



**Corporate Policy and
Resources Committee**

**Thursday, 11 November
2021**

Subject: Budget Consultation Responses

Report by:

Assistant Director of Finance and Property
Services and Section 151 Officer

Contact Officer:

Tracey Bircumshaw
Assistant Director of Finance and Property
Services and Section 151 Officer

tracey.bircumshaw@west-lindsey.gov.uk

Purpose / Summary:

To present a summary of the responses to the
Budget Consultation for 2022/23

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- 1. That Members accept the results of the Budget Consultation and consider the results and comments as part of the budget setting process 2022/23**

IMPLICATIONS

Legal:

The Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires that business rates payers are consulted on the budget proposals for expenditure (including Capital Expenditure) within the following year budget.

Financial :

There are none from this report

Staffing :

None from this report

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :

Whilst there are none specifically from this report, impact assessments are carried out for policies associated with the delivery of services.

Data Protection Implications :

None from this report

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:

Whilst there are none specifically from this report, the consultation did include views on climate initiatives.

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations:

None from this report

Health Implications:

W

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report :

None .

Risk Assessment :

--

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes

No

Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

No

1. Executive Summary

The budget consultation is an annual consultation exercise to seek the views of residents and businesses on the Councils budget proposals, the key messages in responses are detailed below. The full report is attached at Appendix 1.

1.1 Response

Response rates this year (513) were not as high as last year (708) with a return rate of 30%. It is unclear why this may be the case, however this may be due to the amount of people now going back into work.

1.2 Corporate Plan Priorities

90% believed that these should still be the key priorities of the council.

1.3 Valued Services

95% of those who responded feel that operational services is an important service. This was the highest percent out of all the services mentioned.

1.4 Investment

Respondents gave a lot of examples for how we might invest for the benefit of our communities. Whilst ranking the priority of how we should make investment decisions an economic return was highest ranked.

1.5 Council Tax

These figures show the favoured option is a 3% increase with 32% of the votes and nearly two thirds of the respondents said that the council should not have the ability to determine the level of council tax without a referendum.

1.6 Fees and Charges

Nearly two thirds of respondents felt that we should only increase fees by inflation this year and then review again next year.

1.7 Green Waste Subscriptions

An inflationary increase only was the most popular option for the Green Waste subscriptions. The most popular charge was £40 from a range of £0-£90. Two thirds of respondents did not agree to additional collections.

Further support and any other comments

Other comments received mostly are around the changes to tips during covid, extra support needed for the young and elderly and the focus on how difficult everyone is finding it financially at the moment.

Next Steps

The following actions will be undertaken and recommended for the 2022 budget consultation:

- To continue with the use of a video/leaflet which helps put the same message across.
- Continue to undertake the consultation and ensure the message is spread across as many residents as is possible.
- Investigate the reasons for low return rate.
- Consider methods of engaging the wider public and businesses