Medium Term Financial Strategy consultation

Dear Tom,

RE: Leicestershire County Council Budget Proposals 2020-24

Thank you for inviting the LLEP to respond to the County Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020-24. The County Council is a key partner on the LLEP and we fully support the proposals in the draft strategy.

The LLEP recognise that the authority is the lowest funded county council in the country and facing substantial financial pressures. We commend the savings that the council has made and support the planned savings of £80m in 2020-24 period and the proposed Council Tax rise of 3.99%.

The LLEP will continue to support council projects that promote economic growth and we fully back the council's proposals for a range of one-off investments to support infrastructure for new homes features in the £600m capital programme including building Melton relief road, creating 6,400 more school places and rolling out high-speed broadband. We will also continue to support the important Health and Social Care sector.

Yours sincerely,
Kevin

Kevin Harris
Chair
Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP)

About the Strategic Business Intelligence 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
Strategic Business Intelligence Team Leader

Strategic Business Intelligence
Strategy and Business Intelligence
Leicestershire County Council
County Hall, Glenfield
Leicester LE3 8RA

Tel: 0116 305 7341
Email: jo.miller@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.

ਜੇ ਆਪ ਆ ਮਾਫਿਤੀ ਆਪਨੀ ਆਖਾਮਾਂ ਸਮਝਵਾਮਾਂ ਥੋੜੀ ਮਦਦ ਈਝਨਾਂ ਭੀ ਤੀ 0116 305 6803 ਨੰਬਰ ਪਰ ਫ਼ੋਨ ਕਰਥੋ ਅਨੇ ਅਮੇ ਆਪਨੇ ਮਦਦ ਕਰਵਾ ਆਵਥਾ ਕਰੀਥੁੰ.

ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਣ ਵਿਚ ਕੁਝ ਮਦਦ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ 0116 305 6803 ਨੰਬਰ ਤੇ ਫ਼ੋਨ 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 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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