



Budget Consultation 2014/17

feedback report

8th January 2014

Compiled by the Consultation, Research and Intelligence Team

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Executive Summary

The Mayor published his draft budget proposals for the next three years (2014/15 – 2016/17) on 18th November 2013. The consultation began on this date and ran for a 6 week period until 30th December 2013.

The proposals (setting out the approach to close a funding gap of £90 M over three years) were communicated widely to the people of Bristol with a comprehensive range of opportunities provided for people to have their say. This included an online survey (see Appendix 5), eight public meetings, direct email, radio phone ins, live web chat and paper information packs (including paper survey) distributed to libraries, customer service points and on request directly to service users and community locations.

It is estimated that the promotional activity to raise awareness of the budget consultation reached an audience of over 50,000 people that in turn prompted approximately 10,000 views of web information and over 1300 people to turn out in person to a public meeting. This led to a record response rate to the consultation (over 12 times the response in 2012) with nearly 3,900 people 'having a say' via paper and online surveys. In addition we had 25 written submissions from community and voluntary sector groups (see Appendix 3).

The response came from people who are largely representative of the demographic spread of Bristol with some under representation from young people, BME and disabled communities and over-representation of people aged over 65 years. Representation was countered by the specific targeting of public meetings and responses from community, voluntary and equalities groups.

This report will be considered by Cabinet on 16th January in order to finalise budget proposals for debate at Full Council on 18th February 2014.

Headline Results:

1. It is fair to say that this has been a robust consultation and the feedback from a range of sources has been included in this report. This includes:
 - 3,860 responses to the online and paper consultation survey
 - Feedback from public meetings and equalities events
 - 28 responses from community, voluntary and equalities organisations
 - Over 190 emails sent to the Mayor

Although not strictly part of the consultation process we have monitored feedback from other engagement sources such as social media, petitions on budget matters which were live during the consultation period and ideas put forward via the online facility 'George's ideas lab'. This has been included as useful context within this report.

2. Based on the consultation survey results, the majority of respondents were in favour of a council tax increase of 2% or higher (69%).
3. Respondents were asked their opinion on the overall set of savings proposals and nearly half (49%) agreed with most or all of them with a further 14% expressing no opinion and 37% disagreeing with all or most of them.
4. It is clear that the public in Bristol have identified a number of priority issues that they feel should not be included in the saving proposals. These are detailed below (with a full list in Appendix 7) and account for £4.3M of proposed savings (based on the top 10 proposals with most disagreement)

The common proposals for disagreement (in running order) were as follows:

- Cease older people's warden and alarm services in independent older people housing schemes

- Commissioning home care against reablement outcomes
- Cease funding for a specialist floating support service for older people
- Introduce charges for older people's housing alarms in sheltered schemes
- Health and Social Care Housing related support
- Review of housing related support to independent sector sheltered housing schemes for older people
- Reduce older people Extra Care Housing Wardens
- *Review public toilet provision*
- Cease library non-statutory services – Prison Service and Schools library service. Redesign At Home Delivery Service
- *Remove subsidy for leisure and sports contracts.*

[It is important to point out that in compiling these results a number of patterns have emerged indicating bulk responses or coordinated lobbying against some proposals. Where this has been found we have endeavoured to demonstrate the impact on consultation results as this may be relevant during the budget setting process, see Figures 8a and b and page 32].

5. The common proposals for agreement were as follows:

- Reduce the running cost of council buildings
- Increase mooring charges at City Docks
- Ensuring cost duplication is minimised
- *Remove subsidy for leisure and sports contracts*
- Expand community supported accommodation to reduce spend on residential care
- Provision of equipment to reduce need for multiple carers
- Better value for money from residential and nursing placement contracts
- Challenge Council spending
- Eliminate subsidy to St Paul's learning centre and explore other options
- *Review public toilet provision.*

Some proposals occur in both lists (shown in italics) and therefore indicate a high response with split public opinion in favour and against the proposed saving. See lists of the top 20 proposals agreement/disagreement on pages 13 and 14 (Figures 7 and 8).

6. Headlines from equalities specific consultation events and submissions are included in Section 3 of main report with further information in Appendix 2. Below is a broad summary of the major themes and issues voiced by equalities stakeholders and representatives during the consultation period.

- There was a strong sense that there is a disproportionate impact on equalities groups, particularly older people, disabled people, women and BME communities. There was a call for Bristol City Council to undertake a more detailed cumulative impact assessment of proposals, specifically looking at the cumulative impacts of the proposals on individual groups.
- There was concern about smaller, equalities-led, voluntary and community sector organisations potentially being destabilised by budget reductions, and the impact of losing specialist knowledge, links to hard-to-reach communities, or culturally competent services
- It was raised that although a number of services with proposed reductions are discretionary – they save a significant spend further down the line in other services that may be needed, either for Bristol City Council or our partners
- There was criticism that services for vulnerable groups have been proposed, while some services that benefit more affluent, or less representative communities have not been put forward for reductions
- There was concern that proposals and their Equality Impact Assessments were not sufficiently detailed enough for either Bristol City Council to fully understand the implications of its proposals for equalities groups or for stakeholders and citizens to fully engage with the consultation.

1. Background

This year, unlike previous years, the public consultation covers the Mayor's 3-year budget. The budget proposals (designed to resolve a £90 M funding gap) were explained in detail on the website and in a brochure available from public libraries and customer service points (www.bristol.gov.uk/budget) .

The Mayor consulted on a proposal to increase Council Tax by 2% for each of the next three years together with 63 other proposals to make savings to the council's budget. These 63 proposals were to make £43 M savings over three years because some of the £90 M savings are already in progress through on going efficiency measures (£9.1 M) and the council's Change Programme (£49 M).

The 63 proposals in the consultation survey were grouped into the following categories:

- Improving business efficiency
- Changing how we fund and provide services
- Better buying
- Reducing or stopping services
- Invest to save.
- Increasing our income
- Charging relevant costs to the capital programme

In addition the Mayor identified all other areas of discretionary spend within the council as a list of alternatives from which savings could be made. If people disagreed with any of the proposals, they could pick an alternative from this list or make an independent alternative suggestion.

2. Communication about the Budget

Given the scale of the funding gap and complexity of the challenge to set a balanced budget, the Mayor requested a full and meaningful consultation with members of the public, businesses, voluntary and community groups and councillors. This approach exceeded the council's statutory requirement to consult with the business sector on its budget proposals but nonetheless met the Mayor and council's commitment to engage with citizens and seek their views to inform decisions on how the council should invest its budget.

The council took a proactive approach to communication about the budget and provided a comprehensive range of opportunities to 'have your say'. The Mayor was able to meet and speak to citizens, answer questions about the budget and direct them to the consultation.

Through this approach it is estimated that an audience of 50,000 has been reached, that in turn prompted at least 10,000 views of information over the web, with nearly 4,000 people providing direct feedback on the budget proposals and 1,300 attending budget meetings. Figure 1 shows the activity carried out to promote awareness of the budget consultation and the engagement opportunities to allow people to take part.

Web site (over 10,000 website views)

- A set of budget consultation web pages (www.bristol.gov.uk/budget) were created to explain the proposals, background and ways for people have their say. Citizens could read detailed information about the budget proposals, along with an Equalities Impact Assessment for

each proposal. There was supporting information to explain how the council's budget is constructed and how the £90M budget gap is calculated. All the information was in plain English, supported with graphical information and available in alternative accessible formats or other languages on request. There were links to the online consultation survey and instructions on how to obtain paper versions.

Figure 1: Budget engagement activity



Public meetings (over 1,300 attendees)

The following were held:

- Six public meetings on the budget (including Mayor's Question Time) in various locations across the city organised in conjunction with Neighbourhood Partnerships and Bristol University, providing information and a Q&A session with the Mayor. Four of these in the week beginning 25th November in the evening, Mayor's Question time on 3rd December and a day time meeting on 19th December. Postcards with 'how to have your say' were available, as well as paper copies of the savings proposals and survey.
- A whole day event co-designed with Voscur with representatives from the equalities groups to explore the impact of the proposals on these groups, MShed, 11th December.
- Youth Opinion budget consultation event at The Station, 11th December
- Business West consultation event on 5th December
- Four meetings between Equalities Voice and Influence organisations and Service Directors of their choice (this included Disability Equality Forum, Black Voice and Influence, Bristol Older People's Forum and Bristol Women's Voice)

- Feedback from these public events was collated, themed and added to the feedback on the consultation. See Appendix 1 for feedback from these meetings.

Additional Mayor's public engagement activities

- The Mayor visited Bristol Academy to talk to students about democracy and the budget, listen to their views and encourage them to take part in the consultation.
- Three Radio phone-ins and Mayor's web chat 'Ask George', 6th December.

Other promotional activity (see Figure 1):

- Posters and postcards distributed via Libraries, GP surgeries, budget meetings etc promoting how to get involved in the consultation - QR-coded (quick response codes) so smartphone and tablet users could directly access consultation pages.
- Promotions via e-newsletter bulletins and direct emails to over 40,000 addresses
- Information packs for councillors, community groups and colleagues – to encourage people to take part in the consultation.
- Articles in community newsletters.

Bristol City Council Scrutiny Commissions

- All Scrutiny Committees were invited to review the initial budget proposals. Resources Scrutiny Committee have critically reviewed budget assumptions for both the revenue and capital budgets and reviewed the impact of the Local Government Settlement at their 6th January meeting. This review is included in Appendix 4.

Consultation survey (3,860 online and paper responses)

- The consultation ran for a 6 week period (18th November – 30th December).
- An online survey (see Appendix 5) was provided on the website. Printed versions of the budget information packs and survey were available at local libraries and customer service points and on request.
- The survey prompted people to rate their overall agreement or disagreement with the budget proposals. It also allowed them to pick and rate their agreement or disagreement to any (or all) of the 63 individual proposals. Free text boxes were provided for respondents to add their own comments and suggestions and an alternative list of other areas of discretionary council spend were supplied that people could select from in place of any proposals that they disagreed with.
- A dedicated phone line was set up for enquiries and paper copies.
- Packs were also delivered to all members of the At Home Library Service.
- Although every effort was made to point citizens to the survey to 'have their say', responses received by a direct email or letter (to the Mayor, senior officer or Consultation and Research team) were also collated and themed and added to the feedback on the consultation.

Social media promotion and monitoring

- Social media was used to raise awareness of the consultation and monitor the mood on Twitter.
- Any budget 'ideas' for alternative savings received on George's Ideas Lab, were added to the feedback.
- E-Petitions related to the budget proposals (hosted on the council website and non-council websites) have also formed part of the consultation feedback.

3. Equalities issues and themes

Equalities Impact Assessments (EQIAs)

Each of the budget proposals had a 'relevance check' to see if an Equalities Impact Assessment was needed. For those that required an EQIA, this was completed and published alongside the proposal on the web site.

A draft Cumulative EQIA was published with the consultation and citizens were invited to consider the overall cumulative impact the proposals may have on any one equalities community or communities. This was published on the website and was updated as feedback from these particular groups and their representative was received. See Appendix 2 for a summary of feedback on equalities issues.

Voscur/Equalities event

On the 11th December, there was an event co-designed with Voscur (Equalities VCS conference) to discuss the budget proposals with equality stakeholders and representatives. The Mayor and Strategic Directors presented their proposals with any anticipated equality impacts to stakeholders, and there was a question and answer session for each directorate.

Voice and Influence Organisations

There were 4 individual meetings between equalities Voice and Influence organisations and Service Directors of their choice, in order to allow them to ask specific questions and raise issues relating to the communities that they represent. These included Bristol Disability Equality Forum, Bristol Women's Voice, Black Voice and Influence and Bristol Older People's Forum.

Headlines from equalities specific consultation events and submissions

The headline issues arising from the Equalities VCS conference, consultation events with Voice and Influence organisations, and submissions from equalities led organisations are included in full in Appendix 2. Where comments relate to the most common proposals for 'disagreement', they are also included in Section 5 of this report. Below is a summary of the main issues:

Health and Social Care concerns

- reductions in HSC, particularly around Home Care, reducing the quality of care
- Bristol City Council should use its commissioning power to ensure that care workers are being paid at least the living wage
- people like the School Road Respite facility and the proposal might have hidden cost
- reduction in wardens would increase social isolation
- not appropriate to replace specialist floating support for older people with generic floating support.

Libraries Service and At Home service

- digitally excluded may be disadvantaged by reductions in libraries with less access to free internet
- more volunteers in wealthier areas may mean that these libraries flourish, while those in deprived areas diminish
- support for wrapping the At Home service up with other services
- loss of expertise by not having a designated member of library staff and adverse impact on quality of social care .

Community Investment Grants

- should not be reduced, was too soon and could potentially destabilise organisations
- these Grants should be used to develop communities, and that this is more necessary now.

Equalities Team

- more necessary in the current climate, and concern over the ability of the organisation to build its competence.

St Paul's Learning Centre

- disputed that the facility was underused. The Centre has a historical and community value
- community needed more time to mobilise and take over running of more forums.

Welfare Rights and Money Advice Service

- disproportionate impact on equalities groups, particularly disabled and BME communities
- anxiety about the online training provision, and its suitability and accessibility

Safer Bristol

- any reduction in Domestic Abuse and Sexual Abuse services was short sighted, as need is rising.

Public toilets

- public toilet closures would significantly and disproportionately impact on equalities groups
- work needs to be done to ensure that the Community toilet scheme is appropriate.
- what impact the reduction of public toilets would have on Bristol's Purple Flag award?

Community Transport

- how joined up is transport strategy with communication between community transport, public bus and other forms of transport?
- cumulative impact of the community transport proposal
- many users have no alternative
- transport alternatives that are suggested are inadequate and or inaccessible
- zoned Community Transport areas will make it harder for disabled people to access services
- concern for concessionary travel and changes to the Diamond Card, particularly with the imminent changes to Disability Living Allowance

Children's Centres

- lack of detail in the Children's Centres proposal –people felt they could not meaningfully engage with the proposal
- link between children's poverty and women's poverty
- access to affordable childcare remains a significant issue.

Home to School Transport concerns:

- who would lose this support – how will it affect working parents and carers?
- changes to Disability Living Allowance that some disabled people currently rely on.

Alternatives

- funding reductions from both the Arts budget, and also the Neighbourhood Partnerships budget
- Bristol City Council has not fully exploited the opportunities for income generation as much as it could have, in order to protect services.

Survey analysis of savings proposal by equalities groups

Equalities questions (ethnic origin, religion, age, gender etc) were asked in the section 'about you' in the survey. Respondents were not obliged to answer these questions and could tick 'prefer not to say'.

Responses to these questions help us check if the total response is representative of the population and help target further promotional activity.

Over half of respondents (55%) gave equalities information and this was a sufficient sample to provide some analysis by the different equalities groups. Where this was possible, comments have been added to this report to give greater insight into the interpretation of results.

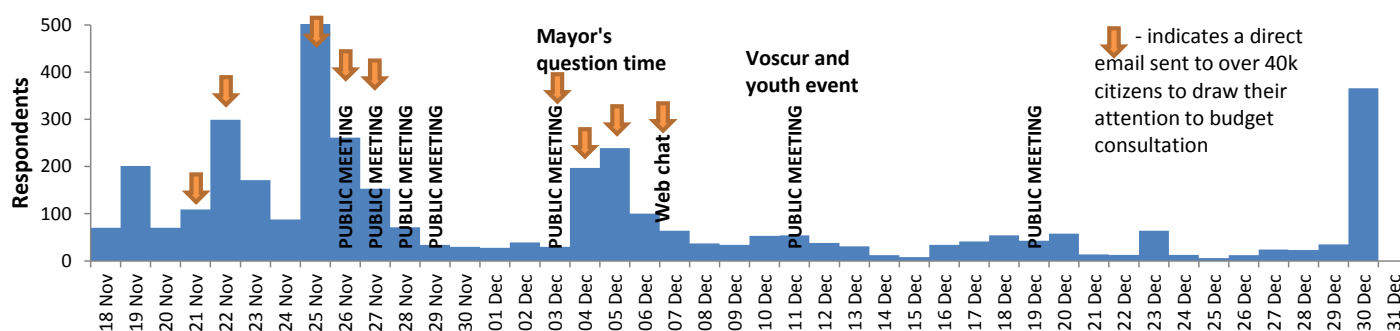
4. Headline results from the consultation survey

4.1 Response Levels:

The consultation received a very good response with over 3,860 surveys completed. This is nearly 12 times the response last year. It included 3,405 online and 455 offline (paper) responses to the survey.

The pattern of online responses came in two waves. The first wave came directly after launch and the second after the Mayor's public Question Time meeting /proactive promotion online through e-bulletins and emails. Offline (paper) responses were fewer and trickled in over the 6 week period with some coordinated responses e.g. from library At Home service users and Brunel Care tenants arriving in batches during the consultation period. For example, 340 paper responses were received from Brunel Care tenants a few hours before the consultation close. Blank survey responses were deemed invalid and excluded from the final analysis.

Figure 2: Response trend and dates of meetings/events



In addition to the 3,860 survey respondents, we were able to reach over 1,300 through face to face and other engagement events such as the public meetings, web chat and radio phone ins. Some residents who attended a public meeting also responded to the survey. The feedback from these events was recorded, themed and added to the overall consultation feedback.

Further non council-led engagement happened at a community level; particularly users directly affected by some of the proposals e.g. At Home Library Service, Brunel Care Tenants, Hengrove Play Park, St Paul's Learning Centre. Further representations on the budget were made through local meetings, stakeholder groups, media channels and petitions. These have been fed into the consultation findings where possible.

