

APPENDIX 2

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

BUDGET 2019+

CONSULTATION REPORT

January 2019

CORPORATE POLICY AND STRATEGIC RESEARCH TEAM



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This draft report summarises responses to Birmingham City Council's Budget Consultation 2019+, which ran from 13 November 2018 to 31 December 2018. It was based upon a 'Budget 2019+ Consultation' booklet.

The council continues to face a significant financial challenge for 2019/20 against a backdrop of ongoing reductions to government grant and pressures to spend more on core services to the public. These expenditure pressures cover a range of costs including the effects of inflation and meeting increasing demand for adult social care services. The aim is to deliver a sustainable plan for future years. This year's consultation referred to £18m for specific proposals for the coming 2019/20 financial year. It also referred to the longer term financial challenge of identifying a total of £86m by 2021/22. These savings are on top of the savings of around £690m that the council has already made since 2010/11.

In addition to the consultation document the consultation process involved a public meeting, briefing for the business community, online activity (including a survey, social media, webcasts etc) and wider engagement through the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees and discussion at some ward forums.

■

In addition, each directorate was/is expected to carry out individual consultation with its service users, as appropriate, before implementation of any decisions.

Responses were received as follows:

- 873 responses to the online 'Be Heard' online survey.¹
- Comments from organisations made through submissions to 'Budget Views' includes emails and letter. This includes a campaign run by 'Love culture, hate cuts' which generated 784 postal responses, 70 emails and 4,901 signatures to an online petition.

Overall, the budget consultation for 2019+ generated considerable response across the city. The focus was to encourage participants to take part via the online survey and to rank the services that were most important to them. This allowed the consultation to take account of residents' genuine preferences and concerns rather than being skewed towards individual popular campaigns.

This consultation was on the overall resource allocation. Council Directorates will be supplementing this with more detailed service led consultations and equality impact assessments with those affected. These will complement the corporate impact assessment, which will be attached as an appendix to the Council Plan and Budget 2019+ to be considered at Council on 26 February 2019

Respondents were asked to specify which services were most important to them, and to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the proposals. The proposals were grouped according to service and then the level of council tax and the social care precept. Finally, they were invited to make comments or suggestions as to how to save money.

Most important services

The online survey asked respondents to rank the top five services that were most important to them and their families from a list of 25 key services. These ranged from child protection, environmental health and transport planning, to older and disabled people.

The top five themes in the questionnaire based upon the totals were:

¹ This volume of response provides a 95% confidence level (based on a population estimate of 1.14m) and a margin of error of +/- 3.5%.

Top 5 - based on total score (e.g. rank 1 = 5 points, rank 2 = 4 points, rank 3 = 3 points, etc.)	Top 5 - based on most rank '1' given to service
Refuse collection	Care and support for older and disabled people
Care and support for older and disabled people	Refuse collection
Child protection and safeguarding	Child protection and safeguarding
People with mental health issues	Community Safety
Community Safety	Improving B 'ham economy

The online budget consultation survey asked whether respondents agreed or disagreed with the proposals for key service areas. Overall more agreed than disagreed.

Agreement with overall themes (% based on number of respondents to that theme)

Directorates	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Total	Total agree	Total disagree
Place	5%	23%	30%	15%	17%	10%	100%	28%	32%
Economy	7%	31%	32%	13%	10%	8%	100%	38%	22%
Children & Young People	5%	31%	33%	13%	9%	9%	100%	36%	22%
Cross Cutting	10%	32%	31%	11%	8%	6%	100%	43%	20%
Strategic Services	11%	33%	28%	12%	7%	9%	100%	44%	18%
Adult Social Care & Health	7%	31%	34%	10%	8%	10%	100%	38%	18%
Finance & Governance	11%	39%	28%	8%	6%	9%	100%	50%	13%
Human Resources	14%	40%	26%	7%	5%	9%	100%	53%	12%
Chief Executive/ Assistant Chief Executive	13%	38%	29%	6%	5%	9%	100%	51%	11%

If the participant disagreed, they were asked with which proposal they disagreed. The three areas with the highest levels of disagreements were:

- Place (32%) disagree
- Economy (22%) disagree
- Children's Services (22%) disagree

However, outside of the Place directorate, more people agreed with the proposals than disagreed with a significant number of people – all proposals – who neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposals (ranging from 26% to 34%). Where there were specific concerns with particular proposals these were picked up in the analysis of the comments received (later in this report).

The proposals in the Place directorate received the highest level of disagreement - with the top three areas of concern being

- Culture
- Charges for car parking in parks
- Regulation/enforcement especially around pest control.

On Economy - there were two main areas of comments and these were related to

- Concerns around dimming and trimming street lightning
- Closure of the Tourist Information Centre.

Respondents on Children and Young People were concerned about:

- School subscriptions and that schools will no longer subscribe in the future if they are asked to pay more, which could impact education standards and children's safeguarding.
- The Travel Assist offer - feeling that this service needs protecting and that the impact of changes will be affecting the most vulnerable.

Public meetings

Contributors to the open public meeting raised the following subjects:

- Concerns about moving services online.
- Special educational needs and personal transport budgets.
- The use of volunteers in libraries.
- Concerns about care for those with physical disabilities and the elderly.
- The need for tourist information centres in the light of the Commonwealth Games.
- The importance of parks to the city.

The business meeting raised issues such as:

- Business Improvement Districts and recognition of the work that they carry out.
- The assessment system for social care and health businesses.

Council tax and social care precept

- Just over half of all respondents to the online questionnaire disagreed (52%) with the proposed general 2.99% increase in council tax, with just under half agreeing (48%).
- 58% of respondents disagreed to the rise when the council tax was combined with the social care precept with 42% agreeing. The proposal is to increase council tax by a further 2% to pay for adult social care (known as the adult social care precept).

Other comments and suggestions for saving money

Respondents to the online survey were asked for further comments and suggestions as to how the council could save money. Overall, there were 655 comments made. There were as many as 52 different themes. Perceived council waste and inefficiency had the largest number of comments (15%) with respondents describing what they saw as council waste and poor performance, followed by suggestions around contracts/private sector/consultants (9%) that included views both for "Outsourcing more services" and against "less outsourcing". There were calls made to reduce salaries of executives and councillors (6%).

The refuse service received 6.6% of comments in this section and a large proportion of these were suggesting changing to fortnightly collections and suggestions for privatisation.

There were several comments around roads use of external contracts/private sector/consultants; support for the vulnerable.

In addition, there was a separate campaign on "Love culture, hate cuts", which distributed postcards and an online petition around the city's cultural spots for the general public to express concerns about cultural funding. This generated a significant volume of postcards and letters (784), emails (70) and an online petition (4,901 signatures).

END OF EXEC SUMMARY

**It is the council's policy to undertake equality impact assessments in compliance with the Equality Act 2010. In addition to the corporate overview, service specific impact assessments are undertaken as required.*

INTRODUCTION

The consultation

The Council has already made savings of approximately £690m and a long term programme of change is in place, aimed at making the council:

- Smaller and more strategic
- Less about structures, more about people
- Partnership based
- Better at managing demand

Despite this, the city will continue to face an extremely challenging financial situation over the next four years. The city council has always been heavily dependent upon Government grants to meet the costs of services. This has made it very vulnerable to cutbacks in those grants. Planned cutbacks in core Government grants and other forecast changes mean the council expects to have to make savings of £86m through to 2021/2022

Although the total 2017/18 council expenditure is £3bn, a large proportion of our funding must be spent on specific services. For example, £737m of grant funding must be spent on school services, and another £483m is to reimburse the council for meeting housing benefit costs. Income from the provision of council housing must be spent in providing that housing and related services.

Other areas of spending, such as debt financing costs, are fixed and unavoidable. This means that only around a third of expenditure is directly controllable by the council, and savings have to be made from this much smaller budget figure.

Taking all these factors together, the further savings that we now need to make (on top of the annual savings of about £690m that the council has already made from 2010/11 up to 2018/19) are £86m. We have previously consulted on some of the savings which are already included in the council's financial plans including significant savings in the cost of 'back-office' services. This consultation document concentrates on the newly identified proposals and detailed those grouped by key service area.

This report summarises the responses to Birmingham City Council's Budget Consultation 2019+ which ran from 13 November 2018 to 31 December 2018, based upon the 'Budget: Consultation 2019+ document.

