



BUDGET CONSULTATION 2024

Consultation Report Summary

January 2024

1 Introduction

With reduced grants from Central Government, it is critical that we direct our resources in a way that benefits our communities and meets their needs and priorities.

Each year a consultation is undertaken on the following year's budget prior to it being set. Although there is no legal requirement to undertake this we have a legal requirement under the Local Government Act 1992 section 65 to consult ratepayers who are persons or bodies appearing to be representative of persons subject to non-domestic rates within the district and must be about the authority's proposals for expenditure.

The objectives of this engagement were to seek views on the priorities for our residents and businesses and to raise awareness of the financial challenges the council faces.

This report summarises the views of residents and businesses that took part in this consultation. Views were gathered from West Lindsey residents, Parish and Town Councillors, West Lindsey District Council Councillors and West Lindsey businesses through either a direct invite, events or by visiting the website.

A total of 410 responses were received and out of these responses 206 were received electronically, 189 were postal, 7 through seated conversations at events and 8 were from market stalls. From these 410, 338 of these are members of the West Lindsey Citizen Panel, 6 are Town or Parish Councillors, 2 West Lindsey District Councillors, 8 businesses and 1 was a Community Representative.

Equality data was gathered from the surveys and a breakdown of the responses can be found within the full report.

A full report can be found at <https://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/budgetconsultation2024>

2 Summary Results

2.1 Council Tax

The results relating to the level of council tax were as follows:

Option	Results	Last years total
0% change	55 (13.4%)	83 (19.6%)
1% increase	71 (17.3%)	64 (15.1%)
2% increase	145 (35.4%)	80 (18.9%)
3% increase	92 (22.4%)	110 (26.0%)
£5 increase	38 (9.3%)	74 (17.5%)
No response	9 (2.2%)	12 (2.8%)
Total	410	423

2.2 Fees and Charges

Historically the Council has increased its fees and charges by inflation or costs of delivery which are impacted by inflation. We asked respondents their views on which of the following options they felt would be the best option for 2025/26.

Cap fees at a lower rate than inflation (3%)	28%
Pause fees at the current level and increase by inflation next year	22%
Increase fees by inflation only and review next year	51%

2.3 Sports and Leisure Facilities

The Council provides sports and leisure services such as Market Rasen Leisure Centre and Gainsborough Leisure Centre. We asked respondents if they thought it was important for the Council provide and enhance these services.

Yes	81%
No	19%

Just over four fifths of the respondents felt we should provide and enhance this service and from those who said yes, we asked how they felt this enhanced service should be funded.

The user should pay higher prices to access additional services	49%
The user cannot afford higher prices and therefore services should stay the same	20%
The council should look at providing a different way of providing leisure and sport facilities such as through walking and cycling routes that are less costly to maintain	21%
To be paid through Council Tax (an increase to all Council Tax payers)	10%

2.4 Comments

Numerous comments were received both through the survey and through the events. These comments are all available upon request however, a summary of the main comments can be viewed in the full report.

If you would like a copy of this in large, clear print, audio, Braille or in another language, please call 01427 676676 email customer.services@west-lindsey.gov.uk

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West Lindsey District Council
Guildhall, Marshall's Yard
Gainsborough
Lincolnshire, DN21 2NA