4.2 Analysis of Responses:

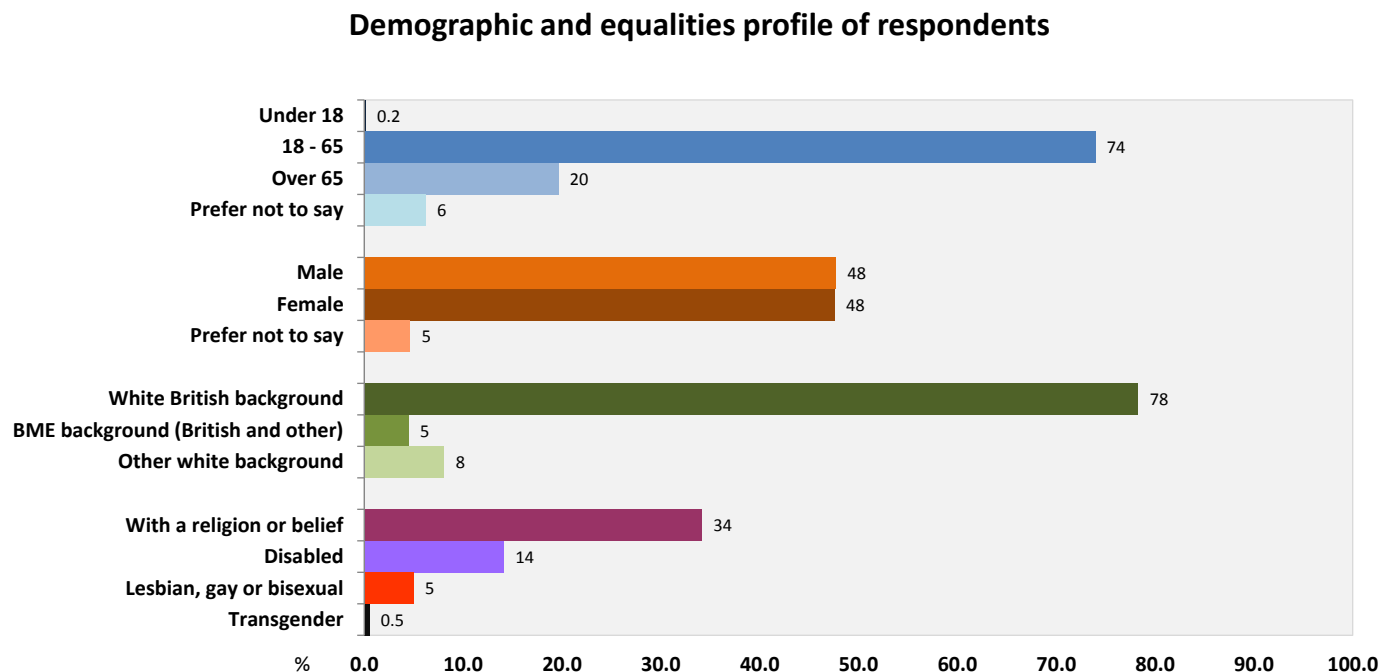
Over half (55%) of respondents gave demographic and equalities information (1,947 people) and the profile of the respondents (Figure 3) indicates a spread of responses from all groups.

Older people (over 65 years) were over represented in the response, at 20% (city average is 13% from the 2011 Census). Some groups were under represented including the following:

- Black and minority ethnic group (BME) at 5% (city average from the 2011 Census for adults is 13%)
- Younger Citizens 0.2% of respondents were under 18 years despite specific attempts to target younger citizens
- Disabled people at 14% (in the 2011 Census 20% of people aged 16 years and over say their day to day activities are limited due to a disability or ill health)

- However, representation at public meetings and responses from equalities stakeholders and organisations has countered this, see Appendix 1 - Feedback from Public meetings, Appendix 2 – Equalities feedback and Appendix 3 – Response from Community and Voluntary Sector and self-organised groups.

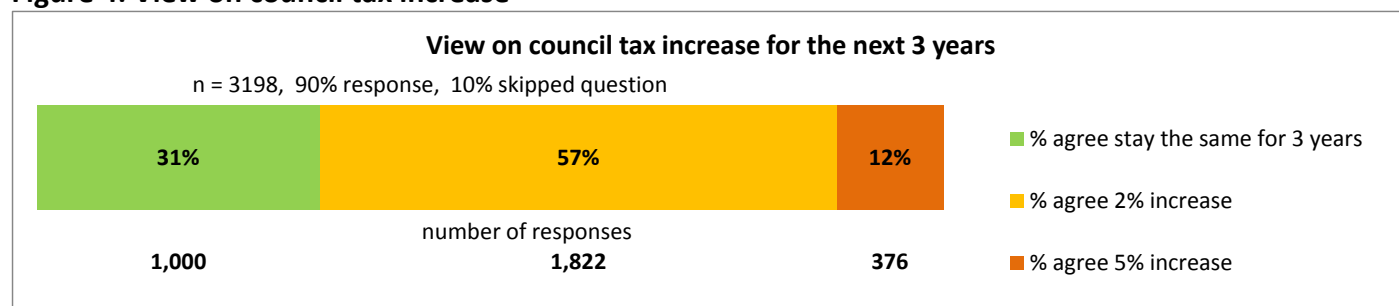
Figure 3: Demographic and Equalities Profile:



Analysis of question 1: Proposed council tax increase

Nearly 3,200 people answered this question in the consultation survey and over two thirds (69%) agreed a council tax increase should be 2% or higher for the next 3 years in order to balance the budget.

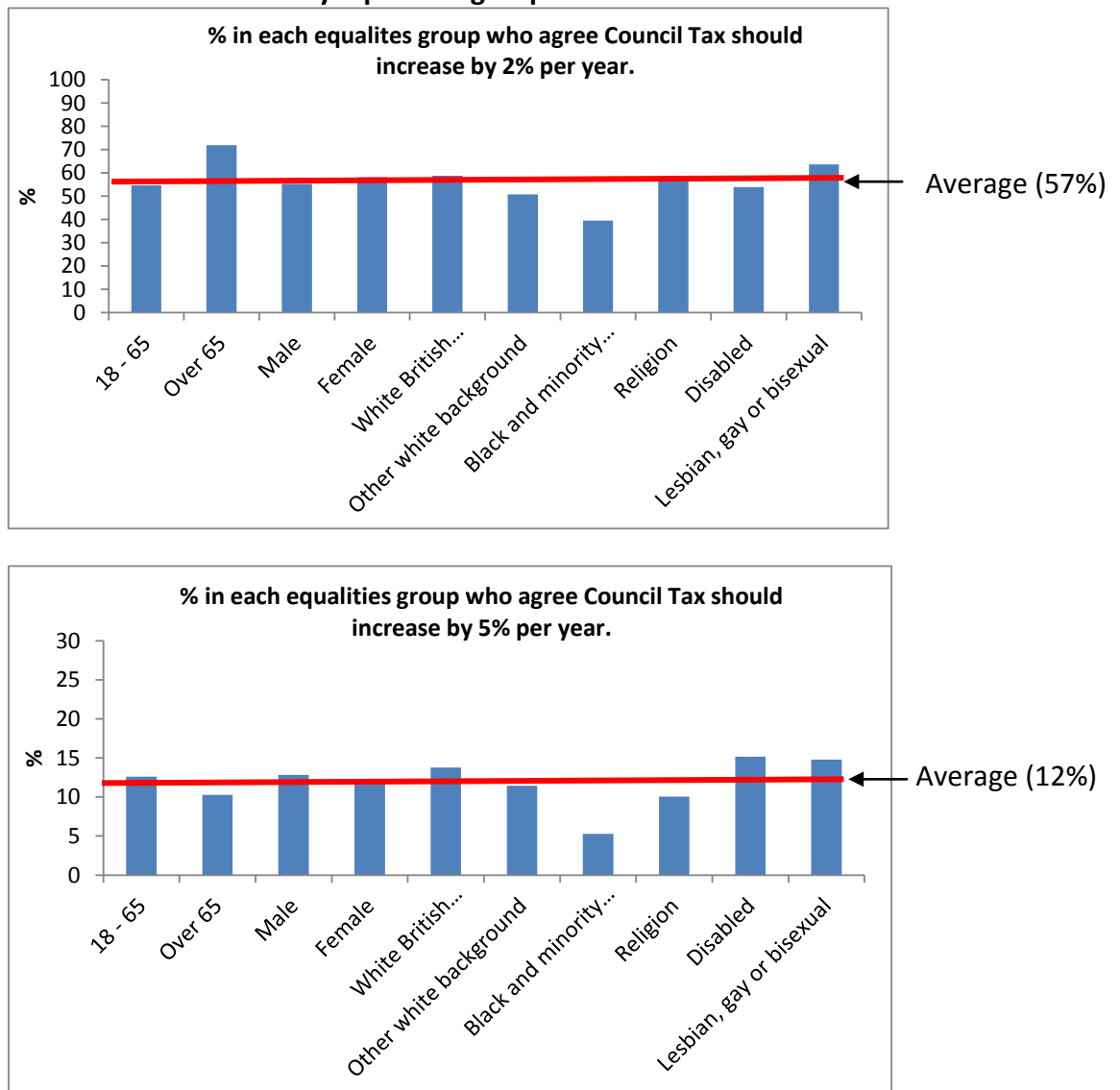
Figure 4: View on council tax increase



Due to this large sample of respondents who gave demographic information, an equalities breakdown of results was possible, see Figure 5.

Figure 5 indicates more older people (over 65 years) were in favour of a 2% increase in council tax. Fewer BME residents supported an increase of 2% or 5% in council tax.

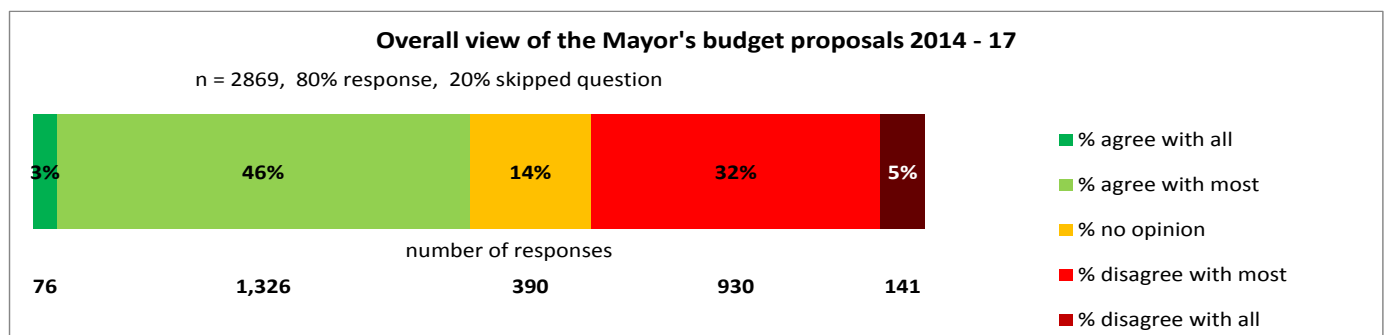
Figure 5: View on council tax increase by equalities groups



Analysis of question 2 : Overall view of the draft savings proposals

Over 2,800 people gave an opinion about the overall set of savings proposals and just under half of respondents, at 49% agreed with most or all, 14% had no opinion and 37% disagreed with the proposals.

Figure 6: Overall view of the Mayor's budget:



More men agreed with the overall set of proposals, at 58%, compared to women at 47%.

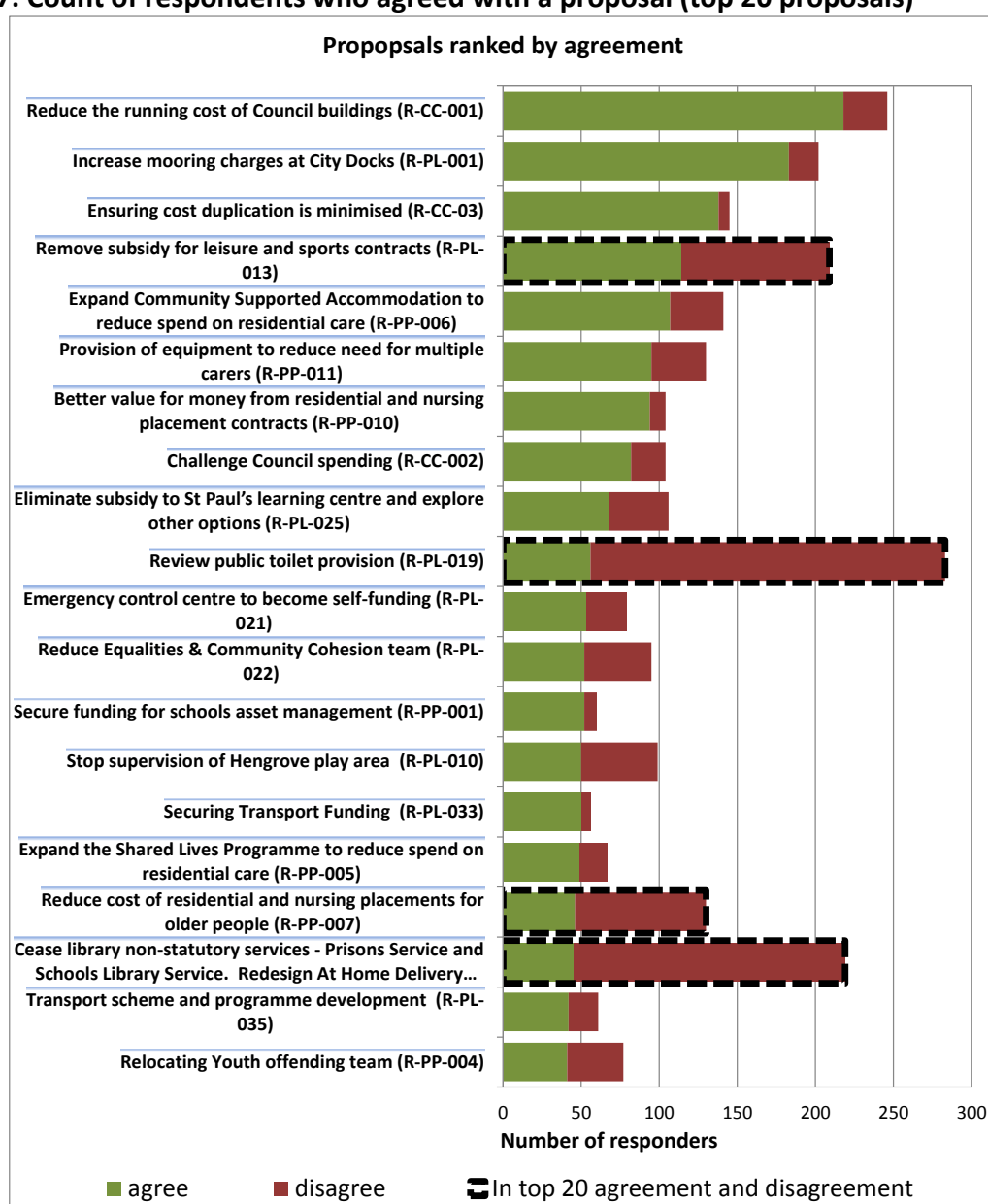
Analysis of responses to individual proposals:

We asked people to consider individual proposals and to indicate whether they were in agreement or disagreement using a scale 'strongly agree', 'agree' 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' to express their view. Respondents were free to select as many or as few proposals for comment as they wished. We provided a free text box to encourage respondents to add their own comments and suggestions.

The most commonly selected savings proposals with public 'agreement' and 'disagreement' are summarised in Figure 7, 8a and 8b with some proposals featuring in both lists ie split opinion e.g. proposed removal of subsidy for leisure and sports contracts and review of public toilet provision. This is shown with a bold-dashed outline in the Figures.