The consultation process involved:

- A public meeting led by the council's Leader and Cabinet in the Banqueting suite of the Council House.
- Online Be Heard survey, online communications campaign including webpages, webcasts, newsfeeds, Facebook and Twitter.
- Comments/ letters received from organisations via emails and attached letters.
- A consultation meeting aimed at the business community, attended by representatives of Birmingham-based businesses at The Chamber of Commerce with the council Leader, several cabinet members and chief officers.
- Council directorates are supplementing this over-arching consultation with more detailed consultations with service users about specific proposals before implementation of any decisions. Some have been run in parallel with this consultation.

Residents were asked about the services that were most important to them and their family as well as around the specific cuts. The three top areas of importance to survey respondents were: care and support for older and disabled people, refuse collection and child protection and safeguarding. These same three areas were also the top three areas of importance to respondents in 2018.

Residents evidenced specific concerns about a pest control charges, culture and charges for car parking in parks. Respondents were concerned about trimming street lighting and that cuts would have a highly negative impact on the most vulnerable people in society, including older people. There was a campaign about culture and concern about the closure of a tourist information centre in light of the Commonwealth Games. Running through many of the comments was a concern for how already stretched services, vulnerable people, and families would be impacted.

This year's consultation referred to £86m of new savings required by 2022 with £18m specific proposals required in the 2019/20 financial year. These savings are on top of the savings of around £690m per annum already made since 2010/11.

The proposals in this years consultation document were arranged under nine key service areas, with the table below showing the breakdown from the online survey responses. In addition, there were also some responses from organisations.

Directorates	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Total	Total agree	Total disagree
Place	5%	23%	30%	15%	17%	10%	100%	28%	32%
Economy	7%	31%	32%	13%	10%	8%	100%	38%	22%
Children & Young People	5%	31%	33%	13%	9%	9%	100%	36%	22%
Cross Cutting	10%	32%	31%	11%	8%	6%	100%	43%	20%
Strategic Services	11%	33%	28%	12%	7%	9%	100%	44%	18%
Adult Social Care & Health	7%	31%	34%	10%	8%	10%	100%	38%	18%
Finance & Governance	11%	39%	28%	8%	6%	9%	100%	50%	13%
Human Resources	14%	40%	26%	7%	5%	9%	100%	53%	12%
Chief Executive/ Assistant Chief Executive	13%	38%	29%	6%	5%	9%	100%	51%	11%

Respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the proposals. Overall, more people agreed with the proposals than disagreed. If the participant disagreed they were asked which proposal they disagreed with. Those areas with the highest number of disagreements were:

- Place (32%) disagree
- Economy (22%) disagree
- Children's Services (22%) disagree

The proposal about changes to funding for arts and culture organisations in the city received the highest volume of non-survey responses (in addition to a variety of comments on social

media).

Proposed changes to funding for advice services received the second highest number of non-survey responses.

As well as asking for views on specific savings proposals and new ideas for savings, the consultation asked for views on the increased level of council tax next year and the increase in council tax to support social care (called the social care precept), and finally ideas or suggestions on how the council can deliver services differently.

Council directorates are supplementing this overarching consultation with more detailed consultations with users about specific proposals. Some have been run in parallel with this consultation. Responses to the consultation underline the importance of ongoing engagement by the council with citizens, stakeholders, and partners on the details of the proposals and their delivery.

The report

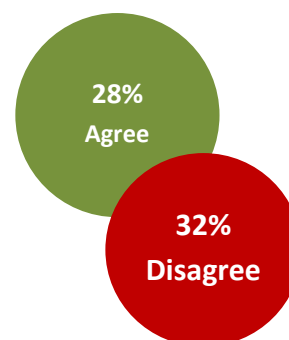
Comments submitted through all the channels outlined above are summarised under the headings used in the online survey. For each of the nine service areas there is a table showing the proportion of people agreeing or disagreeing with it. If the respondent disagreed they were asked to give their comments on the proposals that they disagreed with. Reference is also made to comments made on a particular proposal through other consultation routes where relevant. In particular this year the culture proposals attracting a significant amount of comments through post and email.

The final section addresses the views expressed on issues that do not neatly fall under one of the other headings and comments on some of the approaches taken.

Place Directorate

The proposals relate to the following services:

- Regulation & Enforcement - Income Generation; Pest Control charging; Trading Standards Funding; BID; Hall of Memory; Waste Enforcement Unit; IMLT and RIT
- Adult Education - Corporate Training; TEFL
- School Crossing Patrols – Policy extension & capital measures
- Legal Entitlement and Advice Service - Cease budget
- Community Development & Play - Community Centres
- Bereavement Services Charges - Rights of Burial; Vaulted Graves; Burial Papers; Cremation Fee; Crematoria Charges
- Culture and Visitor Economy - Grant reduction
- Leisure Client - The Active Wellbeing Society grant reduction
- Waste Management - Defined Business Unit; Garden /Bulky Waste charge
- Housing - Social Letting Agency/Incentives; New Operational Model; Integrate funding streams; Shelforce; Management review
- Parks - Fees and charges review



Total Responses: 841

Method	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neither Agree nor Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Don't Know	
Online only	42	5%	194	23%	249	30%	125	15%	147	17%	84	10%

Key findings

There is a mixed response to the Place proposals - 28% of respondents agree compared to 32% who disagree, and a further 40% neither agree nor disagree or don't know. 231 respondents commented on this section. Those who disagree have serious concerns over how the proposals would negatively impact Birmingham, particularly in terms of health and wellbeing, the physical environment, children and young people, and other vulnerable groups.

The proposals that received the most comments are:

Culture and visitor economy

54 respondents disagree with the reduction in arts grants, citing the importance of arts and culture to the city. They believe that this would have a negative impact on Birmingham for a variety of reasons, including the economy, the city's reputation, and on children and young people.

Separate to the online consultation there was a surge of opinion about reductions to cultural funding, especially the CBSO, including responses by a postcard campaign. (Post: 761 and Email: 84 – in addition to an online petition generating 4,901 signatures)

Parks charges

43 respondents are concerned about the proposals for car park charges and other park fees. Many worry that this will lead to fewer people coming to parks, decreasing physical activity and impacting on health and wellbeing. There are also concerns on increased charges for community groups, with the negative impact rippling into the wider community.

Regulation & enforcement

43 people responded to this, including 28 being against charging for pest control and 12 commenting on the reduction of the waste enforcement unit. Respondents are concerned about the negative impact this will have on the physical environment in terms of infestations and fly tipping. Some respondents worry that the pest control charges will discriminate against those on low incomes, causing more potential issues for vulnerable people.

Waste Management

40 respondents are against increasing charges for garden or bulky waste. Some are worried about the environmental impact, particularly increased fly tipping. Others object because they do not want to pay more for a service they already view as unpredictable and of poor quality.

School Crossing Patrols

34 comments expressing deep concerns over children's safety without crossing patrols (17% comments on this theme);

Legal Entitlement and Advice Service

26 comments of this proposal expressing the view that this disproportionately impacts vulnerable people and those on low incomes.

Library Book fund

19 comments on this proposal

Bereavement

16 comments on the bereavement services proposals

Housing

9 comments on the housing proposals

The following comments are typical of many points raised:

"A one-third reduction in funding to arts and community organisations would have a major impact on these sectors, given the sustained cuts over the past few years. [...] it could have a wider impact on Birmingham, as flagship organisations such as the CBSO attract visitors to Birmingham and raise the overall profile of the city...."

"The Car Parking charges in Cannon Hill park are having a damaging affect on visitor numbers [...] This is depriving those in the local community with the lowest means from having the health benefits of our park and a gateway arts centre that has the ability to inspire and enrich our lives."

"Charging for Rat catching without means testing will stop the low paid in the poorest areas dealing with the problem which will then inevitably grow. This is a basic health service and should be maintained."

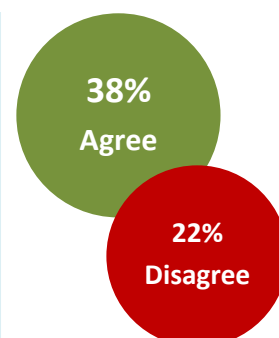
"Waste collection is already expensive and it isn't collected when booked in the first place. This will lead to more flytipping."

"Disagree with culture - cuts to grants and funding, increased cost of parking, cuts to Active Leisure, impact on lower income families- means culture only available to those who can afford it?"

"Ending the Legal Entitlement & Advice service budget for CAB will have a devastating effect on the most vulnerable people who are not able to access such information on-line. This is an austere policy made by people who have never worked with the most vulnerable."