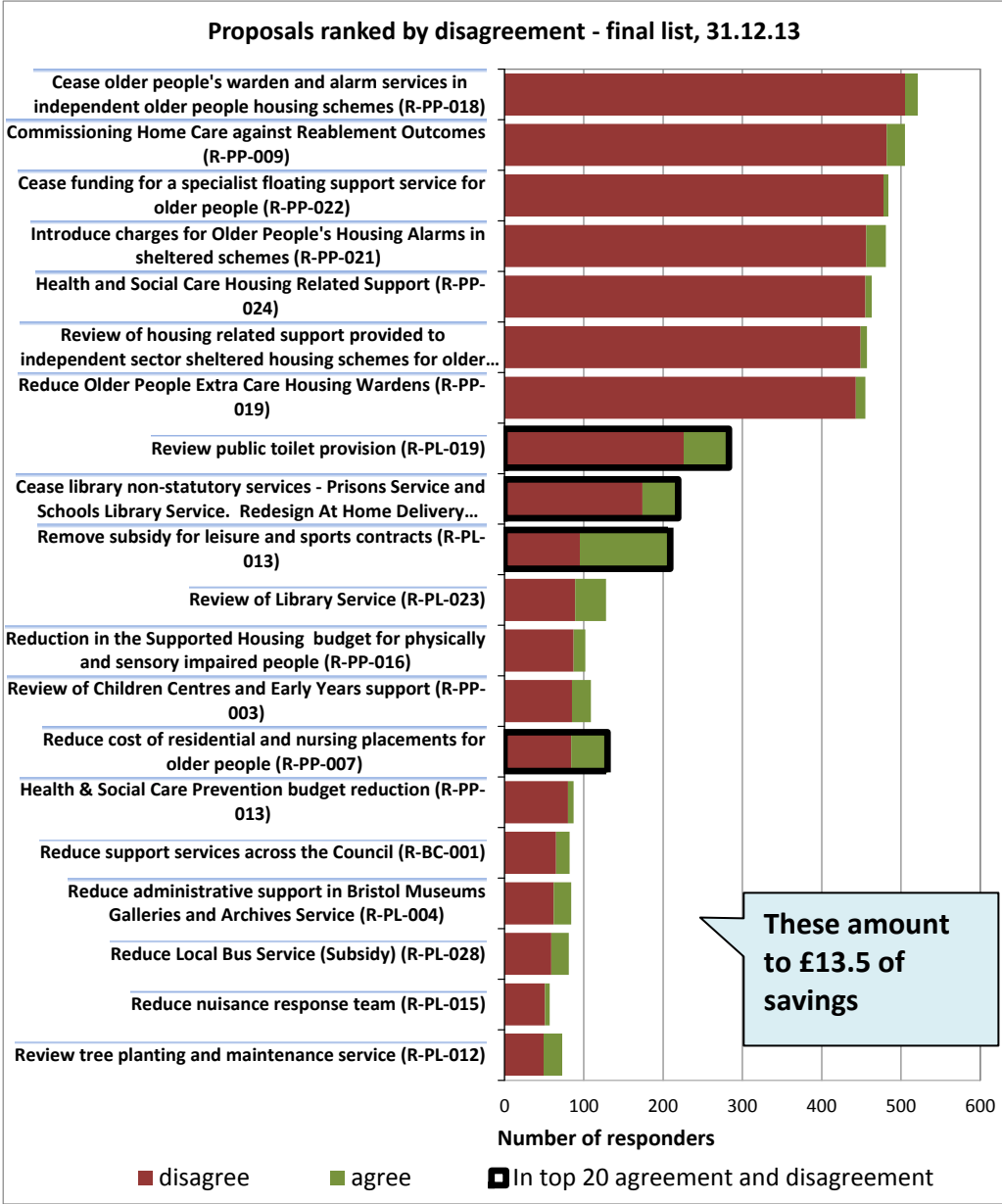
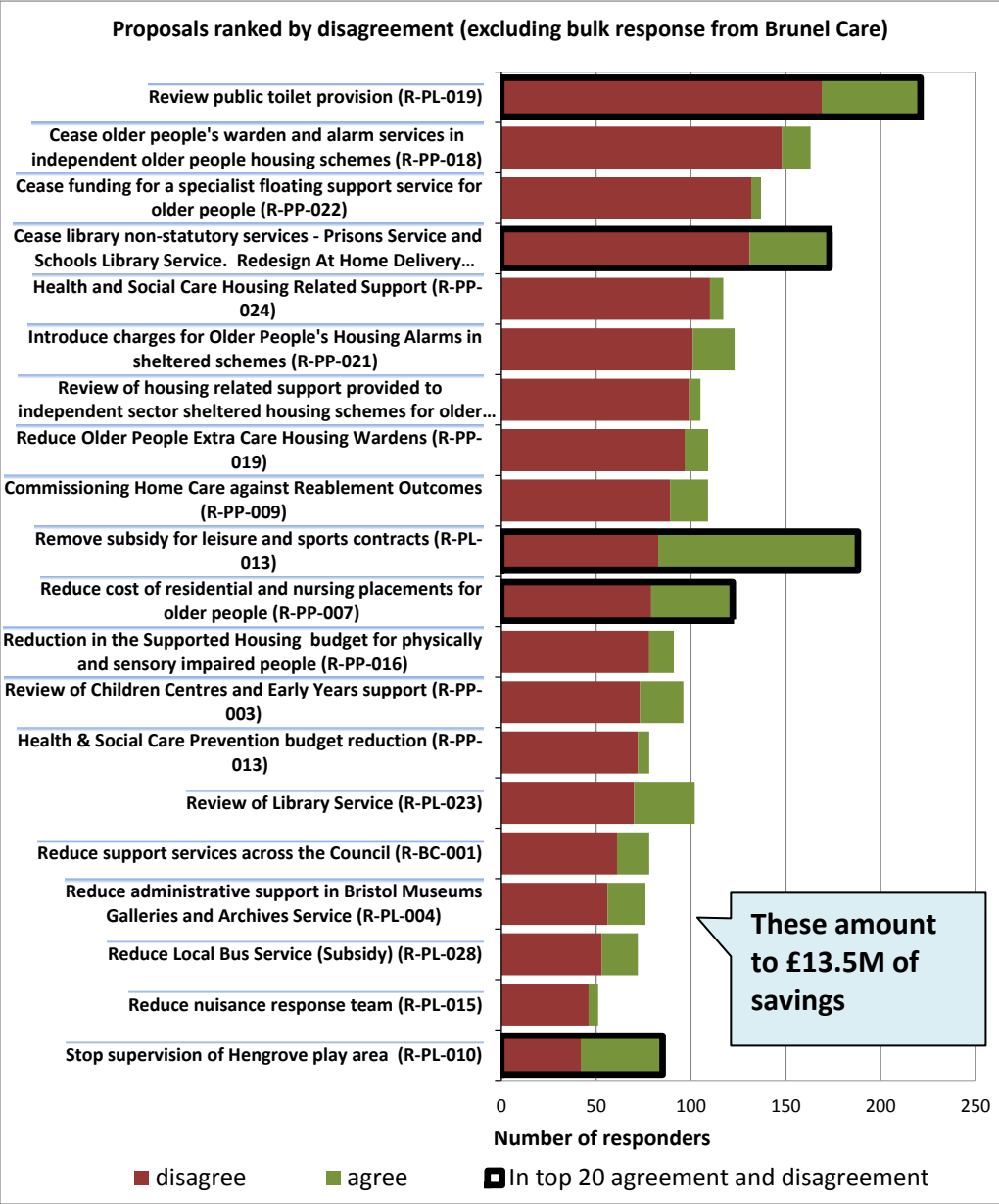
The top 20 proposals ranked against public agreement total over £24.3 M in potential savings whereas the equivalent top 20 proposals with public disagreement total £13.5 M. On average most respondents answered 3 questions in the survey and 1 or 2 of these were related to a specific budget proposal. More detailed comments about these commonly selected proposals are included in Section 5 of this report.

Figure 7: Count of respondents who agreed with a proposal (top 20 proposals)



These two graphs illustrate proposals with most disagreement. They indicate the impact of a co-ordinated bulk response received from groups of service users on 30th December (pm), with many proposals related to health and social care for older people eventually rising to the top (Figure 8b). A smaller, but none-the-less significant co-ordinated response was received earlier in December regarding ‘cease library non-statutory services R-PL-024’.

Figure 8a: Count of respondents who disagreed with a proposal (30th Dec.) **Figure 8b: Count of respondents who disagreed with a proposal (31st Dec.)**

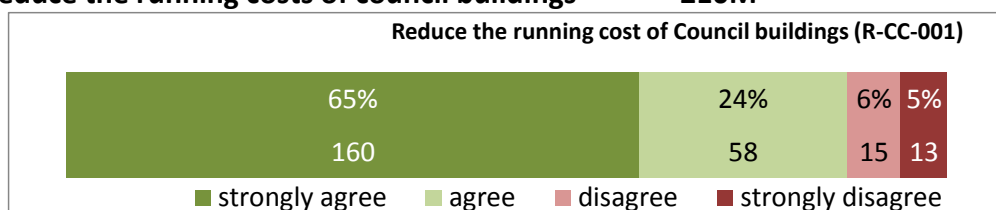


5. Main areas of agreement/disagreement with proposals and comments

10 most common areas of agreement with a proposed saving and comments

Below are the top ten savings proposals with most agreement. These relate to £21M of savings. They are arranged in running order based on number of responses (indicated below each %). See Appendix 7 for all results. Levels of agreement with proposals not included in this section have lower responses and as such, the results are less meaningful.

I. Reduce the running costs of council buildings £10M

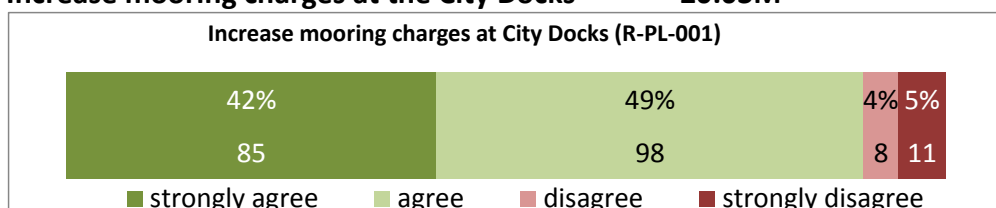


246 people expressed an opinion on this proposal. Clearly the majority of respondents (89%) favoured this proposal, with most strongly agreeing.

Summary of comments

Respondents said it makes common sense to agree with this as the saving is so large and why didn't the council make these savings years ago. Buying rather than leasing buildings and locating outside the city centre all help save money as well as energy and more home working. Several comments under this proposal also included saving St Paul's learning centre, toilets and libraries proposals.

II. Increase mooring charges at the City Docks £0.03M

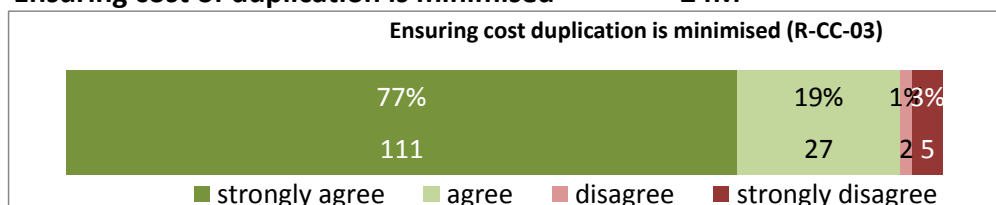


202 people expressed an opinion on this proposal and clearly the majority of respondents (91%) were in favour this proposal.

Summary of comments

Many considered owning a boat a luxury – if you can afford a boat you can afford an increase in mooring charges. These charges should increase in line with council tax.

III. Ensuring cost of duplication is minimised £4M

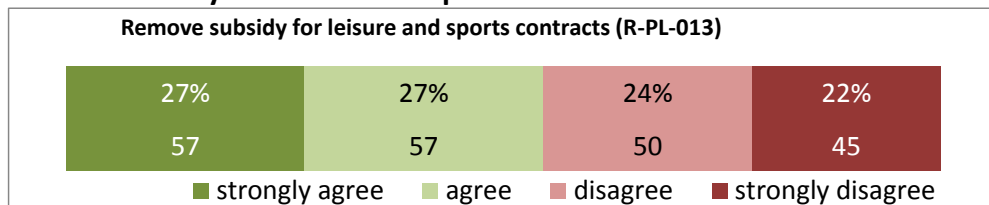


145 people expressed an opinion on this proposal. A clear majority, at 96% favoured this proposal.

Summary of comments

This makes common sense and this cost should be eliminated. Residents said we should also identify duplication and overlapping roles within the council and partner services.

IV. Remove subsidy for leisure and sports contracts £1.1M

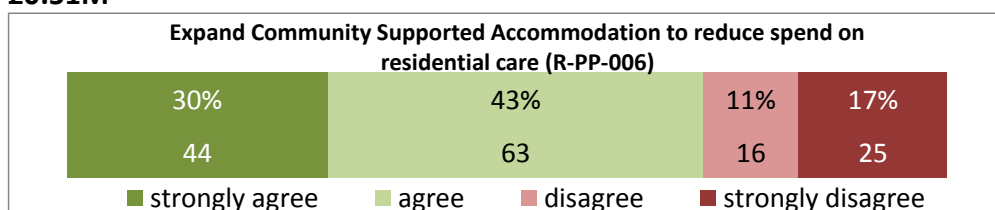


209 people expressed an opinion on this proposal. Opinion was fairly even spread, with 54% in agreement and 46% in disagreement.

Summary of comments

There was an acknowledgement that there are tough choices and something has to give and some leisure activities could be self-funding. Comments in disagreement mentioned this went against the Mayor's vision on health and wellbeing and disadvantaged people on low incomes.

V: Expand community supported accommodation to reduce spend on residential care (R-PP-006) £0.51M

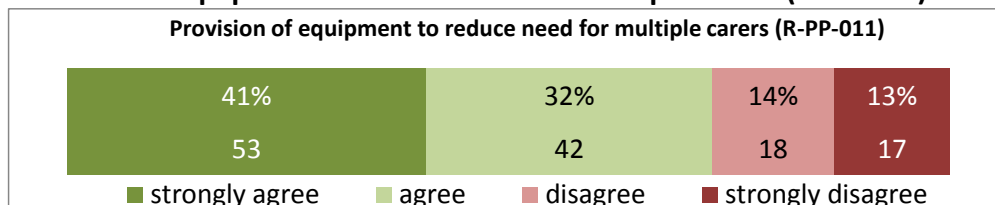


148 people expressed an opinion on this proposal and 73% agreed.

Summary of comments

There was agreement with the proposal as long as the standard of care did not decline and lead to isolation. Others said some people might prefer residential care.

VI: Provision of equipment to reduce need for multiple carers (R-PP-011) £0.3M

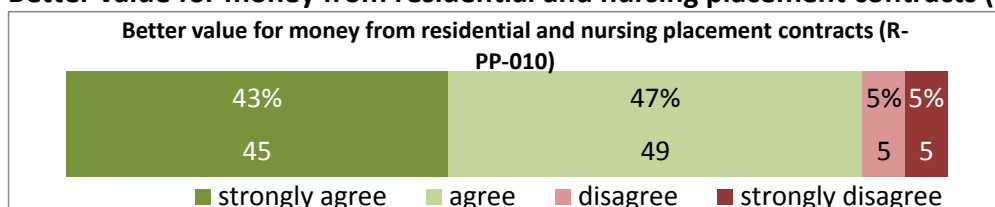


130 people expressed an opinion on this proposal and 73% agreed.

Summary of comments

Those in agreement said this was OK as long as this does not put people at risk. Multiple carers are sometimes required because homes can't be adapted. Equipment cannot replace human contact from a carer, who may lose employment.

VII: Better value for money from residential and nursing placement contracts (R-PP-010) £0.12M

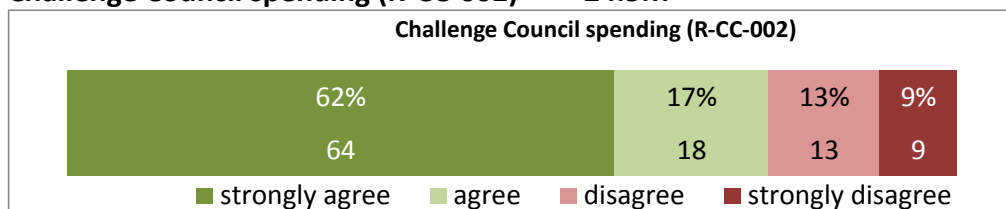


104 people expressed an opinion on this proposal and 90% agreed.

Summary of comments

Most people agreed 'cautiously' with this proposal but expressed a worry that getting 'value for money' is another way of saying 'cutting the service' and concern that quality of service would be maintained.

VIII: Challenge Council spending (R-CC-002) £4.5M

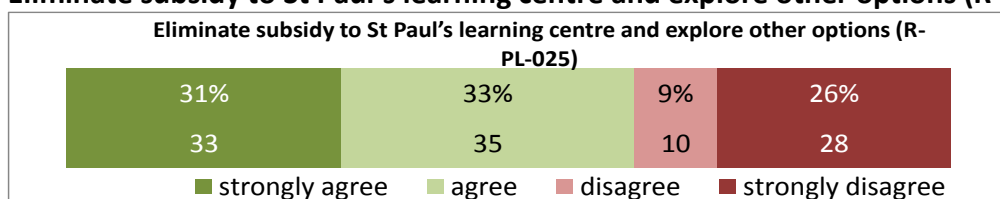


104 people expressed an opinion on this proposal and 79% agreed.

Summary of comments

There was general agreement in support of more commercial awareness, modernising and scrutinising the recruitment of consultants, but outsourcing/procurement doesn't necessarily mean the cheapest or best. Comments included getting rid of some council teams and polices, high sick leave, high salaries etc.

IX: Eliminate subsidy to St Paul's learning centre and explore other options (R-PL-025) £0.16M



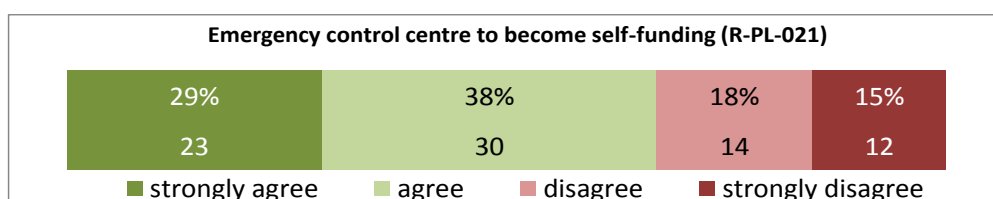
106 people expressed an opinion on this proposal and 64% agreed.

Summary of comments

Several said this service is underused and money could be better spent elsewhere. But those who disagreed said the service should be improved and helped to secure sustainable sources of funding before elimination of the subsidy. Also this proposal adversely affects disadvantaged groups. Comments from the Equalities VCS conference and Voice and Influence organisations disputed that the facility was underused, and stakeholders felt more consideration should be given to the centre's historical and community value. They also said that the community needed more time to mobilise to take on the running of a number of forums at the centre.

N.B A petition is currently circulating to save this centre and has already collected over 1,080 signatures. The Mayor was able to visit and talk to users of the Learning Centre.

X: Emergency control centre to become self-funding (R-PL-021) £0.22M



71 people expressed an opinion on this proposal and 67% agreed.

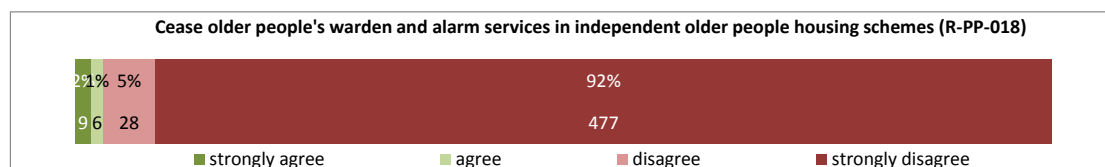
Summary of comments

Comments mentioned outsourcing and working with partner organisations and specialists. There was some concern in 'how' the centre could be funded, potential drop in quality and need for fairness.

15 most common areas of disagreement

Below are the top fifteen savings proposals with most disagreement. The top ten proposals relate to £4.3M of savings and the top 15 proposals, £8.3M (see Table 2 page 23). They are arranged in running order based on number of responses (indicated below each %). Levels of disagreement with proposals not included in this section have lower responses and as such, the results are less meaningful. *The first seven proposals below have been influenced by over 340 co-ordinated responses from Brunel Care. Full comments for every proposal are included in Appendix 7.

I: Cease older people's warden and alarm services in independent older people's housing schemes (R-PP-018) £0.172M

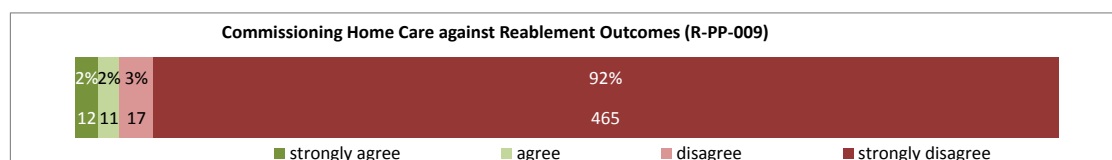


*520 people expressed an opinion on this proposal, of which 97% disagreed and the majority strongly disagreed.

Summary of comments

Many respondents said it was unacceptable to target the cuts at services for vulnerable, older people, when we should be helping older people to live independently. This cut will impact on the safety of older people and result in more injuries and deaths. Comments from the Equalities VCS conference and Voice and Influence organisations reflected concerns that a reduction in wardens would increase social isolation.

II: Commissioning Home Care against Reablement Outcomes (R-PP-009) £1.5M

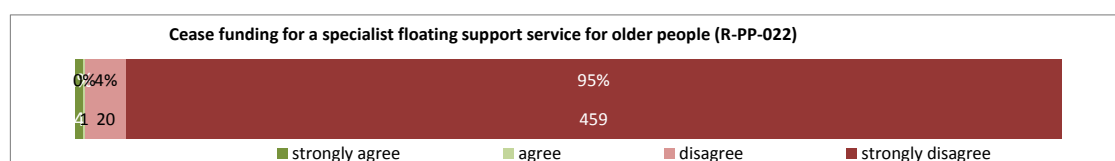


*505 people expressed an opinion on this proposal, of which 95% disagreed and the majority strongly disagreed.

Summary of comments

Comments included home care should be provided by the council and not by profit motivated companies. There was also some confusion on what was meant by 'reablement outcomes'. Comments from the Equalities VCS conference and Voice and Influence organisations reflected concern that reductions in Health and Social Care, particularly around Home Care, would reduce the quality of care that people receive. Also there was a strong feeling that Bristol City Council should use its commissioning power to ensure that care workers are being paid at least the living wage, and BCC should penalise the use of zero hour contracts.

III: Cease funding for specialist floating support service for older people (R-PP-022) £0.411M

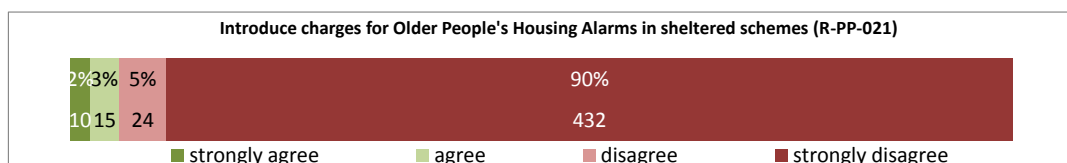


*484 people expressed an opinion on this proposal, overall 99% disagreed with this proposal and the majority strongly disagreed.

Summary of comments

Residents said that if specialist support was required, why was it being cut? This proposal will affect the most vulnerable and the cutting of this service will have a knock on affect resulting in Bristol City Council picking up the costs of providing support for this group of clients. Comments from the Equalities VCS conference and Voice and Influence organisations reflected concern that replacing specialist floating support for older people with generic floating support would not be appropriate.

IV: Introduce charges for Older People's Housing Alarms in sheltered schemes (R-PP-021) £0.168M



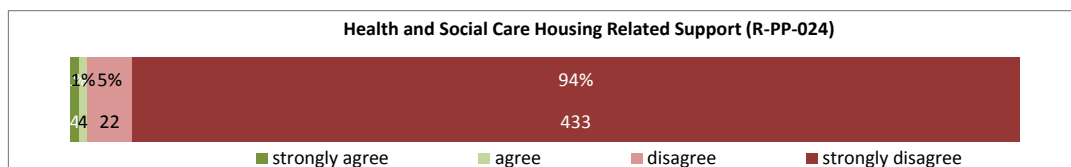
*481 people expressed an opinion on this proposal, of which 95% disagreed and the majority strongly disagreed.

Summary of comments

Older people are hit hard enough already and charges for any service often disproportionately affect the poor and leave them at risk. Why is the council putting a price on feeling secure? We should be providing reassurance for our older adults, not making them feel like they have to pay for it. Comments from the Equalities VCS conference and Voice and Influence organisations reflected concerns that a reduction in wardens would increase social isolation.

V: Health and Social Care (HSC) Housing Related Support (R-PP-024)

£0.80M

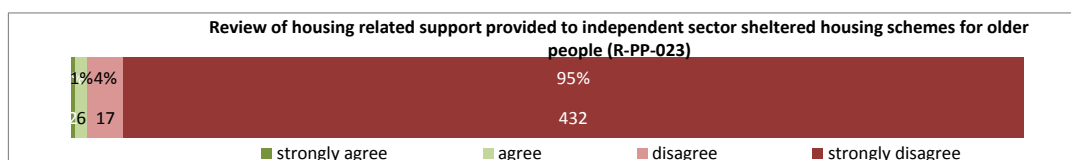


*463 people expressed an opinion on this proposal, overall 99% disagreed with this proposal and the majority strongly disagreed

Summary of comments

The public thought this will impact on the elderly, vulnerable and those with complex needs. These services have already been cut – when making cuts, quality and complexity of the service should be considered as well as price. Comments from the Equalities VCS conference and Voice and Influence organisations reflected concern that reductions in HSC, particularly around Home Care, would reduce the quality of care that people receive.

VI: Review of housing related support provided to independent sector sheltered housing schemes for older people (R-PP-023) £0.145M

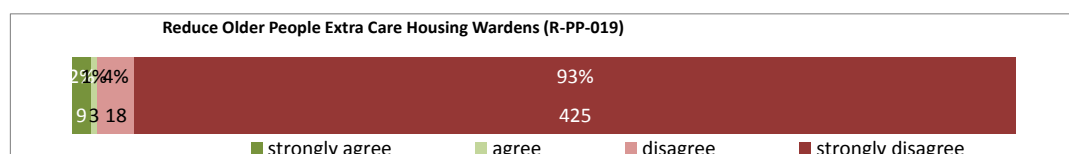


*457 people expressed an opinion on this proposal, of which 99% disagreed and the majority strongly disagreed.

Summary of comments

Comments included this will increase social isolation and fewer people being able to live independently. We should be looking after our elderly. This discriminates against the independent sector tenants.

VII: Reduce Older People Extra Care Housing Wardens (R-PP-019) £0.70M

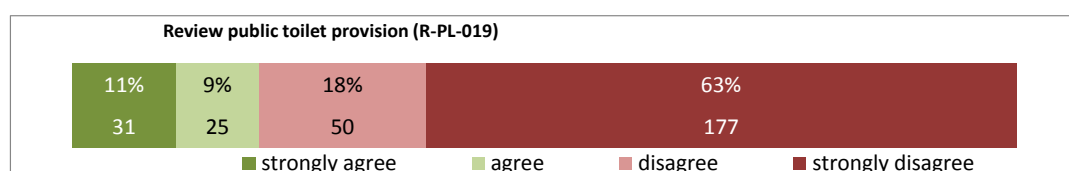


*455 people expressed an opinion on this proposal, of which 97% disagreed and the majority strongly disagreed.

Summary of comments

Elderly vulnerable have restricted lives already, we owe them some support and wardens are a very good way of doing this. This could lead to a deterioration in service of care to older people. The oldest in society need to be looked after, and taking away the housing warden who ensures their security will make people feel less secure. Comments from the Equalities VCS conference and Voice and Influence organisations reflected concerns that a reduction in wardens would increase social isolation.

VIII: Review public toilet provision (R-PL-019) £0.05M



283 people expressed an opinion on this proposal, over three quarters of all respondents (81%) disagreed and the majority strongly disagreed.

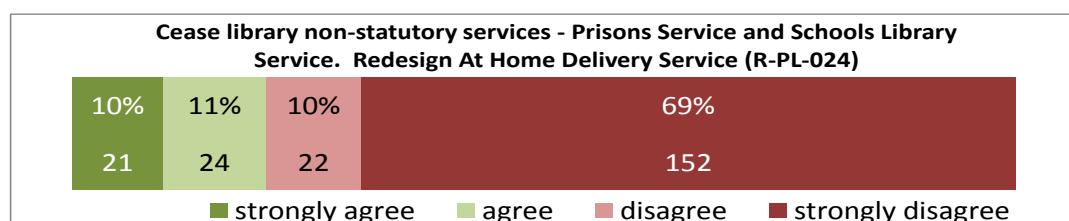
Summary of comments

Many comments in disagreement referred to the council ignoring the needs of the elderly, people with medical conditions, disabled people, women and children. It was suggested this proposal would lead to the fouling of the streets and health risks and detracting tourists from a 'Green Capital City'. It was stated access to a toilet was a human right and many people were happy to pay a charge. A quarter of respondents agreed with this proposal but said there needed to be alternative provision and retain toilets in parks. Comments from the Equalities VCS conference and Voice and Influence organisations included:

- Concern that the public toilet closures would significantly and disproportionately impact on equalities groups, namely women, disabled people, older people and people caring for children.
- It was also felt that significant work needs to be done to ensure that the Community toilet scheme is appropriate, with specific issues raised about the accessibility of community toilets.
- It was asked what impact the reduction of public toilets would have on Bristol's Purple Flag award?

N.B. see also comments in Appendix 3 from organisations including Bristol Older People's Forum, Friends of the Downs and Avon Gorge and SHINE Health Integration Team and that highlight additional health risks.

XI: Cease library non-statutory services - Prisons Service and Schools Library Service. Redesign At Home Delivery Service (R-PL-024) £0.125M



291 people expressed an opinion on this proposal and 79% disagreed, the majority strongly disagreed.

Summary of comments

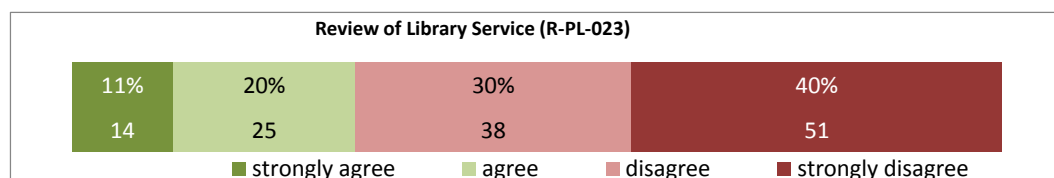
Many said these library services should not be cut – they were a lifeline and invaluable for people who can't get out. Access to all library non-statutory services generally provides an educational resource, can help rehabilitate and essential for people with limited means. Two thirds of comments related to redesign of the At Home Library Service and the remainder referred to the Prison service. N.B. many comments were received as a co-ordinated response from users of the At Home Library service. Comments from the Equalities VCS conference and Voice and Influence organisations included:

- Concern that digitally excluded may be disadvantaged by reductions in libraries, as they are a key facility for accessing free internet.
- There was some support for wrapping the At Home service up with other services, particularly those in Health and Social Care. BOPF suggested this be part of a tackling isolation service.
- There were concerns that there might be a loss of expertise by not having a designated member of library staff – or if this was rolled into the job of a care worker that it may result in an adverse impact on quality of care.

X: Remove subsidy for leisure and sports contracts (R-PL-013) £1.1M

See page 16, point IV - this proposal also had high levels of agreement.

XI: Review of Library Service (R-PL-023) £1.1M

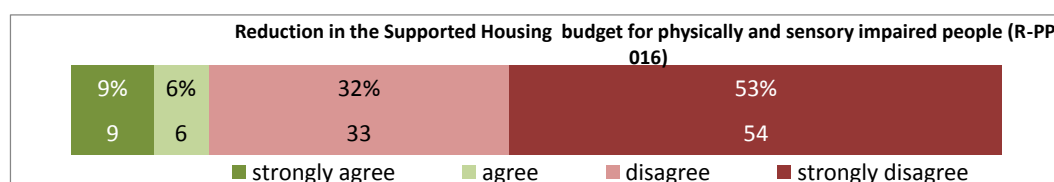


128 people expressed an opinion about this proposal and 70% disagreed.

Summary of comments

Libraries are a vital part of a civilised democratic society. They also help central and local government carry out some of its objectives eg increase literacy for young and old and internet access and computers for anyone who can't afford one and an Internet connection. It's also an invaluable source of social interaction for older people. Some of the comments in agreement referred to better use of modern technology instead of printed books and a more centralised resource.

XII: Reduction in the Supported Housing budget for physically and sensory impaired people (R-PP-016) £0.3M

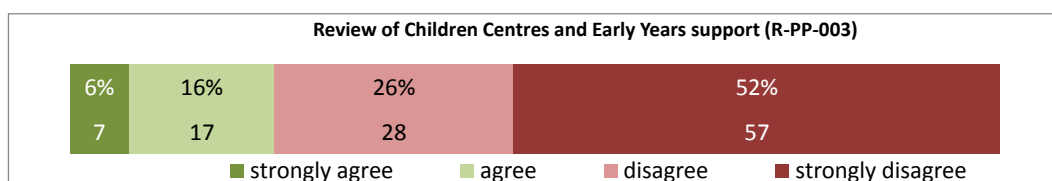


102 people expressed an opinion on this proposal, overall 85% disagreed and the majority strongly disagreed.

Summary of comments

Physically and sensory impaired people are already disadvantaged and isolated and this cut will be on top of changes to funding from welfare reform. A reduction in this funding is taking away a much needed support to prevent social isolation and therefore will impact on individuals' health and well-being.

XIII: Review of Children Centres and Early Years support (R-PP-003) £1.528M



109 people expressed an opinion on this proposal, overall 78% disagreed and the majority strongly disagreed.

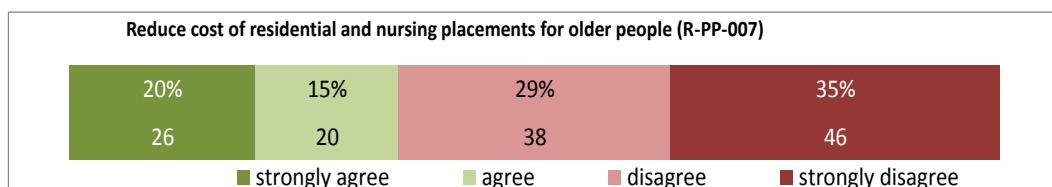
Summary of comments

Support for families should be the backbone for society and these centres do a great job. They provide invaluable support particularly for people in deprived areas of the city and early intervention saves money in the long term. Children will be at risk if centres close and childcare costs are prohibitive for many families. Comments from the Equalities VCS conference and Voice and Influence organisations included:

- There was significant concern about the lack of detail in the Children's Centres proposal, to meaningfully engage with the proposal.
- There were a number of issues raised about the link between children's poverty and women's poverty.
- It was strongly felt that access to affordable childcare remains a significant issue, and there were concerns that the proposal might worsen this and limit women's participation in work and economic development.

N.B. see also response from Filton Avenue Nursery School and Children's Centre in Appendix 3.

XIV: Reduce cost of residential and nursing placements for older people (R-PP-007) £0.745M

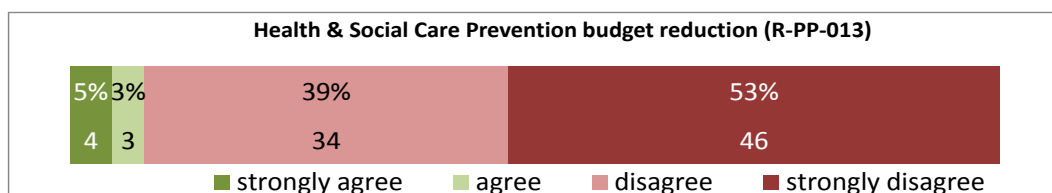


130 people expressed an opinion on this proposal, 64% disagreed 35% agreed.