Economy Directorate

- **Planning & Development:** end financial support to the WMGC to supporting companies considering relocating to Birmingham.
- Withdraw funding for the Tourist Information Centre
- **Property Services:** make more efficient use of the Council's property assets.
- **Employment Service:** create a single Education and Skills service bringing together education, employment and skills services currently held across 3 Directorates.
- **Transport:** generate efficiencies through synergies in teams.
- **Highways:** reduce energy use on our streetlights by dimming and shortening the time street lights are active (trimming).
- Addressing our statutory duties associated with Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) and the setting of parking tariffs and charges.



Total Responses: 840

Method	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neither Agree nor Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Don't Know	
Online only	55	7%	261	31%	268	32%	105	13%	82	10%	68	8%

Key findings

38% of respondents agree to the proposals compared to 22% who disagree.

148 respondents provided comments. 30% of all comments were related to concerns around dimming and trimming street lightning and 28% were related to the closure of the Tourist Information Centre.

Respondents are concerned that dimming and trimming street lighting will increase crime and anti-social behaviour. Respondents feel during the night there is a less safe environment; therefore reducing the lighting will raise even more concerns. There are also concerns around increasing amounts of theft, drug use and prostitution, with crime already being an issue in the city. There is a general sense of feeling that public safety of local residents has not been taken into consideration.

Overall respondents are disagreeing to the tourist information service being cut. They feel it is vital for the city, and is important for the future of the city in particular with Birmingham hosting the Commonwealth Games.

Cutting the tourists information service will have a detrimental impact on the city including losing tourists and the associated revenue, damaging the local economy more than the savings made by the council. Respondents feel that tourist depend on information centres to find out about what is available across the city. Many have concerns Birmingham is expected to be the second city, therefore not having a tourist information centre is not right.

The following comments are typical of many points raised:

"I am extremely concerned about the dimming of street lighting during the night. We already have extremely high levels of crime & making it darker will give a strong advantage to the undesirables & criminals & as a result crime will soar even more than".

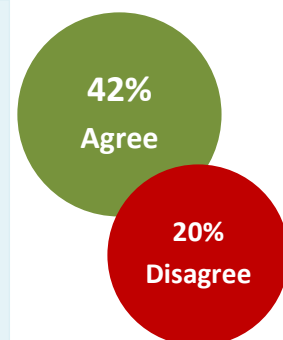
"It is appalling that the council has come to a stage where they are reducing street lighting. What a about the SAFETY of local residents does this not matter! The crime that will be caused by doing this will cost local government much more than you will save".

"Getting rid of the tourist information centre in the lead-in to the Commonwealth Games is a mistake. Direct face-to-face contact with visitors is important to tourism development - particularly in encouraging return visits".

"Lack of face to face tourist information services fall well below what is expected of our claim to be the second city".

Cross-Cutting

- **Customer Services:** Creating a corporate contact centre.
- **Business Improvement:** Fully consolidate support services resulting in the identification of 876 full-time equivalent posts being in scope to transfer into a centralised function.
- **Corporate:** A freeze on non-essential expenditure across all directorates and types of expenditure in October 2018 until further notice.
- **Commercialisation:** Support the ongoing sustainability of a range of services, reviewing fees and charges.
- **Transport:** It is proposed to manage the council's transport function from a central team.
- **Procurement:** Make target savings through re-tendering of the current Constructing West Midlands Frameworks, negotiated reduction in certain Management fees, contract extensions or in flight tenders, reduction in the inspection frequency of lifts within corporate buildings.
- **Property Services:** This proposal seeks the effective utilisation of the City Council's operational property assets through the creation of a portfolio of fit for purpose public sector hubs and rationalise unsuitable, under-utilised and expensive to operate



Total Responses: 850

Method	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neither Agree nor Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Don't Know	
Online only	89	10%	275	32%	267	31%	94	11%	72	8%	53	6%

Key findings

More than twice the percentage of people agree to the proposals (42%) than disagree (20%).

131 provided comments in this section, however only **34** comments were about the proposals in this section. Of these **10 (29%)** were about Business Improvement, the majority of these were concerned that consolidation will mean a reduction in quality of service.

The remaining **97** comments were regarding issues not related to these specific proposals. This could be because this was the first opportunity in the survey for people to enter comments and potential confusion between 'Cross Cutting' and 'Cost Cutting'. The majority of these were general comments opposing cuts to BCC services and a small number concerning specific proposals that could be commented on later in the consultation.

The following comments are typical of many points raised:

"I agree with consolidation but disagree about the proposal to rationalise unsuitable, under-utilised and expensive to operate buildings as I fear that it will be used as an excuse for closing day centres for vulnerable people such as disabled adults or children with special needs."

"I believe that it will be wrong to move the ACAP services as it is an easily accessible team and is necessary to help adults in the city they are experts in ensuring that people are directed in the right places."

"There are really substantial savings to be achieved through better use of resources, performance management of contracts and asset management."

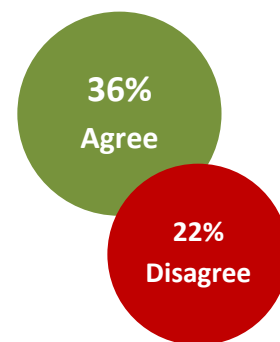
"There is still a lot of unnecessary expenditure such as using and paying for non council run meeting venues, use of paper to print out minutes...."

"There are really substantial savings to be achieved through better use of resources, performance management of contracts and asset management."

Children and Young People Directorate

The proposals relate to the following services:

- **Education infrastructure** – PFI contract
- **Education safeguarding** – increase in subscription fee for schools
- **School and governor support** – increase in school subscription fee
- **Cross-directorate** – relocation
- **Children's Trust** – contract reduction
- **CYP management review**
- **Travel Assist**



Total Responses: 836

Method	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neither Agree nor Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Don't Know	
Online only	43	5%	260	31%	272	33%	110	13%	74	9%	77	9%

Key findings

The responses show there is generally more support for the set of proposals relating to the Children and Young People theme. In total, 36% of respondents actively agree compared to 22% who actively disagree.

133 respondents provided comments. The main reasons they disagree are:

- The risks/impact the proposals could have on CYP and families (28, 21%), with some stating that the council should ensure that any proposals implemented not impact negatively on CYP (4, 3%).
- Other risks/impact (22, 17%) the proposals could have such as, negative impact on: staff, quality of services, safeguarding of CYP and general outcomes for residents.
- The services mentioned in the proposals are considered to be vital by some respondents (8, 6%), with some explicitly stating that they disagree with the proposed savings or that the proposed savings shouldn't go ahead (33, 25%).
- The perception that CYP are not considered to be made a priority by the council (5, 4%), with some stating that there has been a lack of funding or funding for CYP services should be increased and not reduced (33, 25%).

The key messages from comments regarding each of the proposals include:

- **School subscriptions - safeguarding training events and school and governor support and advice (34, 26%):** Many respondents were concerned that school budgets are already stretched and that there is a risk that schools will no longer subscribe in the future if fees are increased. Some were also concerned that this could impact education standards, safeguarding of children and the schools' relationship with the council.
- **Travel Assist offer (21, 16%):** Generally, respondents felt that this service needs protecting and that the impact of the proposed changes will affect the most vulnerable residents and those already facing great difficulty.
- **Children's Trust contract (12, 9%):** The majority of comments suggest a concern about the impact the reduced funding will have on, what many believe to be, an already stretched service (e.g. safeguarding of CYP, quality of service, increased pressure on staff and increased staff turnover). One respondent, however, explicitly stated that they agreed with the proposal.

Key findings (continued)

- **Access to Education and SENDIASS service building relocation (7, 5%):** Three respondents stated that this proposal is a good idea or is workable, while four respondents highlighted risks to be considered (e.g. professionals being less accessible to service users, impact on quality of service).
- **CYP management review (6, 5%):** There was a mixed response to this proposal. Two respondents agree with or find the proposal acceptable. Two respondents were concerned that the management restructure could have a negative impact (e.g. potential loss of experience and expertise and decline in efficiency and credibility of the service). Another respondent questioned how the restructure would improve outcomes. One respondent stated that the council should ensure the focus is on management as opposed to lower grade staff.
- **PFI contracts (5, 4%):** There was a mixed response to this proposal. Three respondents agreed that it was a good idea to review the PFI contracts, while two respondents believed that they do not work, with one of these suggesting that it be cancelled and brought in house.