Summary of comments

Older people need more support not less, the council should double the amount not decrease it. Great care must be taken to ensure high standards. Contractors have no incentive to treat people well and this will result in care home failures (e.g. Winterbourne View).

XV: Health and Social Care Prevention budget reduction (R-PP-013) £0.34M



87 people expressed an opinion on this proposal and 93% disagreed.

Summary of comments

There was some confusion about what this proposal meant. Also, that the consultation would not have reached those with mental health needs affected by this proposal. Some said the proposal was short sighted and would push the problem on to the NHS and crises services and cost more in the long term.

Table 2 indicates the savings from the top 30 proposals with high levels of disagreement.

Top proposals for disagreement		millions	
1	Cease older people's warden and alarm services in independent older people housing schemes (R-PP-018)	£0.17	Top 10 = £4.28M
2	Commissioning Home Care against Reablement Outcomes (R-PP-009)	£1.50	
3	Cease funding for a specialist floating support service for older people (R-PP-022)	£0.41	
4	Introduce charges for Older People's Housing Alarms in sheltered schemes (R-PP-021)	£0.17	
5	Health and Social Care Housing Related Support (R-PP-024)	£0.08	
6	Review of housing related support provided to independent sector sheltered housing schemes for older people (R-PP-023)	£0.15	
7	Reduce Older People Extra Care Housing Wardens (R-PP-019)	£0.07	
8	Review public toilet provision (R-PL-019)	£0.50	
9	Cease library non-statutory services - Prisons Service and Schools Library Service. Redesign At Home Delivery Service (R-PL-024)	£0.13	
10	Remove subsidy for leisure and sports contracts (R-PL-013)	£1.10	
11	Review of Library Service (R-PL-023)	£1.10	Top 15 = £8.3M
12	Reduction in the Supported Housing budget for physically and sensory impaired people (R-PP-016)	£0.30	
13	Review of Children Centres and Early Years support (R-PP-003)	£1.53	
14	Reduce cost of residential and nursing placements for older people (R-PP-007)	£0.75	
15	Health & Social Care Prevention budget reduction (R-PP-013)	£0.34	
16	Reduce support services across the Council (R-BC-001)	£4	Top 20 = £13.45M
17	Reduce administrative support in Bristol Museums Galleries and Archives Service (R-PL-004)	£0.05	
18	Reduce Local Bus Service (Subsidy) (R-PL-028)	£0.70	
19	Reduce nuisance response team (R-PL-015)	£0.10	
20	Review tree planting and maintenance service R-PL-012	£0.30	
21	Stop supervision of Hengrove play area (R-PL-010)	£0.30	Top 30 = £15.65M
22	Reduce Voluntary and Community Sector Budget (R-PP-015)	£0.06	
23	Reduce Equalities & Community Cohesion team (R-PL-022)	£0.18	
24	Reduce commercial waste enforcement (R-PL-020)	£0.09	
25	Expand Community Supported Accommodation to reduce spend on residential care (R-PP-006)	£0.51	
26	Review funding arrangements for Blaise Castle Museum, Red Lodge, Georgian House, Roman	£0.16	
27	Reduce Pollution Management service (R-PL-017)	£0.12	
28	Eliminate subsidy to St Paul's learning centre and explore other options (R-PL-025)	£0.16	
29	Reduce spending on crime reduction projects (R-PL-003)	£0.25	
30	Relocating Youth offending team (R-PP-004)	£0.37	

colour code:

Health and Social Care
Children and Young People
Environment and Leisure, NCD
Neighbourhoods & Communities, NCD
Museums and Galleries, NCD
Safer Bristol, NCD
Transport, NCD

6. Alternative areas of savings selected by respondents

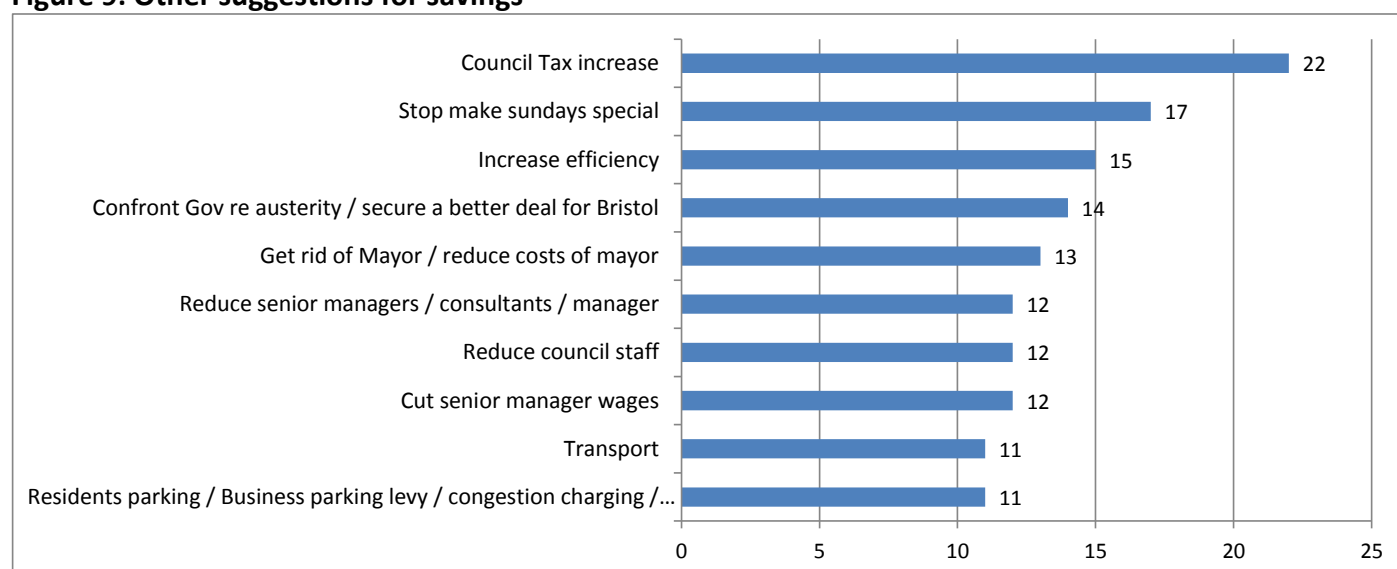
As part of this budget consultation, the Mayor published other areas of discretionary spend (services that the council is not legally obliged to provide). This list enabled respondents to choose alternatives to the proposed saving they disagreed with.

The table below shows the rank of alternatives for discretionary spending, as areas where respondents would prefer to make savings. Top of the list is to make savings from the Remaining Local Bus Service Subsidy and savings from the current spending on increasing citizen influence on local service delivery through Neighbourhood Partnerships. Lighting energy was third, see Table 3. See also Appendix 8 for all comments about the discretionary spend areas.

Table 3: Rank of discretionary spend (top 10)		Number of responses
Remaining Local Bus Service Subsidy (67%)	£1.4M	106
Increasing citizen influence on local service delivery through Neighbourhood Partnerships	£2M	100
Lighting energy	£0.56M	83
Community investment and grants to the voluntary and community sector to support disadvantaged and equalities communities.	£2M	79
Park and Ride	£1.2M	78
Arts Grants and support	£2.36M	78
Subsidising sports clubs and facilities	£2.5M	72
Household waste and recycling centres (tips)	£0.76M	48
Welfare advice service	£0.28M	44
Community Transport grants	£0.5M	38

Open comments were received with other suggestions to balance the budget and these are included in the graph below. The categories are shown where we have received at least 10 comments on an issue.

Figure 9: Other suggestions for savings



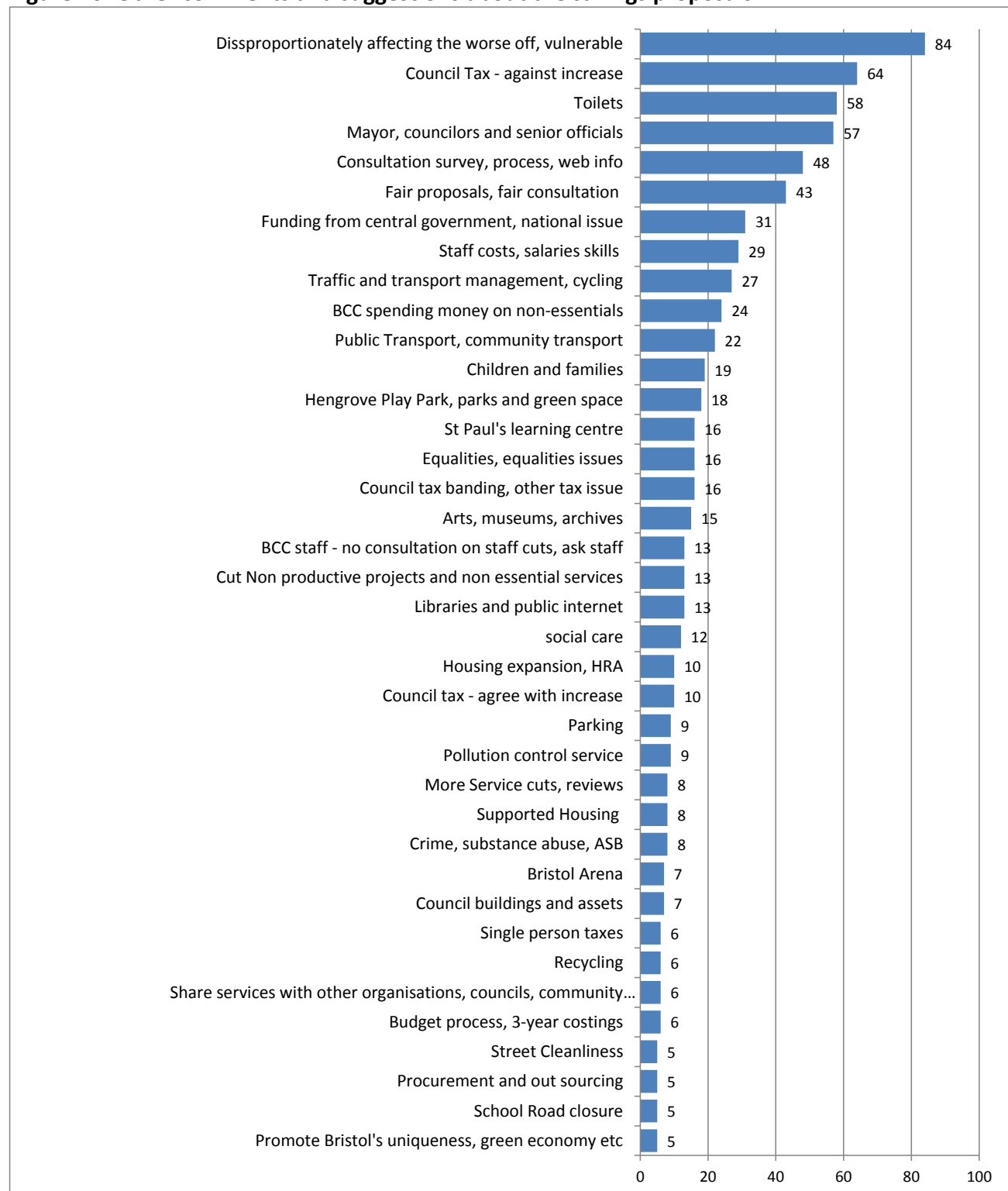
There were also comments about alternative spend areas from the Equalities VCS conference, individual consultation events with Voice and Influence organisations, and submissions to the consultation from equalities led organisations, as summarised below:

- There was a strong sense that there should be funding reductions from both the Arts budget, and also the Neighbourhood Partnerships budget – in place of some of the reductions that directly impact equalities groups or vulnerable people.
- It was also felt that Bristol City Council has not fully exploited the opportunities for income generation as much as it could have, in order to protect services.

7. Other budget suggestions, comments and emails

Over 617 comments and 190 emails/letters were received in the survey and separately as direct responses to the consultation. These were themed by category and illustrated below. Figure 10 includes categories where we have received at least 5 comments on an issue. Typical comments are included on the following page and all comments are included in Appendix 9.

Figure 10: Other comments and suggestions about the savings proposals



Typical comments received in the budget consultation

Go to Central Government and say 'no'

Happy to pay 2% extra on council tax if council reduced its council running costs

I cannot afford to live anywhere as it is and by putting up the prices of everything, we will end up homeless.

This is a courageous budget proposal in challenging times.

I would be mortified to think that vulnerable people are experiencing a poorer quality of life while the more fortunate people enjoy modest rises in council tax.

Stop funding the Arts so much. They should be generating their own income like a business.

Mayor elected by the people should have courage to have a referendum - by proposing council tax increases above 2%

What discretionary spending is available should be concentrated on those most in need

The council should be looking into how to utilise the services they provide and make more money.

Save money by halting all Mr Ferguson's vanity projects like closing roads on Sundays, Bristol as a "Green Capital" and the promotion of cycling over motorised transport.

The number one principle of our social responsibility is to protect those who are vulnerable and in need - let us consider that above all else please. Thank you for this opportunity to have my say.

If you close down any more toilets will we be allowed to use the streets as a toilet?

On the whole, it makes sense, although there is too much reduction in services to the elderly and physically impaired

8. Feedback from the Mayor's public meetings

The Mayor was available to discuss the savings proposals with the public at a number of meetings. The more detailed notes and questions asked at these meetings are included in Appendix 1 and below is a summary.

Week commencing 25th November there were 4 public meetings in the evening at four locations around the city, see table 4 below. A further equalities meeting took place on 11th December and a day time public meeting on 19th December. A Mayors Question Time took place on 3rd December and an Ask George webchat occurred on the 6th December. A Youth Opinion meeting was held on the 11th December.

Evening meetings were well attended with good participation – approximately 340 people in total. There was a broad demographic (possibly BME under represented). The Mayor was supported by Cabinet and Service Directors – the latter providing detail and context of proposals as necessary. In all cases the full time allocation was used (with some questions going unanswered). There were some small demonstrations outside events eg Anti Cuts Alliance at City Hall.

Main Themes & Hot Topics

- High dissatisfaction regarding central government enforced cuts but acceptance that the council is legally obliged to put forward a balanced budget
- Concern about proposal to close public toilets in Bristol (particularly the impact on elderly, disabled, parents of young children etc)
- Concern at the cumulative and disproportionate impact of budget proposals on elderly, disabled and vulnerable people in Bristol communities e.g. School Road, Warden Services, Children's centres, community transport etc.
- St Paul's Learning Centre – community asset, invitation to review community plan for the future.
- Library Service – proposal seen as far too vague for people to understand or comment on
- Job losses - concern about the possible impact on front line services / people do not know where the job losses will fall.

Table 4: Summary of meetings/Mayoral engagement in chronological order:

Date	26 November	27 November	28 November	29 November
Area	North	South	Central	East
Venue – 6.30 or 7.00pm	Henbury School Station Road	The Park Centre Daventry Road, BS4	City Hall College Green	Bristol Brunel Academy Speedwell Road
Cabinet Members and senior officers present	Geoff Gollop, Barbara Janke, Brenda Massey, Mark Taylor	Barbara Janke, Mark Taylor	Mark Taylor, Mike Hennessey, Alistair Cox, Craig Bolt, Gillian, Douglas, Di Robinson Tracey Morgan	Mark Taylor, Tracey Morgan, Alistair Cox, Mike Hennessey, Di Robinson, Craig Bolt
Attendance	66	76	130	66
Demographics	White, retired older people. Genders in balance.	White, middle aged, equalities groups including disabled and young people. Genders in balance.	Audience middle aged or retired, equalities groups including BME and disabled people. Genders in balance.	Mainly white, middle aged, equalities groups included disabled people. Genders in balance.

Table 4: Summary of meetings/Mayoral engagement in chronological order (continued):

Date	3 December	6 December	11 December	19 December
Type of meeting	Mayor's Question time	Ask George webchat	1.Equalities/Voscur meeting 2.Youth Opinion Question Time	Day time public meeting
Venue	University of Bristol, Wills Building	N/A	1. MShed 2. The Station	City Hall, College Green
Senior Managers / Directors present	Di Robinson, Vareta Bryan, Tracey Morgan, Mark Taylor	N/A	1.Angie Ridgwell, Tracy Morgan, Alison Comley, Vareta Bryan, Julia James, Mike Hennessey, Gillian Douglas, Nick Hooper, Craig Bolt, Neil Taylor, Peter Woodhouse. 2. Tracey Morgan, Mark Taylor, Craig Bolt, Kurt James	Vareta Bryan, Mark Taylor, Craig Bolt, Kate Murray, Pete Woodhouse
Attendance	223	1701 total views (232 live and 1469 archive)	1. 80 2. 12	80
Demographics	All age groups with many students, and some residents from outside Bristol. Audience profile was 'urban prosperity' based on Acorn analysis.	N/A	1.Well balanced, all groups represented 2. Young people only	Many older people, BME group well represented

9. Other feedback / opinion on savings proposals

Although not strictly part of the consultation process we have monitored feedback from other engagement sources such as social media, petitions on budget matters which were live during the consultation period and ideas put forward via the online facility 'George's ideas lab'. This has been included as useful context within this report.

Relevant Petitions on the savings proposals

We are aware of the following budget related e-petitions. Six are running on the council's E-Petitions website and two are not on this site, but circulating in the community (in paper format) and for some of these, we are unaware of number of signatures. See Appendix 6 for more details.

1. **Save Hengrove Park.** Note: also in Evening Post article including video 11/12/13 (unable to see number of signatures) www.savehengrovepark.com Facebook page with 11,162 likes.
2. **Not allow St Pauls Learning and Family Centre to be closed.** (1,082 signatures so far) https://secure.avaaz.org/en/petition/George_Ferguson_Bristol_City_Council_Not_allow_St_Pauls_Learning_and_Family_Centre_to_be_closed/?copy

These have not yet been submitted to Democratic Services.