The following comments are typical of many points raised:

"[Some] proposals look reasonable under the terrible budget shortfalls."

"There should be no cuts in children's services or education. Cuts here will only create tomorrow's problems."

"We have a duty to offer children and young people all the support, facilities, services and life skills they require to ensure they can reach their full potential life. I strongly disagree to any cuts to services offered to children and young people"

"There isn't enough money currently to provide a decent service. Taking more money will result in further hardship & less efficient service."

"It puts undue pressure on families who are already finding day to day life difficult. Reductions will have harmful unintended consequences on families."

"Increasing subscriptions for schools in a period where school budgets are already inadequate to meet need seems unfair and school will simply not subscribe."

"I don't think money should be shaved from Travel Assist which provides a vital service. Improvements need to be made, and funds spent wisely, but funding should not be taken away from families that depend on it to get their children to school."

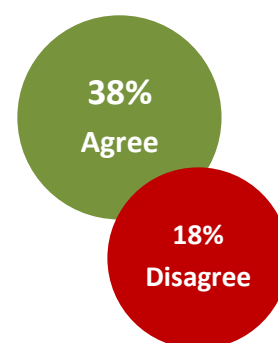
"People on low incomes rely on these localised services and having less support and fewer centres will impact greater on vulnerable members of society."

"Difficult to see how reducing costs of the Children's Trust could not result in poorer quality services and outcome."

Adult Social Care and Health

The proposals relate to helping people remain independent in their own home / communities:

- **Directorate:** Making use of capital resources to pay for larger items of equipment and refining the current system for Financial Assessments to create a fairer system of charging for those who access non-residential care.
- **Specialist Care Services:** Making use of capital resources to pay for larger equipment items
- **Public Health:** Aligning Bharosa service to key public health outcomes and delivers against the Domestic Violence Strategy. Decommission the existing HIV/TB service and work with NHS England and other providers to develop more general care arrangements for service users.



Total Responses: 840

Method	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neither Agree nor Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Don't Know	
Online only	42	5%	194	23%	249	30%	125	15%	147	17%	84	10%

Key Findings

More than twice the percentage of respondents agree (38%) rather than disagree (18%) to the Adult Social Care theme set of proposals.

105 respondents provided comments. Just under a quarter 24 comments (22.9%) of all comments referred to cutting costs and services, 24 comments were received on decommissioning the HIV/TB service and commented about the negative impact on the most vulnerable people in society. The main reasons they disagree are:

The cuts will highly impact on vulnerable people including older people, disabled people and families. This will cause isolation and higher hospital admissions. It was felt that Adult social care and health is an important service and will highly impact on the lives of disabled people and carers. Making cuts to services will be detrimental to their health and wellbeing. Concerns were raised about vulnerable people not having a say and that they are not listened too.

There was a strong sense of feeling that the HIV/TB service should not be removed as specialist support workers have been trained to support and understand the needs of people with HIV/TB. It was felt that removing this specialist service could prevent people from access to main stream services and is essential to the health and wellbeing of these patients.

The following comments are typical of many points raised:

"Cutting services that protect the old isolated and vulnerable will lead to higher hospital admissions".

"Cuts to this directorate will adversely affect the most vulnerable members of society".

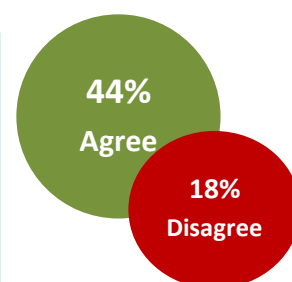
"Specialist support workers understand the nature of HIV and stigma associated that can stop people accessing mainstream services".

"I strongly disagree with the decommissioning of HIV/TB services; these services are vital to those living with HIV in our community and those in at risk groups. By decommissioning these specialised services these communities are put at risk and the essential care they receive is threatened".

Strategic Services Directorate

The proposals relate to helping people remain independent in their own home / communities:

- **Customer Services:** Translation services, Online account BRUM, renewal of Garden Waste collections online, reducing number of support roles.
- **Communications:** Reduce marketing budget by £150k to £100K with service requirements paid for by the service area.
- **Revenues and Benefits:** Reducing the Local Welfare Provision for 'White Goods' and furniture.



Total Responses: 846

Method	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neither Agree nor Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Don't Know	
Online only	93	11%	282	33%	235	28%	99	12%	57	7%	80	9%

Key Findings

More than twice the percentage of people agree to the proposals (44%) than disagree (18%).

110 respondents provided comments. A quarter of all responses received (29, 25%) were related to an online account. 20% were about the impact an online account would have on vulnerable people and 17% were about the impact the cuts would have on vulnerable people. There were also concerns about language barriers and removal of the translation service.

Respondents feel that current online reporting is poor and fails to work. Some people especially older vulnerable people, those with learning difficulties and people may struggle to access online accounts and some people may not have computers or access to online accounts. Respondents also felt that online accounts would be restricted for those with language barriers. Closure of libraries and reduces hours of some libraries will also prevent some people from gaining access to online accounts.

Another issue raised was the response turnaround after reporting online. **The wait for some respondents has been up to three weeks.** Most respondents prefer contact by telephone.

There was a strong disagreement around stopping the translation service. People struggle to understand what is being asked over the phone, online services will make this even harder. Interpretation should not stop and should be a service people are entitled to. Birmingham is becoming more and more diverse and therefore the language barriers need to be taken into consideration.

The following comments are typical of many points raised:

"Given the councils history with failed online accounts and single customer records, you should probably have the thing in place and working before putting staff savings against it".

"The website for reporting repairs is poor and to have to other things by the website inspires no confidence".

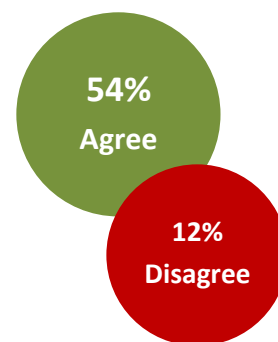
"The 'online only' approach to customer service will mean that people without easy access to the internet, such as homeless, vulnerably housed or elderly people will be disadvantaged, especially as you continue to close libraries".

"It is really hard for a person to understand clearly (even if their own language) when talking on the phone".

HR Directorate

The proposals relate to the following services:

- HR – changes to DBS checks
- HR – funding for support staff groups
- HR – collaborate with other LAs to provide statutory training
- HR – procurement of one provider for all apprenticeships
- HR – reduction in managers
- HR – replacement of IT system



Total Responses: 842

Method	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neither Agree nor Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Don't Know	
Online only	115	14%	334	40%	218	26%	57	7%	44	5%	74	9%

Key findings

The responses show there is general support for the HR proposals. In total 54% of respondents actively agree compared to 12% who actively disagree.

Of the 66 comments received the most popular topics are the changes to the DBS check process (14, 21%), apprenticeships (9, 14%) and the replacement of the HR IT system (6, 9%).

DBS checks: Comments are largely concerned about the risk involved in the self declaration aspect of the proposal. Many believe it was risky to put the responsibility of declaring convictions on staff, with some believing that this would be a safety issue that could put vulnerable adults and children at risk. One respondent states that that the expected saving were not worth the risk.

One provider for apprenticeships: All of the comments received about having one provider for apprenticeships are negative. Key messages are that single providers would impact smaller providers and local providers, who some believe would be able to provide better support to apprentices. One respondent suggests this should be brought in house. Another respondent believes that seeking one provider would also weaken the council's negotiating position.

HR IT system: Key concerns and questions include: whether it is the best use of budget, that the council may not understand the costs fully, suggesting costs were being underestimated, and, that the council relies too much on IT solutions and these may not deliver the savings expected.

One respondent agrees that the system should be replaced. Another stated that the council has made mistakes in the past when implementing new IT solutions and urges it to learn from these mistakes.

The following comments are typical of many points raised:

"The small saving on staffing achieved by eliminating those responsible for criminal checks on employees does not justify the serious increase in risk to users, by total reliance on voluntary self assessments. Those with criminal convictions are unlikely to volunteer such sensitive information."

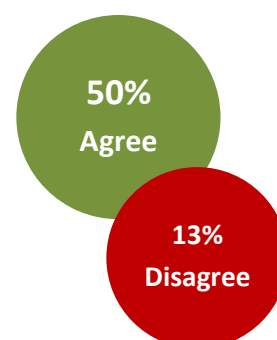
"Whilst I understand the need to reduce the number of apprenticeship training providers I feel the priority should be to procure local providers rather than a huge national company."

"BCC relies too heavily on poor and inefficient IT. Apply IT only where it makes common sense. Savings through investment in IT rarely deliver."

Finance and Governance Directorate

The proposals relate to the following services:

- **Finance and Accounts Payable** – new IT system
- **Legal** - reduce the total amount of money spent by Birmingham City Council on barristers fees and external law firms
- **Legal** – management review



Total Responses: 840

Method	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neither Agree nor Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Don't Know	
Online only	90	11%	326	39%	235	28%	63	8%	47	6%	79	9%

Key Findings

The responses show there is general support in favour of the proposals set out for the Finance and Governance directorate. In total, 50% of respondents actively agree compared to 13% who actively disagree.

In total, 79 comments were received in relation to these proposals.

Finance and Accounts Payable IT system: Of the 32 (41%) comments, the following key messages emerged:

- Comments were largely cautious and negative about procurement of a new system. Although, two comments stated that this is a sensible idea.
- Concerns include loss of experienced staff, failure of system to meet the council's needs, failure of the system to deliver cost savings, cost of system and maintenance.

Legal and Governance external legal spend and management review: From the 12 (15%) comments the received the following key points were highlighted:

- The quality of the legal advice is very important. One respondent stated, "you get what you pay for", suggesting that a smaller budget may result in a poorer quality of service.
- A reduction in service or poorer quality of advice may cause more problems and be more costly in the long term. Some respondents said that services such as Children's Services and the Homeless Service may face more legal challenges and a greater pressure as a result.

There were also few comments that suggested that the council wasted money. Some suggested this could be addressed by working in a more SMART way and by building staff rather than just cutting costs.

The following comments are typical of many points raised:

"It is beyond costly to lose experienced finance staff only to find a new IT system does not live up to expectation and revenue is lost because transactions fail."

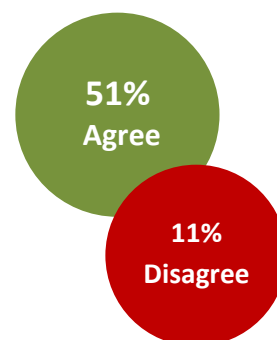
"...you get what you pay for when it comes to lawyers. Failure to obtain the correct legal advice will lead to problems and claims later which will invariably cost more to sort out."

"...this Council waste money and needs to be streamlined."

Chief Executive's and Assistant Chief Executive's Directorate

The proposals relate to the following services:

- **Assistant Chief Executive** - reducing the non-staffing budgets and generating income
- **Assistant Chief Executive** - reviewing management structures



Total Responses: 849

Method	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neither Agree nor Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Don't Know	
Online only	109	13%	320	38%	244	29%	52	6%	44	5%	80	9%

Key Findings

The responses show there is general support in favour of the proposals relating to Chief Executive and Assistant Chief Executive Directorate. In total, 51% of respondents actively agree compared to 11% who actively disagree.

58 comments were received in relation to these proposals.

Reviewing management structures: There are 16 (28%) comments relating to reviewing management structures. Nearly all these comments speak negatively about senior roles. This includes:

- There are too many high paid roles.
- The number of senior roles should be reduced while lower grade roles, particularly frontline ones should be protected.
- The salary of the highest paid roles should be reduced to help meet savings targets.

However, two respondents spoke about the importance of having strong leadership to effectively manage the changes.

Reducing the council's membership to external bodies: All four (7%) respondents that commented on this disagreed with this proposal. Concerns include that the council will not be represented as well and opportunities to learn and grow will be lost.

There were 12 (21%) comments made highlighting potential impacts the proposals. These include: negative impact on key services, stress on the city's residents and communities, additional pressure and stress on staff.

The following comments are typical of many points raised:

"Focus on reducing the salary of the top staff and not the services offered by the supporting staff."

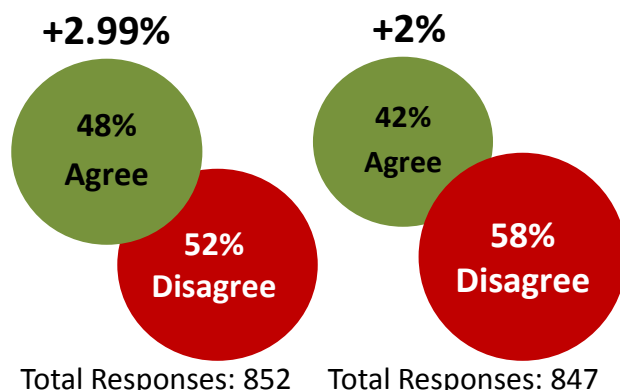
"I fear that learning, networking and improvement opportunities will be lost without the contact with other local government organisations"

"Public services...are being taken away from us... They are affecting everyone, the most vulnerable the most."

Council Tax and Social Care Precept

Two questions were asked in relation to council tax:

- Firstly, if they agree to a **2.99%** CT (Council Tax) increase each year from 2019/20, and then 1.99% in later years.
- If they agree to a further 2% increase each year from 2019/20, i.e. **4.99%** in total, to support social care (Social Care Precept).



Key findings

Respondents are **slightly against the 2.99% CT rise** but more are against the 2% Social Care increase. 418 respondents provided comments on the council tax rise and 412 on the Social Care precept (excluding those who only said 'as above/see above').

The main reason given for those disagreeing with the proposed rises are that it is **not affordable** for the respondent themselves or for others, especially those on low incomes, with concerns that this would potentially push them into poverty and negatively impact families and pensioners. Many cite that they already face increased costs to daily living. 4.99% is more than inflation – viewed as **far too steep a rise**, particularly without an increase in income.

There is also **scepticism in the council's ability to use the money effectively** to improve services, often based on perceptions that the council have **poorly managed services and budgets** and that the council should provide better services before applying any rise. The poor quality of **waste collection**, and ongoing discontent over the bin strike, as well as the poor state of roads, are frequently cited as part of the council's incompetency, along with doubt over the council's ability to improve services using this increase in funds. Also, many do not agree with paying more council tax when services are getting cut.

Other reasons given include:

- Council should look for more savings within the current budget;
- Those who don't use the Social Care service shouldn't have to pay for it;
- No value for money in terms of police, with increasing crime on the streets;
- Central government should provide more funding, particularly for social care;
- Make council tax more means-tested, with some suggesting that the wealthier pay more.

The following comments are typical of many points raised:

"5% last year and further increases not in line with wage increases which are in real terms decreasing how are people supposed to be able to survive?"

"...Stuck in the poverty gap. Elderly homeowners will be cutting food and heating to keep the roof over their heads. 3% is a large increase; subsequent 2% annual increases will see major (hidden) welfare problems with those who will be unable to cope."

"Services have deteriorated during the past months. City run schools are falling apart, social services are poor, domestic waste collection is awful and our roads are dangerous because of poor maintenance."

"I do not mind a rise to support social care - however, a rise of nearly 5% whilst also cutting services would likely lead to rioting in the streets (if we're able to walk through the uncollected rubbish)."

Comments and suggestions for delivering services differently

In summarising open-ended questions, there is by necessity a degree of simplification and categorisation. This should be borne in mind when reading the analysis below.

The survey received a total of 655 wide-ranging and detailed comments and suggestions under the question. Respondents appeared to take this opportunity to air their complaints concerning the council. This is shown by the (8.4%) of comments that have been categorised as general comments as they were comments not directly linked to any of the themes in the consultation.

The remaining suggestions and comments on how the Council might improve services covered a wide range of topics. The suggestions covered **52** individually identified themes when giving their views including income generation, support for vulnerable people, collaboration, volunteering, major projects/events and the Commonwealth Games. The top 5 themes were:

- Council waste and inefficiency
- Contracts/Private sector /Consultants
- The refuse service
- Reduce salaries of executives and councillors
- Roads and Highways

Perceived council waste and inefficiency had the largest number of comments, with **14.7%** of respondents describing what they saw as council waste and poor performance. **9.0%** of respondents had suggestions around **Contracts/Private sector/Consultants** which included views both for “*Outsourcing more services*” and against “*less outsourcing, more in sourcing*”. There were calls made to **reduce salaries of executives and councillors**, with **5.6%** of respondents suggesting salary and allowance reductions for senior managers/councillors: “*reduce salary differentials i.e. reduce number of 'high cost managerial' and focus on front line*”.