In addition, these budget related petitions are currently live (or have recently closed) on the BCC e-petition site (as of 6.1.14):

3. **Save Blaise Castle** http://epetitions.bristol.gov.uk/epetition_core/community/petition/2508
Closed 28/12/13 (492 signatures - 137 signed the online e-petition and 355 signed the paper petition).
4. **Save warden service in sheltered accommodation** Closed 31.12.13. 55 signatures
5. **Save School Road respite facility –**
http://epetitions.bristol.gov.uk/epetition_core/community/petition/2532 Closes 10/1/14 (2,075 signatures so far - 504 signed online e-petition and 1,592 signed the paper petition)
6. **Save Hengrove Park:** http://epetitions.bristol.gov.uk/epetition_core/community/petition/2512
Closes 31/1/14 (47 signatures so far)
7. **Save Our City - No to £90m of Cuts:**
http://epetitions.bristol.gov.uk/epetition_core/community/petition/2509
Closes 11/2/14 (55 signatures so far)
8. **Keep Bristol Public Toilets**
Open: http://epetitions.bristol.gov.uk/epetition_core/community/petition/2496
Closes 24/2/14 (431 signatures so far)
9. **Freeze Council Tax:** http://epetitions.bristol.gov.uk/epetition_core/community/petition/2523
Closes 22/5/14 (49 signatures so far)

Budget ideas received via George's Ideas Lab

George's Ideas Lab was not promoted as a formal part of the budget consultation process, however it provides additional insight into bright ideas to save money. It also offered another signpost to the consultation and people have used this route to have their say.

The Lab has mainly been promoted as a way of collecting ideas for the Bloomberg Mayor's Challenge, the Green Capital programme and as a six month pilot of a new way to share, discuss and rate ideas to improve Bristol. Currently the site has over 600 registered users and 354 ideas. The Mayor and his assistant mayors will look at the more popular, most discussed ideas and others we identify as having the most potential for improving the quality of life in the city and saving money.

Nine ideas received are related to the budget, of these two are directly related to proposals - public toilets and Hengrove Play Park and six ideas are related to saving money. One relates to cutting the cost of democracy which the council is already doing with 4 yearly elections and the boundary commission review. See this list in Table 5. The site has received a low number of votes per idea, and it has now entered a 'rate and review ideas' phase.

Table 5: Relevant ideas in George's Ideas Lab

Name	Description	Votes	Average rating 1=poor idea, 5=excellent idea
City Hall	Sell City Hall into the property market, to become a hotel or plush apartments.	2	2
We're all in it together!	Crowd funding to mitigate reductions in services proposed in Mayoral budget proposals	3	3.3
Using those on community service programs to help reduce staffing costs	The idea is for people sentenced to conduct 'community service' to work alongside permanent members of staff in a bid to reduce costs on councils – in essence, a supply of free labour.	3	4
Rate Relief for Toilets	NDR rate relief for businesses providing a public toilet facility	6	3.6
Charging for museum entry	Start to charge people £1 (or Bristol Pound) for entry to museums. Entry for children up to 18 and those receiving concessions should be free.	4	3
Saving money and enabling community action	Reduce the number of councillors in Bristol by half to 35. This will immediately save £399000 in the basic salaries, plus more in savings on their projected pro rata pensions and projected fees for attending councillor training course.	4	3
Reduce the number of councillors fairly for better relations in local communities	Rethink ward boundaries to reduce the number of councillors and to improve the functioning of neighbourhood partnerships	5	2.8
Volunteer Day	When I worked in the US, our company used to set aside one day where the entire company of 4,000 people went and volunteered in the community. Usually painting school classrooms, but on one occasion, we built an entire school library	6	4
Council Employees Take a Pay Cut to save Services	Cut the salaries of council employees to reduce the impact of budget cuts	10	1.6

Social media

We used social media to raise awareness of the budget proposals and promote the consultation, using the Bristol City Council twitter account and ASK Bristol on facebook. Promotions included e-newsletter bulletins and direct emails to over 40,000 addresses. We also monitored the mood on twitter from over 356 tweets received, see Figure 11. The mood on twitter became progressively more negative as promotion gave way to community campaigns about specific proposals. Figure 10 illustrates 52% of tweets were negative. Figure 12 illustrates the popular words occurring in tweets - Hengrove Play Park, Public Toilets and St Paul's Community Centre have all been referred to.

Figure 11: Budget Consultation on twitter

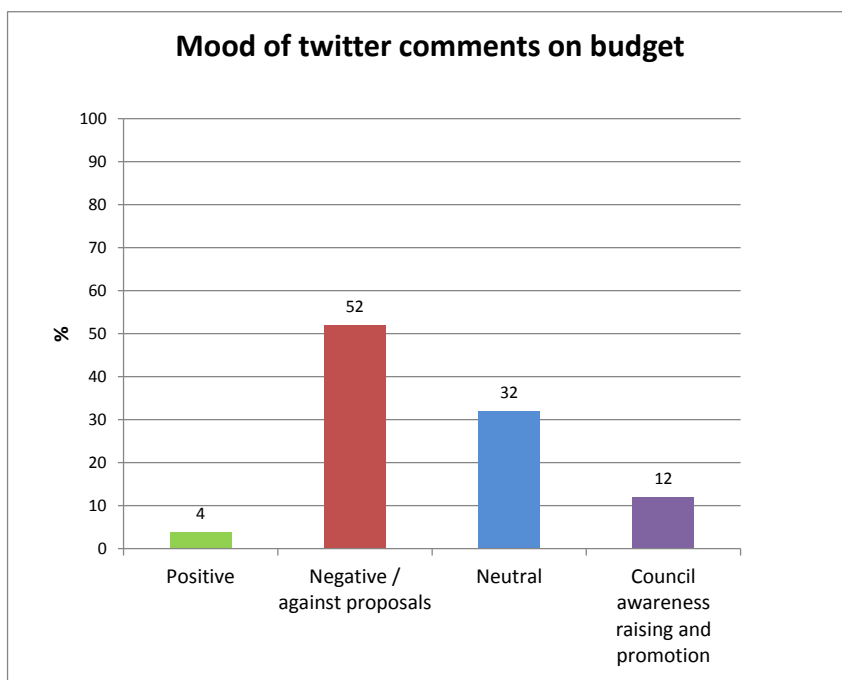
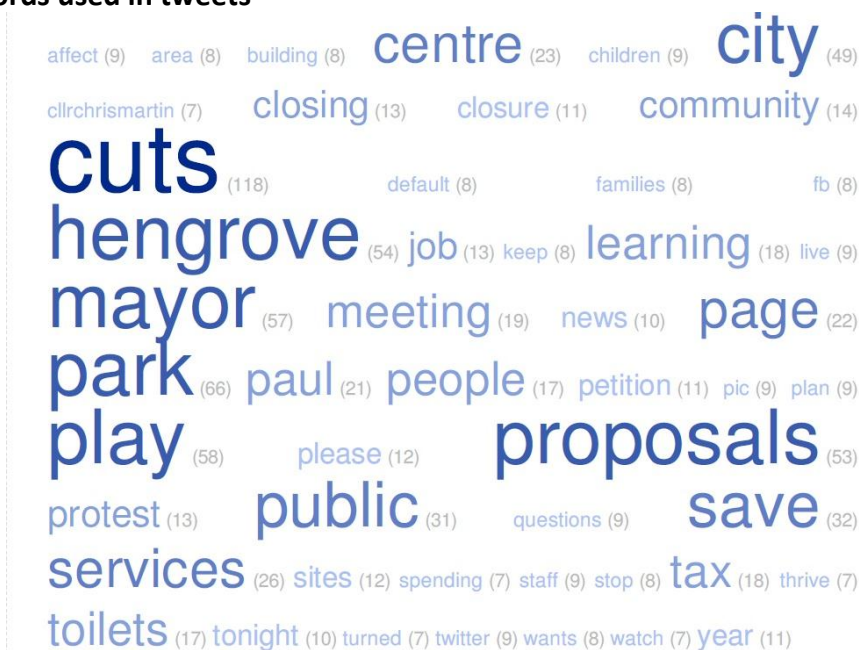


Figure 12: Popular words used in tweets



10. Reliability of results

Sample size

This year's budget consultation included a comprehensive range of activities to publicise the consultation and give people more opportunities to have their say. The success of this approach has been reflected by the response of 3,860 to the survey. In context, this figure is nearly 12 times the response to the budget consultation in 2012 and (in comparison the other consultations on citywide topics) represents a very good response. The demographic profile of respondents indicates a low response from Black and minority ethnic groups and disabled people (compared to the city profile in the 2011 Census) although the demographic of the Mayor's public meetings and non-council led Voice and Influence meetings, better reflects the profile of the city. Many comments received from these groups have been included in this report.

Campaigns and multiple responses

Certain campaigns to save services arose during the consultation e.g. Save Hengrove Play Park, At Home Library Service, Keep Bristol Toilets Open, Save School Road Respite Facility, don't allow St Paul's Learning Centre to close, save Brunel Care services, and these have contributed to a high proportion of disagreement with some of the proposals in the consultation.

We used a number of approaches to check multiple (or identical) entries from one source and bulk or co-ordinated responses including IP addresses, email addresses and identical wording to open questions. The length and thoroughness of the survey is likely to have deterred some multiple completions. IP address checks revealed Bristol City Council, University, NHS and Brunel Care IP addresses were common, but responses appeared to be from different individuals.

Representations

Bulk offline responses were received from and co-ordinated by Brunel Care (340 responses) and users of the At Home Library Service (approximately 100 responses). Brunel Care tenants and At Home Library users tended to be people over 65 years, influencing the demographic of respondents with over-representation of this age group (see page 10). Their opinions generated high levels of disagreement with 7 health and social care proposals related to care and housing for older people and this had the impact of placing other proposals (with disagreement for a wider demographic) lower in the running order e.g. public toilets, Hengrove Play area.

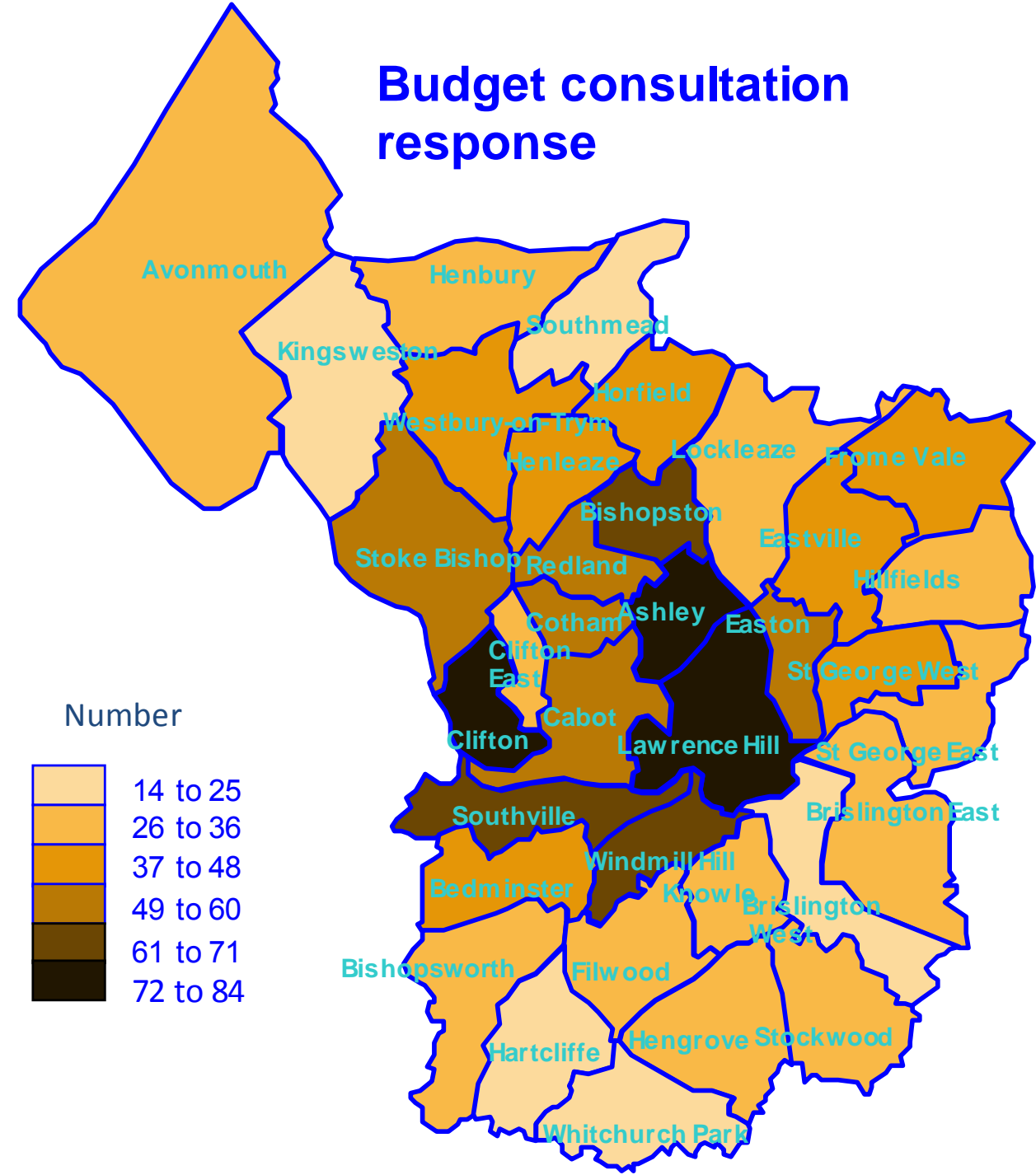
The Mayor and Cabinet should be aware of the above when they consider the consultation results. They should also be aware of non-survey submissions received from groups and organisations who have responded to a number of proposals with a letter/email. The survey responses in Section 5 should be considered alongside non-survey submissions in Appendix 3 and equalities feedback in Appendix 2.

Ward analysis

Geographical spread of responses is shown in Figure 13, based on respondent post codes. 1,521 respondents (44%) gave a post code and we have no way of knowing the geographical distribution of the remaining 56%. Of those who gave a post code, 31 lived outside the Bristol area. The pattern in Figure 12 shows a concentration of respondents from the central parts of the city.

Ward analysis for **each** proposal has not been displayed as part of this report due to the small sample size at ward level. A ward breakdown was not the main purpose of the analysis and the survey respondents were 'self selecting'. Also, giving a post code was not a mandatory field in the questionnaire (if it had been, it would have reduced response rate).

Figure 13: Map of the 44% respondents to the budget consultation survey who gave a post code



11. Conclusion

It is estimated that an audience of over 50,000 people has been reached through the communication and consultation process and well over 4,000 have 'had a say' through the survey, public meetings, direct emails and letters.

- Based on the consultation survey results, **the majority of respondents were in favour of a council tax increase** of 2% or higher (69%).
- **Nearly half of respondents agreed with most or all of the 63 savings proposals** (at 49%), with 14% having no opinion and 37% disagreeing.

Disagreement - It is clear from the various methods to feedback in this budget consultation, that the public in Bristol have identified a number of priority issues that they feel should not be included in the saving proposals. These total £4.3M of savings (based on top 10 proposals with most disagreement). Many of the same proposals that had received high levels of disagreement, had also arisen as questions for the Mayor at public meetings and had been the subject of petitions and community campaigns. Several of these referred to cumulative and disproportionate impact of budget proposals on elderly, disabled and vulnerable people in Bristol communities and generally included:

- Housing services for older and vulnerable people
- Health and social care prevention.
- Public toilets
- Library services (statutory and non-statutory)
- Children's Centres and Early Years Support.

There was an over-representation in responses of 'disagreement' from older people (over 65 years) although many health and social care proposals were relevant to this group.

Agreement - Common proposals for 'agreement' amounted to £21M of savings (based on the top 10 proposals with most agreement). Proposals included:

- Challenge Council spending (including reducing council running cost of buildings and minimising the cost of duplication)
- Increase mooring charges in the city docks
- Removal of subsidy for leisure and sports contracts.

Those residents who did not agree with any of the proposals could choose **alternatives from a list of discretionary spending**. Savings from the Remaining Local Bus Service Subsidy and cutting spending on increasing citizen influence on local service delivery through Neighbourhood Partnerships, were favoured.

Some proposals triggered **non-council led community activity**, such as meetings, campaigns, petitions, letters to the Mayor and issues included:

- Closing public toilets and health implications
- Save Hengrove Park
- Not allow St Paul's Learning and Family Centre to close
- At Home Library Service
- School Road respite facility
- Save Blaise Castle
- Brunel Care (care and support, care homes, sheltered housing, wardens etc)

Responses to these should be considered as a significant contribution to overall feedback as they demonstrate the strength of feeling and implications at a local level, and help compliment the survey results, particularly from seldom heard groups.