The refuse service received **6.6%** a large proportion of these were suggesting changing to fortnightly collection: “*Change domestic waste collections to every other week for refuse*”. Suggestions were also made around privatisation: “*I would suggest that you privatise the Waste Management service*” and the performance of the green waste collection service: “*If you are serious about green waste then the service needs improving*”.

There were several comments around **roads and highways (4.7%)**. Among the subjects was parking, including suggestions for increasing of charges: “*Charge a premium on car parking to be reinvested in public transport*”. Additional comments regarding street lighting were also a common theme “*LED lighting for all residential roads*”, - as were comments regarding street cleaning - “*think about using people on community service to help keep the streets clean*” - and road/pavement conditions - “*Improve the roads, its pothole alley at the moment and better materials may never need a new road surfacing*”.

Other suggestions were made around **reducing the number of managers (2.9%)**, **major projects (2.9%)** and **major events (2.1%)**, increasing the **support for the vulnerable (1.8%)**, **collaboration** with other organisations (1.7%) %, and **volunteering (1.5%)**.

There were also several comments around the funding of the **Commonwealth Games (2.3%)** and potential strains on Birmingham’s budget as a result.

OTHER ISSUES

As in earlier years, there were strong feelings that the cuts shouldn't be made at all and concern that the cuts would affect the most vulnerable.

Representativeness and consultation approach

This year's budget consultation survey received over 873 responses, which was an increase of 37% on last year. This does not take into account responses or comments received as letters, emails or other channels such as social media.

The strategy for the communications and engagement campaign was similar to the approach adopted for the previous two years, e.g. led by digital activity to reach the largest possible number of people with the incorporation of other offline activity to help ensure the reducing number of people without internet access are catered for. The consultation focussed on encouraging comments to be made via the Be Heard online survey. Strenuous efforts were made to publicise the budget consultation so that people could make comments on the budget proposals. It is not possible to have simultaneously an open access online survey and to ensure that responses by different groups of people are proportional to their numbers in Birmingham's population. However, the Be Heard online survey does have the advantage of allowing respondents to make overarching comments on all the proposals and to rank the services most important to them. The Be Heard survey allows the respondents to give more considered responses.

Budget Views' letters and emails are taken into account in the individual sections of this report. A table of responses from organisations is included at the back of this report. The online survey respondents were asked to complete personal profiles including their gender, ethnicity, and sexuality, and whether they had a disability or long term condition/illness. A large majority of respondents answered these questions and a detailed analysis of this data is contained in Appendix 3. Appendix 3 also contains an analysis of online respondents by ward where people had provided a full postcode. Appendix 2 contains the scrutiny committees' responses to the consultation.

An important principle of the consultation process was open access (referred to above). However, this has meant that the responses cannot be claimed be statistically representative of the views of Birmingham residents. As well as the lower representation of some groups of residents than their proportion in the city's population, respondents to any consultation process tend to be those concerned about a particular issue. However, these views do reflect the views of a large number of people in the city and are thus important.

Some respondents didn't feel that there was sufficient detail to make a decision. However, that information will be provided at an individual service level in the detailed consultation with service users carried out by directorates.

Appendix 1

Responses from organisations

	Organisation		Topics covered
1	Arts Council England	Arts and culture	Opposition to reduction in arts funding
2	Birmingham and Black Country Local Nature Partnership	Place	General comments about proposals
3	Citizens Advice Birmingham	Advice services	Opposition to reduction of funding for advice and support services for residents
4	Colmore Business Improvement District	Business Improvement Districts	Opposition to proposal to cut one BID-supporting job role, and suggestions for improving inter-BID cooperation
5	Culture Central	Arts and culture	Opposition to reduction in arts funding
6	Healthwatch Birmingham	Adult Social Care, Place, Libraries	General response about a range of issues
7	Midland Heart	Housing	General response about current issues and recommendations around housing and homelessness, and opposing associated budgetary reductions
8	Rees Care Leavers Foundation	Children's services, Place, Economy, Strategic Services	General comments about proposals
9	SENDIASS	Children's Services	Opposition to a range of savings proposals
10	Spitfire Support Services	Advice services	Opposition to reduction of funding for advice and support services for residents
11	The Active Wellbeing Society	Active lifestyle	Opposition to funding reductions for healthy lifestyle programmes

Appendix 2

Scrutiny Response Budget 2019/20+ consultation

Purpose

As part of the Budget 2019/20 Consultation, a number of the O&S Committees considered aspects of the budget proposals as they related to their portfolios, in committee meetings in December

Co-ordinating O&S Committee

On 7th December, the Co-ordinating O&S Committee looked at the budget consultation, focusing on:

Corporate oversight of the budget and implications for corporate priorities;

Any cross-cutting issues/implications and any longer term issues.

The Deputy Leader, Cllr Brigid Jones, attended the meeting, with Steve Powell and Michael Furness from Finance. In the discussion, members raised a number of issues and questions. In particular, members were keen to explore how robust the consultation was, with concerns that:

No alternatives are presented – it would be a more genuine consultation if it offered the public some real choices to be made; this would enable the Council to respond to people's views, and broker a genuine dialogue about options and priorities;

Previous proposed savings have resulted in legal challenges – how sure are we about the quality of our consultation processes, to protect the council in future?

Overall it was felt that the Council was missing opportunities to positively engage citizens in the process, for example by having a rolling process rather than a one off annual event. The Council should engage interest groups across the city on an ongoing basis, to engage them in the decisions the Council must make in relation to reducing budgets and how that might best be done, rather than just presenting proposals that often elicit negative reactions.

Another key point was the need to fully understand the policy implications of reducing budgets and funding. This is partly with regard to prevention / early intervention – what impact will our decisions now have on provision and on costs in the future, especially with regard to the proposed reduction of advice services funding; and also the wider impact some decisions will have on the type of city Birmingham will become, for example e.g. the reduction in funding for the arts.

Other points raised in the debate included:

“Seeing the broader picture” – the budget consultation document sets out additional proposals for savings in the coming year, but there is no information on the savings decisions made in previous years. Whilst this information is publicly available elsewhere, in order that consultees are able to set the new proposals in context, these should be explicit.

Clarity on what is being consulted on – it may not be clear to all that this consultation is on the budget outline and consultation on specific proposals will follow.

It would also assist citizens in responding to the consultation to have a clear picture on what are statutory services and what are not;

The consultation could also publicise on ideas as to how citizens might be able to help to reduce costs.

Finally committee members reinforced the point set out in the audit letter, that proposals must be deliverable and the council must not dip into reserves as in the past.

The Co-ordinating O&S Committee intends to undertake more closely about how the Council approaches consultation.

Children's Social Care O&S Committee

On 12th December, the Children's Social Care O&S Committee looked at the budget consultation, focusing on CY110 19+ Travel Assist. The Acting Corporate Director for Young People informed Members that they have been able to reduce the proposed overspend.

The Interim Finance Business Partner, Children & Young People stated that the budget had a previously non-delivered saving of £3.5m and they are putting in an extra £2.2m which means the budget has increased from £19m to £20m - £21.2m approximately and the £1.7m is to bridge the gap. However, Members were confused as this is not reflected in the factsheet (extract below):

The amount currently spent on the service and the proposed reduction is shown below

Total Spend 18/19	Income 18/19	Net Spend 18/19	Saving in 19/20	Saving in 20/21	Saving in 21/22	Saving in 22/23
£18.798m	(£0.403m)	£18.395m	(£1.718m)	(£2.488m)	(£2.488m)	(£2.488m)

Members were concerned that demand is increasing and therefore there are concerns regarding deliverability. The Acting Corporate Director stated that they needed to look at the family of SEND services, including those of the partners and they will also be consulting with families etc. to help shape the service.

Learning, Culture & Physical Activity O&S Committee

An informal meeting of the committee was held on Wednesday 19th December with Cllr Jayne Francis, Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Culture. The following issues were raised:

Education Infrastructure – Members felt there was insufficient information, to feel confident about this proposal being achieved;

Stop Provision for English as a Foreign Language to Prevent a Greater Pressure – members were reassured on this proposal as it was confirmed that this did not refer to English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), but relates to students from overseas to study who need a higher standard of English;

Reduction in Arts Grants by One Third – members thought this was a disproportionate saving compared to other saving proposals and queried what support will remain for local community arts organisations. Members requested a detailed breakdown on the

organisations and the cuts that are being proposed and were informed this information will be available in January 2019;

The proposal to re-locate the Special Education Needs and Disability Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) – members raised a concern that, as demand is increasing, whether this will affect the support that is provided to parents and what is the operational impact?

Management Review and Structure – members were keen to ensure that the restructure would constitute management efficiencies and not cuts to front line services, and asked whether this will affect the delivery of the service and whether the Council will still be able to meet its statutory responsibility as corporate parents.

Members also asked questions on schools' statutory duty regarding safeguarding and requested information on what the cost to the schools would be.

Health and Social Care O&S Committee

The budget savings proposals for Adult Social Care and Health, including Public Health, were discussed by the Health and Social Care O&S Committee at its meeting on 18th December 2018.

In attendance, to address questions and comments arising from the discussion were Councillor Paulette Hamilton (Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care) and Becky Pollard (Interim Director of Public Health).

Becky Pollard also provided additional information which had been requested on the Public Health proportional spend for the April 2017-March 2018 financial year.

Members raised the following points in relation to each of the budget savings proposals listed below:-

AD101A 19+ Funding of Equipment Loan Store

Members questioned the use of capital resources as opposed to revenue or the Better Care Fund (BCF). It was unclear if the BCF came from the capital resource budget and, if so, what was the amount of capital resources that could have been used elsewhere? The Cabinet Member said this service was currently funded through the BCF but going forward a figure had been negotiated with the Health Service to provide funding. A response to the questions on the capital resource budget was not available at the time but a written briefing would be provided.

It was noted that this service brought in an income of £4.479m in 2018/19 and the Cabinet Member was asked if there were opportunities in other services where it might be possible to generate income from external funding.

AD101B 19+ Funding for Assistive Equipment

A comment was made that delays in providing equipment can result in delayed transfers of care.

There were two questions with regard to the Equipment Loan Service:-

Is equipment reclaimed when it is no longer required?

Does the Loan Service record what equipment is on loan and to whom in order that it can be reclaimed and redistributed?

In response, the Cabinet Member confirmed that the equipment is reclaimed but did not have the level of detail required regarding the operational process. It was agreed that the Cabinet Member would request a briefing note from the department to be circulated to the committee.

AD102 19+ Bharosa Service Birmingham

In response to a question about the word 'assumed' in relation to the text '... it is assumed that the service will be directly funded by Public Health ...', members were told that options were being considered about how the service will be delivered in the future and this may not be through the Council. The Chairman asked for confirmation from the Cabinet Member that there is a commitment from the Council to fund the service through the Public Health budget until other options have been developed, which was agreed.

AD103 19+ HIV/TB Support

Support was given for the decision not to discontinue the service but concern was raised that there should be ongoing support for HIV/TB sufferers particularly those who were homeless, not registered with a GP or asylum seekers. Members were told that discussions were taking place with service users, the provider, NHS commissioners and voluntary sector to better understand how else the service can be delivered.

AD104 19+ Fees and Charges Review

Clarification was sought about the definition of the word 'necessary' when referring to the text '.... allow the person to keep enough benefit to pay for necessary disability related expenditure'. It was pointed out that the Council may have one perception and service users may have a different perception. In response, members were told that consultation was taking place with service users to see what they deem is 'necessary'.

Other issues raised included:

- The Cabinet Member was asked what was the legal minimum amount of money that the Council must have in reserves to protect Adult Social Care and Health? The Cabinet Member did not have this information but a response would be sent to committee members.
- The timing of the public consultation, over the Christmas period, was also questioned. The Cabinet Member confirmed that there had been a lot of interest from the public. The consultation had been brought forward a month in response to complaints in previous years of it being held too late.
- Regarding the information provided on budget savings carried forward from Financial Plan 2018+, the Cabinet Member was asked to provide further detail on pension strain costs and the implications of budget cuts that are already in the system. The Cabinet Member said the pension strain costs are applicable to people who retire early and are able to access their pension and the costs associated with that. She also confirmed that some savings from previous years had not been met but mitigations had been put in place through the receipt of extra funding from government.

Housing and Neighbourhoods O&S Committee

The Housing and Neighbourhoods O&S Committee considered the Budget Consultation 2019+ at its meeting on 11th December 2018.

Councillor Sharon Thompson, Cabinet Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods, and Councillor Majid Mahmood, Cabinet Member for Clean Streets, Waste and Recycling, were in attendance to present the budget proposals relating to their respective portfolios and to answer Members' questions.

The following issues were raised:

PL122 19+ Proposal to create a wholly owned company as a Social Lettings Agency – Members were told that around 700 social properties are being lost each year through Right to Buy and in response to a question around whether these could be bought back by the Council were told that this is being looked at, together with the Empty Property Strategy, and a briefing will be brought back to scrutiny once this has been done;

PL115 19+ Re-prioritisation of the work of the Waste Enforcement Unit to focus on cases of fly tipping where the likelihood of prosecution is high – Members were concerned that the current difficulties with regard to progressing good cases would be exacerbated by this proposal, resulting in even less cases being progressed.

Members felt that a more pro-active approach was needed in terms of enforcement with fly-tipping being a big problem in the city and suggested that involving other sections of the council, e.g. housing officers, would be a way forward. The Cabinet Member advised that there are plans for joined-up working on the street scene and Members requested that a report be brought back to committee detailing the proposals.

Sustainability & Transport O&S Committee

On 13th December, the Sustainability & Transport O&S Committee considered 4 particular budget proposals as they relate to the Committee's portfolio:-

- EC102 Transport & Connectivity (Restructure of services)
- EC106a Highways (Energy use on streetlights)
- EC106b Highways (Local Engineering Service)
- EC106c Highways (Civil Parking Enforcement)

The Cabinet Member for Transport & Environment, Cllr Waseem Zaffar and Kevin Hicks, Assistant Director, Highways attended the meeting and gave further details on the proposals. Cllr Zaffar encouraged residents and other stakeholders to respond to the consultation.

In respect to the 'dimming and trimming' of streetlights it was emphasised by Kevin Hicks, Assistant Director for Highways and Infrastructure that areas of concern in relation to crime and safety will have an assessment done in line with a national code of practice that all Local Authorities have to carry out.

There was concern about the increase in parking charges adversely affecting drivers living in areas where there are controlled parking zones (CPZs) within the area marked for the Clean Air Zone (CAZ) resulting in them being charged twice. There was also additional concern on

drivers having to pay for an increase in on-street parking in local centres and the negative effect on businesses.

The Cabinet Member, Cllr Zaffar clarified that the increase in parking charges was specifically targeted at the city centre only and this was to reduce the number of vehicles parking in the city centre and to encourage people to use sustainable modes of travel. He added that this was in-line with the City Council's policies in tackling air pollution and congestion and that additional income raised would be re-invested in transport policies. Cllr Zaffar added that CPZs were part of the submission to government for funding from the Clean Air Fund to put in place exemptions and mitigation measures for those living in the CAZ zone.

The issue of withdrawing funding of school crossing patrols in high risk areas where there are no pedestrian controlled lights (PL105) was raised by Cllr Huxtable. The concern was that with no crossing wardens funded by the Council where would the funding come from within the Cabinet Member's budget to invest in capital measures such as pelican crossings to ensure the safety of children and other road users. In response it was clarified that this budget line was not within Cllr Zaffar's portfolio however capital funding can come from a variety of sources and this would be identified once the budget consultation has ended. The Cabinet Member stated that he would take the response back as part of feedback to the consultation.

Resources O&S Committee

Clive Heaphy, Corporate Director, Finance and Governance, attended the committee on 13th December, and the following points were made:

Under paragraph 3 Summary of Key Issues the third bullet point states that, in future years, there were forecast savings that were not fully deliverable of £8.9m in 2019/20 but the 2019/20 budget consultation states £4m. Therefore, there is a £4.9m gap in 2019/20. The Corporate Director stated that the budget consultation figure is an amalgam of over and under achieved and he undertook to break this down and undertake a reconciliation of the two figures.

The monitoring report refers to the mitigation to the Enablement Service savings and this is not sustainable in the long term. If this remains unresolved Members were informed that there will be an impact on the 2018/19 and 2019/20 budgets.

Travel Assist – there is a £2.2m (no movement since Month 6) base budget pressure and £1.3m (no movement since Month 6) non-achievement of savings and the Council are currently consulting on £1.718m saving for 2019/20. Members agreed that detailed questions are to be put to the relevant officers when Travel Assist is discussed in January or February 2019.