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – Feedback from the Mayor’s community budget meetings and Question Time

Appendix 2 – Equalities summary of feedback

Appendix 3 – Response from Community and Voluntary sector and self-organised groups

1. South West Transport Network
2. Bristol Older People’s Forum
3. Bristol City Council Disabled Employees group
4. Southmead Community Association
5. Governors of Filton Avenue Nursery School and Children’s Centre, Lockleaze
6. Bristol Savages
7. SHINE Health Integration Team
8. BME Voice and Influence (V&I) response
9. Voscur response to budget proposals in general
10. Voscur response to Voluntary and Community Sector reduction in community investment grants (R-PL-006)
11. Bristol Women’s Voice
12. Bristol Junior Chamber of Commerce and shipping
13. Mina Road Park group
14. Westbury on Trym Primary Care Centre
15. The Clifton Suspension Bridge Trust
16. Bristol Parks Forum
17. Easton and Lawrence Hill Neighbourhood Management
18. Disability Equality Forum
19. Avon Local History and Archaeology group
20. West of England Care and Repair Report
21. Bristol and Avon family History Society
22. Bristol Fawcett Group
23. Youth Opinions – Handout circulated at Youth Budget meeting with the Mayor
24. Unison response
25. Bristol City Council response to Unison questions
26. Friends of the Downs and Avon Gorge
27. Comments from the Older People’s Partnership Board
28. Comments from the Learning Difficulty Partnership Board
29. Bristol Youth Links

Appendix 4 – Response from Scrutiny Commissions

Appendix 5– Consultation survey

Appendix 6 - Relevant e-Petitions

Appendix 7 - Detailed results by savings proposal (63)

Appendix 8 – Comments about alternative areas of discretionary spend

Appendix 9 - All other comments on the budget from the online survey.

Feedback from the Mayor's community public meetings

(in chronological order)

North Bristol – Henbury School 26th November

In attendance to answer questions:

George Ferguson – Mayor of Bristol

Cllr Geoff Gollop – Assistant Mayor for Finance and Corporate Services

Mark Taylor – Interim Service Director – Finance

Also in attendance:

Pamela Parkes – Chair

Cllr Barbara Janke - Assistant Mayor for Health and Social Care

Cllr Brenda Massey – Assistant Mayor for Children and Young People and Education

Cllrs Smith, Townsend & Windows

Karen Blong – Democratic Services Officer

90 members of the public.

Pamela Parkes, Chair welcomed all those in attendance to the meeting and explained how the meeting would proceed.

Mark Taylor (MT) introduced a presentation (appendix a to the minutes) which provided the back ground and context of the wider public sector financial situation.

The Mayor introduced Cllr Gollop, Deputy Mayor and Assistant Mayor for Finance and Corporate Services and noted the following;

The consultation meetings were arranged to ensure the opinions of the public were listened to and considered when developing the budget. The final budget would be presented at the Full Council meeting on the 18th February 2014. Due to the reductions from central government funding, local government cuts would be inescapable.

Bristol was slightly behind the other Core Cities where significant changes had already been implemented. The draft budget suggested that 800 Full Time Equivalent jobs would be lost in Bristol, this would affect 1000 people.

It would be important to ensure that Bristol prospered and work would continue to boost Bristol's economy. A holistic approach would be required.

Questions asked:

- The Disabled Equality Forum were concerned about the effect of the cuts on disabled people. Could access be affected due to loss of staff?
- Would the Mayor consider an integrated transport system and / or expanding the rail network? Would a congestion charge be considered?
- The Mayor was referred to a recent meeting with Eric Pickles and David Cameron. Why were the cuts front loaded in year one? A general election would be held in 18 months and a different government could have a different approach?
- Highlighted concerns related to;
 - proposed reductions in library services, specifically delivery to prisons;
 - proposed reduction in services to tackle noise pollution.
 - Low bus fares would be important to areas outside the City centre, specially the more deprived areas such as Lawrence Weston. High bus fares could result in isolation.
- Could alternative funding be sourced for museums? Could libraries donate unused books to prisons?
- The reduction in the noise pollution services, which already seemed over worked. Concerns could be linked to articles 8, 13 and 2 of the European Convention of Human Rights.
- Would the Mayor consider privatising services or creating franchises to increase income?
- The need for budget cuts was understood. The question related to the possible imbalance between cuts and increases in revenue: what has been considered to raise income?

- The Henbury / Brentry Children's Centres were run by voluntary organisations. There were huge pockets of deprivation in Henbury and the centres allowed children to play side by side and provided role models. The cuts could stigmatise services which provide support for the most vulnerable.
- Concerns were highlighted related to Emerson Green NHS Treatment Centre.
- The question asked if all the money invested in Icelandic banks had been returned to BCC?
- What type of investments has been considered?
- What would be the savings from Parks?
- What were the Mayors thoughts about the consultation process?
- Would there be a reduction in housing provision for disabled people?
- What were the changes to the school respite facility?
- Vulnerable people could not be described as discretionary – how were savings going to be made in services used by vulnerable people?
- It was suggested that the public should be permitted to use toilets in restaurants and cafes.

South Bristol - The Park Daventry Road 27th November

In attendance to answer questions:

George Ferguson - Mayor of Bristol

Cllr Barbara Janke - Assistant Mayor - Health & Social Care

Mark Taylor - Interim Service Director - Finance

Also in attendance:

Pamela Parkes - Chair

Ian Hird - Democratic Services

Pamela Parkes welcomed all those attending the meeting and explained how the meeting would proceed.

Mark Taylor gave a presentation (appendix A to the notes) which provided the background and context of the wider public sector financial situation.

The Mayor introduced himself and the challenge ahead, and then invited questions and comments.

Questions / comments were then taken from the floor. A summary of these comments, plus the response from the Mayor / Councillor Janke is set out below:

- If School Road residential care home (short term / respite care accommodation) closes, what alternative provision will be available?
- Further question on respite care: were carers being re-assessed? Would this result in less respite care being available?
- Will a separate budget consultation meeting be arranged, specifically to consult with young people?
- Concerns about impact of budget reductions on poorest areas of the city, especially in relation to public toilets, children's centres and libraries.
- Expression of concern about the impact of stopping supervision of Hengrove play area, and also a comment around the impact of previous decisions taken on youth provision / Bristol Youth Links.
- Further comment in relation to School Road respite centre - referred to comments earlier at the meeting about take-up rate at School Road - advised that he had experienced difficulty in finding a place for his son there on a number of occasions.
- In relation to direct payments, expressed concern about the possible implications / human consequences of services provided by contractors if they proved to be inadequate.
- In Hengrove, local park, leisure and library facilities, and the city's museums are essential services for children; need to take a stand against central government and say that services should not be cut.
- General concern about impact of budget cuts on vulnerable groups, especially elderly people and children - expenditure should be prioritised in these areas; financial support for arts / culture could be reduced.
- With reference to earlier discussion: direct payments work well for some people.
- Expressed concern about any reductions which would affect voluntary and community sector capacity.
- Concern about any reductions to children's centre funding; suggested that greater involvement of the voluntary sector should be sought in delivering children's centre provision – cited the example of the service at Windmill Hill City Farm.
- Leisure centres (£1.1m saving through removing the subsidy for leisure and sports contracts).
- Why doesn't the Mayor stand up for Bristol and work with other councils to defy government cuts?
- Mayor's travel costs:
- Future of adult learning at St Paul's learning centre
- Suggestion that insufficient detail was available to enable budget impacts to be judged fully; queried whether, given the signs of more general economic recovery, it was necessary to "front load" budget reductions in year one to the extent proposed.

- Comment from Claire Shiner: suggested the need to learn from good practice, e.g. at Ilminster Avenue Specialist Nursery School and Children's Centre, and referred to the need to ensure effective links / working between children's centres and children's health services.
- General concern about budget reductions, and impact on service quality; and capacity issues re: the voluntary and community sector; need to stand up to central government, as per Liverpool during the 1980s
- (Council employee) - expressed the view that he felt undervalued as an employee, especially given the context of pay restraint in recent years.
- Raised issues about the use of reserves as an "alternative income" to help offset budget reductions.
- Suggestion that a small charge (e.g. £1, or 50 pence) be considered for museum entry. Also queried whether investment in rapid transit and the South Bristol Link was justified

Central Bristol - City Hall 28th November

In attendance to answer questions:

George Ferguson – Mayor of Bristol

Mark Taylor – Interim Service Director – Finance

Mike Hennessey – Service Manager Social Care for Adults

Alistair Cox, City Transport Manager

Di Robinson, Service Director Neighbourhoods and Communities

Craig Bolt, Service Director Resource Planning & Performance

Also in attendance:

Pamela Parkes – Chair

Sam Mahony – Democratic Services Officer

Pamela Parkes welcomed all those in attendance to the meeting and explained how the meeting would proceed.

Mark Taylor gave a presentation (appendix a to the minutes) which provided the back ground and context of the wider public sector financial situation.

The Mayor introduced himself and the challenge ahead, then invited questions and comments:

- With reference to the inequity in society and the rich/poor divide can it be said we're all in this together and there's no realistic alternative to cuts?
- Concern over the cut of £130,000 to the service which supported people leaving hospital. Would it be safeguarded until money was released from the NHS?
- Please reconsider the £30,00 cuts to community transport as they could mean some withdrawn services when for some customers it's the only time they get to leave their homes.
- The budget outlined did not have the detail of where the 1000 jobs were to be cut and therefore the effect on services so therefore there in consultation about things not known.
- There would be a number of people who, through aggressive fundraising and use of the Mayors fund, would donate to raise the money to protect services.
- The proposed closure of School Road as a facility for respite care (following the past closure of The Bush) would put people's health at risk and would increase the pressure on the Council.
- There were four times the number of people sleeping rough this year compared to last, with increased use of B&B accommodation. Why was there not a budget proposal to deal with that.
- The impact of the removal of funding for St Pauls Learning Centre would essentially mean that it would be closed. This would have consequences on the children and community reversing the work of the last 10 years. The Mayor was invited to visit the busy and vibrant Learning Centre to consider their business plan and involve the community in the solution. It was felt that the EQIA did not reflect the true impact on the community and more detail should be added.
- Proposals to close public toilets would be detrimental to children and older people as well as create a bad impression for tourists and visitors.
- It was highlighted that people that used the internet and attended social groups in libraries may not be counted ticket holders/users of libraries. It was a concern that different ways of working could lead to the outsourcing of jobs to private companies.
- How was the Council proposing to mitigate the effect of the cuts on asylum seekers and refugees particularly with references to language provision and therefore community cohesion.
- Could the Mayor ensure that there would be no more instances of duplication within the final budget.
- Would the Mayor publish jobs newly created over £100k, £75k and £50k salaries as well as details of travel expenses.

- There would be a combined impact of the cuts. Reductions in community transport and warden services would increase loneliness and isolation and impact on the NHS in the longer term. Please consider all the older people elements together and whether the most vulnerable people of Bristol really being protected as a total?

East Bristol – Bristol Brunel Academy, Speedwell 29th November

Attendance: 40-50 members of public

Service Directors: Mike Hennessey, Tracey Morgan, Craig Bolt, Di Robinson, Alistair Cox, Mark Taylor

Questions/points raised:

- Closer working with Neighbourhood Partnerships to better deliver local projects at reduced cost.
- The Mayor agreed to meet with staff affected by job losses
- Mayor criticised for his response to Central Government cuts. Point made more than once with the suggestion the Mayor prefers to support big companies (eg Hargreaves Lansdown) instead of fight Govt cuts.
- Message repeated about safeguarding the most vulnerable in the city
- Mayor asked how Bristol could promote tourism yet close public toilets
- Will Speedwell Baths fall under Capital Programme
- Transport seen as critical area for protection. Savings can be delivered by:
 - Reconfiguring how public transport delivered
 - Commercialising Park and Ride services
 - Closer working with regional partners and politicians
- Community transport savings recognisable by delivering more efficient service and having greater commercialisation of contracts.
- Request made to reconsider cut in buss pass funding following DfT announcement that it and Community Transport are great enablers for most vulnerable.
- Mayor quizzed on why only half of savings being consulted on (i.e. only £43m being discussed not whole £90m).
- Point raised about how £50m worth of savings could be made so quickly and why this hadn't been done before.
- Who is going to run things in the absence of managers (following removal of management layers)?
- Mayor asked to justify cost of Green Capital Director
- Will BCC close School Road respite unit – question posed by resident who cares for her sister.
- Cuts in support for the voluntary sector would be disastrous
- Why is the timespan to save 3 years, suggestion some LA's have 5 years?
- Libraries, how are savings to be met? – Di Robinson advised that £1.1m saving to be made by delivering library services differently while maintaining elements residents expect e.g. free access, multi format materials, free IT use.
- Statement made that St George has little in the way of amenity, this has to be addressed and investment in the area should match all other areas of the city especially in light of St George deprived areas
- How much council tax is yet to be collected?

Mayor's Public Question Time - 3 December 2013

Venue: University of Bristol

Event facilitated by David Alder, University of Bristol

Attendance: 223

Summary of questions / issues raised that relate to the Budget Consultation and the Mayor's responses:

(It was noted that anyone wishing to follow up on any particular issue following the session should either leave their contact details, or e-mail the Mayor at mayor@bristol.gov.uk)

The majority of questions at this event did not relate to the consultation. Those that did are below:

1. The issue raised about the importance of preserving **children's centres and early years work.**

Mayor's response: he was concerned to ensure that these well-regarded services continued to be maintained; in this area, budgets were likely to be adjusted (e.g. to achieve sensible efficiencies) but the quality of service delivery should not reduce.

2. Concern raised about the proposed £70k reduction in the **warden service in extra care housing for older people**. Response given (at the Mayor's request) by Vareta Bryan, Service Director - Care Services (adults): there would still be care services based on site and the most vulnerable people would not see any service reduction; would be happy to supply further detail.

3. Concern raised about **closing public toilets**, which will affect young and elderly people in particular. Would commercial enterprises in reality allow people to use toilets as an alternative to public toilet provision ? Mayor's response: it was important to note that the 19 public toilets in parks would not be affected; stressed that new and more efficient ways of working were key to securing better value from services; also need to be innovative - in relation to public toilets, he was open to new ideas about better utilising sites, e.g. the new café at the former public toilet site in Sea Mills was a good illustration of the new way of doing things.

4. Issue raised about whether budget considerations would impact on proposals to redesign the street scene in Old Market Street.

Mayor's response: he was not aware of any changes to the planned approach; was prepared to look into this issue further if necessary.

ASK George web chat 6th December

The following questions that were put to the Mayor that were related to the Budget Consultation:

- What will be the effect of reducing council subsidies for public transport
- How can you justify the Bristol Arena at a time of budget cuts?
- Can the public toilet buildings proposed for closure be utilised as opportunities by the unemployed?
- What are your plans for Hengrove Play Park and what caused the confusion over these plans?
- Does that mean you will do whatever it takes to keep Hengrove Play Park open?
- What do you say to councillors about approving your budget proposals in January?

Youth Consultation Event, The Station, Silver Street – 11th December

This session was prompted at the public consultation session at the Park, Knowle (27th Nov) when representatives from youth group Youth Opinions offered to meet with George to discuss the proposals from a young person's point of view. Invited were Youth opinions, Youth Mayors, members of the Youth Select Committee, volunteers from the Station and Student Union reps from UWE.

Those who actually attended were:

5 reps from Youth Opinions, including one youth worker

1 volunteer from the Station

One of the Youth Mayors

One rep from Youth Select committee

Officers in attendance included Tracey Morgan, Mark Taylor, Craig Bolt and Kurt James

The session was led mainly by Youth Opinions who had conducted their own survey of local people on the proposals. They went through a handout which was divided into two broad themes - how to generate more income and how to save more money.

The following questions were raised:

- Hengrove Park - it should be a youth cafe open in the evening which would increase income and reduce anti social behaviour. During the day it should be run by volunteers, or only reduce some of the paid staff and fill the gap with volunteers.
- Rent out our council buildings to make more income, rather than sell them off.
- Why are Bristol Youth Link costs so high?
- Should crime prevention work be paid for by the police instead of council. eg: PCSOs

- Young people should mentor each other on expected behaviour at youth clubs etc City Academy have a model of good practice we can use. Private sector could fund police or anti social behaviour activity instead of the council or we should put less money in to the arts.
- Public toilets shouldn't be left empty if they are closed, they should be put to use.
- Concerns over commissioning voluntary and private sector to do work for us. Standards used to be good but now the grants have been dropped.
- If we are passing public money over to the private sector, we should find a way to ensure quality.
- There are too many staff being cut and not enough managers

Equalities Budget Consultation Event – 11th December 2013

Speakers:

Mark Hubbard – Bristol Compact (Voscur), Wendy Stephenson – Chief Exec (Voscur), George Ferguson – Mayor BCC: Angie Ridgwell, Richard Billingham, Tracy Morgan, Alison Comley, Vareta Bryan, Julia James, Mike Hennessey, Gillian Douglas, Nick Hooper, Craig Bolt, Isobel Cattermole, Neil Taylor, Peter Woodhouse.

Background

- The event was attended by 80 people. Attendees were equalities VCS stakeholders, either from equalities voice and influence organisations such as Bristol Disability Equality Forum, equalities –led organisations such as SARI, or other VCS organisations that work specific with equalities communities.
- The event was representative of the full range of equalities groups, with a range of organisations representing older and younger people, BME organisations, LGBT organisations, women's groups and a range of disabled organisations. Full equalities monitoring was done of the event and is available.