The day nurseries budget pressure in the monitoring report should not have an impact next year.

The Early Years budget pressure is not reflected in the 2019/20 budget consultation.

SENAR service has a funding shortfall of £1.1m due to grant funding running out. If £0.626 contribution from other partners does not come in then the consultation is looking at other partner incomes as part of the consultation.

Appendix 3

Profile of survey respondents

Age (years)	% of Total
Under 18	0%
18 to 24	2%
25 to 34	8%
35 to 44	16%
45 to 54	21%
55 to 64	22%
65 to 84	19%
85+	0%
Prefer not to say / not answered	10%
Total	100%

Gender	% of Total
Female	42%
Male	43%
Prefer not to say / not answered	15%
Total	100%

Sexual Orientation	% of Total
Bisexual	2%
Gay or Lesbian	4%
Heterosexual or Straight	63%
Other	2%
Prefer not to say / Not answered	29%
Total	100%

Ethnicity	% of Total
Asian / Asian British	6%
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	1%
Mixed / multiple ethnic groups	3%
Other Ethnic group	1%
White	79%
Prefer not to say / Not answered	10%
Total	100%

Religion	% of Total
Buddhist	1%
Christian	38%
Hindu	1%
Jewish	1%
Muslim	5%
Sikh	1%
No Religion	30%
Any Other Religion	2%
Prefer not to say / not answered	23%
Total	100%

Disability (physical/mental) - lasting or expecting to last for 12 months or more	% of Total
No	59%
Yes	24%
Prefer not to say / not answered	18%
Total	100%

Special conditions or illnesses (people can choose more than one)	Count	% of People with physical or mental health conditions (% of 207 respondents who ticked yes to disability)
Dexterity	33	15.9%
Hearing	35	16.9%
Learning	15	7.2%
Memory	20	9.7%
Mental Health	74	35.7%
Mobility	93	44.9%
Social or Behaviour	14	6.8%
Stamina	50	24.2%
Vision	15	7.2%
Other	29	14.0%

Note: percentages do not add up to 100% as respondents allowed more than one option

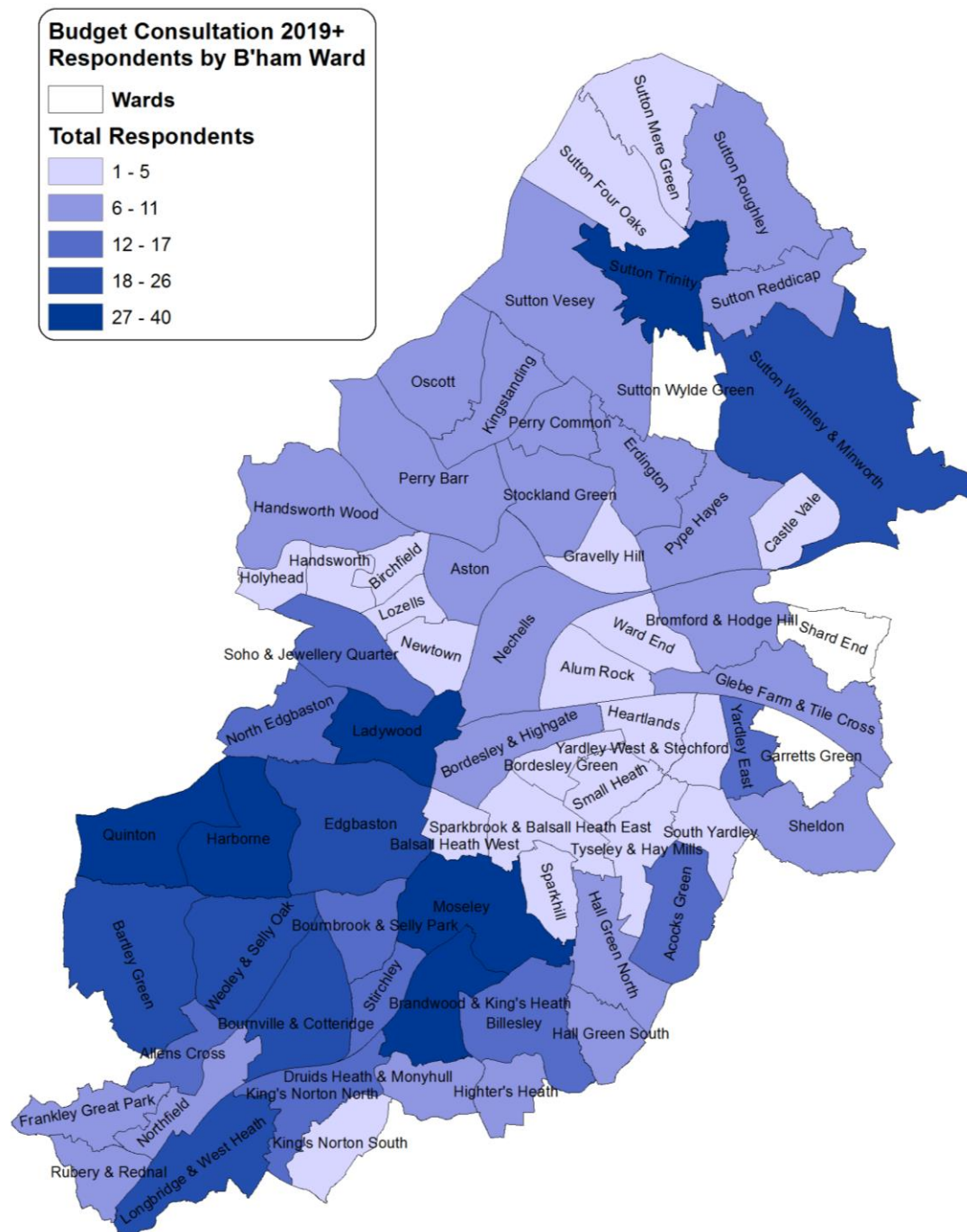
Caring responsibilities	% of Total
None	50.5%
Primary carer of child under 18	15.0%
Primary carer disabled child	1.9%
Primary carer disabled adult (18 and over)	2.5%
Primary carer older person (65 and over)	6.2%
Secondary carer	7.7%
Prefer not say / not answered	16.2%
Total	100.0%

Respondent type (Question 1)	% of Total
Resident	90.5%
Local Business	3.0%
Charity	3.7%
Community	4.6%
Work for Council	11.6%
Councillor	0.6%
Public Sector	2.7%
Other –Total	4.6%

Note: percentages do not add up to 100% as respondents allowed more than one option

Respondents by ward – all responses

Of the 742 respondents who provided a postcode, 3.5% live outside of Birmingham. The remaining residents are based in the following wards.



Birmingham Ward	Total Respondents
Sutton Trinity	40
Moseley	35
Ladywood	31
Quinton	29
Brandwood & King's Heath	28
Harborne	27
Sutton Walmley & Minworth	26
Bournville & Cotteridge	23
Longbridge & West Heath	21
Weoley & Selly Oak	20
Bartley Green	19
Edgbaston	19
King's Norton North	17
Allens Cross	16
Bournbrook & Selly Park	16
North Edgbaston	16
Billesley	15
Acocks Green	14
Yardley East	14
Soho & Jewellery Quarter	13
Stirchley	13
Druids Heath & Monyhull	11
Frankley Great Park	11
Erdington	10
Highter's Heath	10
Kingstanding	10
Perry Common	10
Bromford & Hodge Hill	9
Hall Green North	9
Oscott	9
Sheldon	9
Glebe Farm & Tile Cross	8
Northfield	8
Perry Barr	8
Pype Hayes	8

Birmingham Ward	Total Respondents
Sutton Roughley	8
Aston	7
Bordesley & Highgate	7
Hall Green South	7
Nechells	7
Stockland Green	7
Sutton Reddicap	7
Sutton Vesey	7
Handsworth Wood	6
Rubery & Rednal	6
Small Heath	5
Yardley West & Stechford	5
King's Norton South	4
Newtown	4
South Yardley	4
Sparkbrook & Balsall Heath East	4
Sutton Four Oaks	4
Sutton Mere Green	4
Balsall Heath West	3
Bordesley Green	3
Sparkhill	3
Tyseley & Hay Mills	3
Ward End	3
Alum Rock	2
Heartlands	2
Holyhead	2
Lozells	2
Birchfield	1
Castle Vale	1
Gravelly Hill	1
Handsworth	1
Garretts Green	0
Shard End	0
Sutton Wylde Green	0