Tone of the event

- Stakeholders felt that equalities groups and vulnerable communities were disproportionately impacted by the budget proposals.
- It was felt that lack of detail in proposals and Equality Impact Assessments prevented stakeholders from meaningfully engaging with potential impacts on equalities communities.
- There was a strong sense that reductions should be found from areas such as Arts and Neighbourhood Partnerships, as these did not directly benefit or represent vulnerable or deprived communities.
- There were a number of suggestions that we could charge for some services, or better generate income from our property
- There was a strong feeling that the Council should produce a much more detailed cumulative equality impact assessment and use this to inform decision-making

Key Points Raised

Neighbourhoods

- There was a concern that a reduction in VCS services would destabilise the sector and would result in lost specialist knowledge around specific communities
- Significant concern about St Paul's Learning Centre – felt community should be given more time to come up with a solution. There was dispute that the centre is underused
- Suggestion that museums and galleries should charge a fee, or be crowd-funded

City Development

- There was significant concern about the Community Transport reduction, and the view that the proposal would reduce access to vital services for those who have no other option
- There was also general concern about reductions in bus service impacting low-income citizens

Health and Social Care

- Significant concern about cumulative impact on older people from HSC proposals and wider proposals – it was felt that the repercussions of reductions would be felt in other services and the NHS
- There was concern about a specialist floating support service being replaced with a generic service. It was also felt that a reduction in VCS support would also erode specialist skills and knowledge.

- There was concern that reductions in commissioning would be met by providers reducing salaries in an already low-paid sector, and how this might impact care quality.

Children and Young People's Services

- Felt that reducing Children's Centres would disproportionately impact women and low income families – a number of concerns around childcare as enabler for women in economy
- Stakeholders pointed out lack of clarity on Home-to-School transport, and felt they couldn't engage with the proposals

Day time event – central Bristol – City Hall, 19th December

Approx. 80 people attended.

Demographic included high proportion of older people and BME people.

The Mayor was supported by Service Directors (Vareta Bryan, Kate Murray, Craig Bolt, Mark Taylor, Pete Woodhouse).

Questions included:

- Public toilets
- Community Transport – had Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) had been completed
- Subsidy for local bus service - bus service that had recently been cut without consultation
- At Home library service – for those in more rural settings the foot traffic was not necessarily the highest but where they were a lifeline to vulnerable people
- Services for older people's housing / supported housing and impact on human rights predominantly of the housebound and of young women. The cuts would also damage the bid for Bristol Ageing Better.
- Pollution Control Unit proposal would reduce staff from nine to six. The team performed a statutory duty commenting on planning applications as independent arbiters. With less expertise BCC would not be able to fulfil its statutory duty.
- Disability Forum representative said too little attention had been paid to the accumulative impact of the cuts on vulnerable people.
- The Vice Chair of the lottery bid for Bristol Ageing Better was concerned about the effect of the cuts on older and disabled people as officers had each considered their own department and it was not clear who had considered the accumulative impact.
- Questioner highlighted that the £3 million of service cuts would disproportionately affect older people and the voluntary sector.
- Closure of School Road residential care home was concerned that carers were not being listened to.
- Questioner from BrunelCare representing people in their 80s and 90s was concerned about the health of older people as more people would end up in hospital under the proposals.
- Questioner concerned regarding the impact of the cuts to Supporting People, for example within sheltered housing.
- Closure of services for young people such as youth clubs which had increased the number of young people on the streets and also those who end up in custody.
- Chinese Women's Group highlighted Chinese carers that performed a role often without the language and cultural assistance.
- Consultation period was criticised for being too short at only four weeks, especially considering the Christmas period.
- Questioner highlighted that public were of huge significance to tourism within the City. It was suggested that there could be small charge for use.

Bristol's Budget Consultation 2014-2017

Equalities Summary

Introduction and Context

Assessing the potential impacts of our decisions for equalities communities is an important part of our decision-making process, and so we have assessed the potential impact of individual budget proposals using our Equality Impact Assessment process.

Equality Impact Assessment Process

- Each of the proposals had an equalities 'Relevance Check' to establish whether a full Equality Impact Assessment was required. For each proposal, a Relevance Check or full Equality Impact Assessment was published alongside the proposal.
- We also need to assess the 'bigger picture' of these impacts, and have produced a 'Cumulative Equalities Impact Assessment' which can be found at <<>>.
- Individual Equalities Impacts Assessments and the Cumulative Equalities Impact Assessment will be updated prior to Cabinet.

Consultation Activity

- The proposals were consulted on between 18th November 2013 and 30th December 2013.
- We also held a specific consultation event for Equalities Stakeholders on the 11th December. Strategic Directors presented their proposals and any anticipated equality impacts to stakeholders, there was a question and answer session for each directorate and there were also a series of 'carousel' style discussions on tables on a series of themes.
- We also facilitated an additional four meetings between some of our funded Equalities Voice and Influence organisations and the Service Directors of their choice. This allowed these groups to ask specific questions and raise issues that directly related to the communities that they represent. These four Voice and Influence organisations were Bristol Older People's Forum, BME Voice and Influence, Bristol Women's Voice and Bristol Disability Equality Forum. All four of these organisations also provided a written submission to the consultation which can be found at <<>>

Legal Context

Bristol City Council has a legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 to pay 'due regard' to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic¹ and people who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

In practice, having 'due regard' means that consideration of equalities issues must influence our policy and decision-making. Equality Impact Assessments are the tool that we use to shape and demonstrate our decision-making.

Feedback from equalities-focussed consultation events

In this section you can find general feedback from the Equalities Stakeholder conference and Voice and Influence meetings, and feedback broken down by directorate and proposal.

General Feedback

- It was felt by a number of stakeholders that the budget proposals are in direct contrast to the Mayoral Vision to protect and value vulnerable communities.
- It was also raised that there was a failure by the Council to distinguish between 'needs' and 'wants', and lack of protection of services where there was a preventative element.
- There was concern that the Change Programme has not been consulted on, and questions about how these reductions and staffing reductions might have service impacts.
- There was a consistent criticism that the proposals were not detailed enough, limiting people's ability to engage with the consultation and the impacts. Stakeholders also felt that the Equality Impact Assessments had an insufficient level of detail.
- While stakeholders were pleased that Bristol City Council has acknowledged the need for a Cumulative Impact Assessment, it was felt that the document submitted prior to consultation lacked detail and was inadequate.
- Stakeholders felt we had not addressed issues faced by people with multiple protected characteristics.

¹ 'Protected Characteristics' include age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

- There was criticism about the Council's decision to hold a 6 week consultation, rather than the Compact compliant 12 weeks. There was also further criticism about the accessibility of the consultation.
- Four of the Voice and Influence organisations submitted consultation responses, and while key issues have been raised in this document it is advised that these documents are considered in their own right.
- There was a strong sense that there should be funding reductions from the Arts budget, and particularly elements of the arts budget that benefit more affluent citizens such as Colston Hall and M-Shed rather than small arts groups that benefit equalities groups. It was felt that the omission of arts funding from budget reductions negated the 'zero based' principle on which the budget was based.
- There was also a strong sense that reductions should be found within Neighbourhood Partnerships budget, particularly for affluent areas that may be able to run Neighbourhoods Partnerships or Forums with less BCC support. There were a number of suggestions that the Community Investment Fund reduction should be replaced with an equivalent sum from the Neighbourhood Partnership budget, as these organisations are often more representative.
- It was also felt that Bristol City Council has not fully exploited the opportunities for income generation as much as it could have, in order to protect services.

Health and Social Care

General

It was widely stated that the budget proposals would disproportionately impact older people and disabled people. It was also widely felt that there has been a lack of analysis of longer-term impacts of proposals – and that the services being reduced now save in statutory services further down the line.

There was a feeling that not enough information on impacts has been given or considered, and the proposals are 'cuts by stealth'.

There were a number of questions about how closely Health and Social Care have worked with Community Transport around budget proposals, and whether the cumulative impact is fully understood.

There was a strong feeling that Bristol City Council should use its commissioning power to ensure that care workers are being paid at least the living wage, and BCC should penalise the use of zero hour contracts. Otherwise the proposals would impact on the lowest paid in the care sector, which is overwhelmingly comprised of women and BME groups.

Commissioning Home Care against Reablement Outcomes (R-PP-009)

There was a general concern that reductions in HSC would reduce the quality of care that people receive, and this was repeatedly raised in the context of proposed reductions to Home Care.

It was felt that proposal and its Equality Impact Assessment were complicated, and clearer language was necessary to understand the proposal and the exact meaning of reablement.

Review the use of School Road respite facility (R-PP-012)

There was concern about the transition of the people who are using School Road, and do like it as a facility. There was also concern that this proposal might have hidden costs in the care plans that would need to be developed for service users.

There was some concern about how easy to access Shared Lives is – particularly for School Rd users.

Various Warden and Alarm Services Proposals

There was a concern that a reduction in wardens would increase social isolation, and that introducing charges for older people would have a significant financial impact.

Cease funding for a specialist floating support service for older people (R-PP-022)

There was concern that replacing specialist floating support for older people with generic floating support would not be appropriate – there was also concern that the generic support is short term, and unable to meet long-term needs.

Reduce Voluntary and Community Sector budget (R-PP-015)

There was a view that the VCS offer services that the mainstream cannot and will not provide, and the VCS has been undervalued.

There were a number of specific questions about what the impact might be on small VCS organisations that could be destabilised, and offer a specific service to an equalities group – for example, BME elders or women.

It was suggested that there should be a 6 month period of grace for the VCS reductions to allow organisations to develop an exit strategy.

Increasing the use of Direct Payment for care services (R-PP-008)

There were a number of questions about the relationship between Direct Payments and digital exclusion, for example the additional costs to those who need extra support or don't have internet access.

It was suggested that the Council do early work to support people around issues such as debt and responsibility of people having direct payments, and queries about where the support and advice comes from to take up direct payments.

There were also questions about who will monitor DBS checks and training of carers.

Reduction in the Supported Housing budget for physically and sensory impaired people (R-PP-016)

There were a number of queries about whether support for Buckley House would continue. Although they are unaffected by the proposal, continued support to this facility was repeatedly raised.

Development of the 0-25 years' service (R-PP-014)

Stakeholders were concerned about how the joining of Children and Young's People's Services and Health and Social Care would achieve this saving without any significant adverse impact to the service.

There were also concerns raised about the lack of involvement of disabled-led organisations in the development of the new Transitions Strategy.

Neighbourhoods

Review of Library Service (R-PL-023)

There was support for a change to the way that libraries are delivered, and support for moving towards multi-use models and as community hubs.

However, there were concerns that a greater focus on using volunteers may mean that libraries in wealthier areas continue or flourish, while libraries in more deprived areas diminish.

There was also a suggestion that we could charge for some library services.

Cease Library non-statutory services – Prisons Service, Schools Library Service and At Home service (R-PL-024)

There was some support for wrapping the At Home service up with other services, particularly those in Health and Social Care.

Bristol Older People's Forum suggested this be part of a tackling isolation service and/or linked into work coming from Bristol Ageing Better funding.

However, there were concerns that there might be a loss of expertise by not having a designated member of library staff – or if this was rolled into the job of a care worker that it may result in an adverse impact on quality of care.

Reduce Community Investment Grants (R-PL-006)

There were strong views that the Community Investment Fund should not be reduced, and that a reduction effective from the 1st April 2014 was too soon. This could potentially destabilise organisations and does not give them an opportunity to adapt.

It was also suggested that Community Investment Grants should be used to develop communities, and that this is more necessary now than ever.

A number of stakeholder agreed that groups could merge or share back office costs, and seek to do so.

It was raised that Community Investment Grants funding is often used as core funding – and as many other funders only fund projects, this could destabilise organisations easily. For example, the impact on BOPF could compromise their role as prime partner for Bristol Ageing Better bid.

Concern that if there is a reduction in investment in VCS infrastructure organisations, then the VCS will not have a voice or facilitating body.

There was significant concern about the future of the Equalities Voice and Influence organisations.

Reduce the Equalities and Community Cohesion Team (R-PL-022)

It was suggested that the Equalities Team was more necessary in the current climate, and concern about the ability of the organisation to build its competence.

There was specific concern about the need for equalities training and support for schools, and also work of organisations such as Bristol Physical Access Chain who are supported by the Equalities Team.

It was suggested that BCC focus on employing people with equalities knowledge and skills as a pre-requisite rather than training this.

Eliminate subsidy to St Paul's Learning Centre and explore other options (R-PL-025)

It was disputed that the facility was underused, and stakeholders felt more consideration should be given to the centre's historical and community value.

It was agreed in a number of forums that the Centre would be better run by the community – but that the community needed more time to mobilise to take this on.

It was felt that the timescales for community asset transfer aren't realistic, and it was suggested this could be another CEED.

There was criticism that the Equality Impact Assessment failed to recognise that the Disability Equality Forum are based there, and the uniquely accessible facilities within the centre.

There was specific concerns raised about BME young people in the area, and the centre's role in creating opportunities for them.

Review of Strategic Housing services (R-PL-002)

The protection of a majority of preventing homelessness services was welcomed by a number of stakeholders, however it was acknowledged that access to affordable and appropriate accommodation is a key issue for a number of equalities groups and any reduction to this would have significant cumulative impacts.

There was concern about disproportionate impact on equalities groups from the proposed reduction of the Welfare Rights and Money Advice Service, particularly disabled and BME communities with the cumulative impact of Welfare Reform and Legal Aid reductions.

There was some anxiety about the online training provision, and its suitability and accessibility.

Reduce spending on Crime Reduction projects (R-PL-003)

It was of concern that any reduction in Domestic Abuse and Sexual Abuse services was short sighted, due to the fact that (a) service need is rising rather than falling and (b) spend in DVA services may save later spend in other services.

An example was given that recently there have been three domestic homicide reviews in one month.

Stakeholders felt that women's services have been targeted within this wider Crime Reduction budget, and wanted to know why this was and what else could have been considered.

Review Public Toilet Provision (R-PL-019)

There was concern that the Public Toilet closures would significantly and disproportionately impact on equalities groups, namely women, disabled people, older people and people caring for young children.

It was also felt that significant work needs to be done to ensure that the Community toilet scheme is appropriate, with specific issues raised about the accessibility of community toilets for disabled people, the inappropriateness of licensed premises toilets for some faith groups, and safety concerns for a number of equalities groups and also homeless people who use the toilets.

It was asked what impact the reduction of public toilets would have on Bristol's Purple Flag award.

It was suggested that BCC offer toilets to private companies or community groups, who could charge a small fee for using the toilet.

It was felt that keeping the toilets in the centre discriminates against women who cannot use standing urinals.

Reduce work specification for parks and ground maintenance contracts (R-PL-005)

There were a number of community safety concerns raised by a range of equalities stakeholders – that hate crime might increase, or even fear of crime might impact some equalities groups' ability to use parks and green spaces.

It was suggested that more comprehensive mitigations were explored for this potential impact.

Remove subsidy for leisure and sports contracts (R-PL-013)

There was concern that this proposal would see an increase in fees or charges, which might exclude some equalities communities or create further barriers to participation in sport, and therefore worsen health inequalities for some communities, for example BME people.

Various Museums and Galleries proposals

It was widely felt that as these facilities overwhelmingly benefit more affluent citizens, further reductions or reviews should be made in this area.

There were a number of suggestions that BCC charge for the museums and galleries, or use crowd funding or alternative funding sources.

Regeneration

Review Community Transport Grants (R-PL-027)

There a number of questions and concerns about how joined up transport strategy is, about both (a) communication between community transport, public bus and other forms of transport and (b) communication between BCC and partners.

There were a number of concerns around the cumulative impact of the community transport proposal – with particular concern that the reduction would cost the Council

more in other services. Transport impacts on health and social care, children, young people, leisure and children's clubs.

It was felt strongly that most people that use Community Transport do so because they do not have an alternative, rather than for convenience or to save money – therefore it was widely considered that saving targets could not be reached without significant adverse impacts.

It was also pointed out that the transport alternatives that are suggested are inadequate – public buses remain inaccessible, and a number of accessible taxi companies have gone under in the last year.

There was concern that with zoned Community Transport areas, it will be harder for disabled people to access accessible services, where they often have to travel citywide (i.e. accessible swimming) Another point about services being made central such as youth provision and LGBT services.

There were also concerns about concessionary travel and changes to the Diamond Card, particularly with the imminent changes to Disability Living Allowance.

Reduce Bus subsidy (R-PL-028)

There were a number of questions raised about how reducing bus services might impact on lower paid workers, where many equalities communities are overrepresented.

There were a number of questions raised about eligibility for concessionary transport – from whether there was inequity in the range of disabled people who are eligible to a question about whether the 16-24 discretionary fares could be extended to older people. There were also a number of suggestions, including the commercialisation of Park and Ride services, increasing car parking charges and introducing a congestion charge.

Children and Young People's Services

General

There was concern that our proposals and their Equality Impact Assessments have not taken recent demographic changes into consideration, particularly around the increase in young BME people in the city.

It was felt that Bristol City Council should be mindful that the workforce should be reflective of our communities, and this means that workforce working with children and young people should be at the forefront of this.

There was also concern that we have not done a sufficient level of consultation with young people, and there were questions about what our intention are relating to this going forward.

Review of Children's Centres and Early Years Support (R-PP-003)

There was significant concern about the lack of detail in the Children's Centres proposal – meaning that people felt they could not meaningfully engage with the proposal. However, there were a number of issues raised about the link between children's poverty and women's poverty.

It was strongly felt that access to affordable childcare remains a significant issue, and there were concerns that the proposal might worsen this and limit women's participation in work and economic development.

There was concern that a reduction in provision could create a 'post code lottery' for children's centres and their wrap-around services around the city.

It was raised that speech and language therapy and family support needs to be fully accessible.

There was concern about the drop in standards if training and development is reduced for child-minders.

Review Home to School Transport service (R-PP-002)

While there was support for schooling disabled children more locally wherever possible, there was concern about those who lose support – particularly working parents and carers. There was concern that changes to Disability Living Allowance will mean that some disabled people will no longer have this to rely on. Questions were raised about what kind of advocacy is available to people in this situation.