

Big Conversation Budget Simulator ‘Your Council, Your Money, Your Views’ and Budget Consultation 2015/16

SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Leader of the Council launched the Big Conversation in 2014 to give everyone in Derby the opportunity to influence decision making. The Big Conversation aimed to raise awareness regarding the cuts being made by central government and the impact of reductions on our local services. One of the biggest budget consultations ever undertaken by the Council, over 10,000 people have so far been asked for feedback through a large number of community, business and service user events, on street promotion, member surgeries and through our website.
- 1.2 The Your Council, Your Money, Your Views Budget Simulator launched on 21 July 2014 and challenged participants to manage and balance the Council Budget using an innovative online simulator. The Simulator allowed for those living, working or visiting Derby to give a real indication of where their personal priorities lie as well as allowing the Council to gain a real insight into the views of the public. In order to submit their response participants had to make the required savings.
- 1.3 During the consultation period the Big Conversation team attended events across the city to promote and encourage participation. At these events people were able to complete the Simulator using iPads or provide overall comments and feedback about Council Services.
- 1.4 As of 20 November 2014 there had been 902 submissions with 6,840 visits made to the Budget Simulator Pages. The Simulator will be open to receive feedback until the end of March 2015, however the Big Conversation itself will remain as a continuous dialogue with local residents and stakeholders.
- 1.5 Data from the Simulator has been analysed to identify respondents’ relative priorities in funding services (for example, services receiving highest or lowest % reductions). 1,390 comments have also been evaluated to draw out key themes including difficulty in balancing the budget, the need to focus on ‘must dos’ and maintaining minimum levels of services in accordance with statutory requirements. In some cases, there was acceptance that fees and charges would need to increase as well as changes in service delivery to achieve the scale of savings required (£60 million).
- 1.6 On 3 December 2014 the Council launched a formal public consultation on its 15 year Vision and Budget proposals 2015-18. By the close of the consultation period, the Council had received 425 individual comments on the budget proposals.
- 1.7 The most common themes arising from the comments made by respondents to the

consultation were:

- Proposals to close Moorways Swimming Pool
- Budgets should be spent on the most vulnerable
- Front-line services should be protected from reductions
- Cuts to funding for voluntary sector organisations
- The Council needs to be more efficient and minimise wasting money.

- 1.8 This report brings together the feedback from both exercises to inform Cabinet decision making.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To note the consultation activity carried out as part of the Your Council, Your Money, Your Views Budget Simulator and the 15-Year Vision and Budget proposals 2015-18.
- 2.2 To note the high level results from both consultations.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To ensure the consultation has achieved the aims to encourage participation with people living, working and visiting Derby. The Council also has a statutory duty to consult with residents and businesses on its budget proposals.
- 3.2 To ensure the results of the consultation have been considered and used to inform the budget setting process.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Big Conversation Budget Simulator ‘Your Council, Your Money, Your Views’

4.1 The Your Council, Your Money, Your Views – Budget Simulator was launched on the 21 July 2014 by the Leader of the Council. The Simulator formed a key part of the Big Conversation to give everyone in Derby the opportunity to influence decision making. The aims of the project were to:

- inform, raise awareness and get agreement amongst residents and stakeholders in Derby about:
 - the impact of national economic policy on the Council’s budget and budget decisions
 - the current composition of the Council budget and the scale of the budget savings required in 2015/16 to 2017/18
 - the need to think differently about the range and levels of services the Council can provide in the future
 - the need to think differently about whose responsibility it is to provide services
 - the delivery of services and achieving shared goals in different and innovative ways.
- engage and involve a large number of residents and stakeholders in an exercise to prioritise services and Council expenditure
- explore with residents and stakeholders how services can be delivered differently in the future and the capacity for all sections of the community to play a role
- maintain a continuous dialogue with residents and stakeholders to ensure the issues are being discussed across the city and the conversations are captured.

4.2 Through the Budget Simulator, participants were asked make £60 million of savings by adjusting the budget available for the range of Council services, in addition to having the option to increase Income, Fees, Charges and Council Tax. This enabled participants to:

- see how the Council currently spends its budget
- suggest how they would achieve the savings
- give comments within each service area and suggestions on how Derby City Council can make savings or generate income.

- 4.3 Ultimately the data generated by the Your Council, Your Money, Your Views – Budget Simulator was designed to support the process for setting the Council's budget over the next three years and enable the views of stakeholders on budget reductions to be considered.
- 4.4 There has been an extensive communications and engagement campaign to support the Big Conversation including:
- lamp post, roundabout and car park advertising
 - social media marketing
 - employee bulletins
 - attendance at events including Picnic in the Park, Derby by the Sea, Derby Pride event – Out Derby LGBT (Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender) and the Darley Park Concert
 - lunchtime promotion in the staff promotional area in the Council House
 - Voices in Action Youth Forum presentation
 - presentation to the Derby Deaf People's Forum
 - on street promotion to the public on St Peter's Street
 - presentations in schools and completion of the simulator in Personal, Social and Health Education classes
 - agenda items on Neighbourhood Forum and Board meetings
 - a business sector event in conjunction with Marketing Derby
 - agenda item at the Community Action Derby Annual General Meeting (AGM)
 - presentations at Diversity Forums.
- 4.5 As an incentive for people to complete the Budget Simulator, anyone who submitted their budget by 17 October 2014 was offered a chance to enter a prize draw with the opportunity to win an iPad.
- 4.6 In total 902 completed Simulator responses were received up to 20 November 2014 (when the first cut of data was extracted for analysis). 1,390 comments were received up to December 2014 through the Simulator, self-completion feedback form, email and events listed above. This is one of the largest budget consultation exercises ever under taken by the Council, with over 10,000 people engaged in the Big Conversation to date.

- 4.7 Headline average results by service group for the Simulator are shown in Table 1 below. More detailed results are shown in the Main Findings report shown at **Appendix 2**.

Table 1: Average % change results by service group

Service Group	Average change
Adults	-30.91%
Health and Housing	-23.57%
Children and Young People	-18.82%
Environment and Regulatory Services	-21.14%
Regeneration, Leisure and Culture	-33.28%
Strategic Services and Corporate Management	-29.78%
Neighbourhoods and Streetpride	-27.77%
Income, Fees and Charges	+21.15%
Council Tax (additional)	+1.59%

- 4.8 Service groups were further defined to facilitate more detailed feedback on individual service areas. The following services received the smallest and largest reductions as part of the exercise.

Table 2: Services with the smallest % reductions

Service Area	Change
Children in Care Fieldwork	-15.91%
Health Protection	-16.97%
Trading Standards	-17.42%
Specialist Services for Children and Young People	-17.79%
Food Safety	-17.95%

Table 3: Services with the highest % reductions

Service Area	Change
Cultural Entertainment and Events	-40.09%
City and Neighbourhood Partnerships	-39.49%
Museums	-35.68%
Libraries	-34.09%
Human Resources	-33.09%

Results have been cross-tabulated to draw out any themes by respondent group, for example, location (Derby resident, live outside Derby), age and disability. Full analysis can be found at **Appendix 2**.

- 4.9 As part of the Simulator, participants were able to make comments and suggestions for savings and other ideas to help with balancing the budgets. The comments have been sorted into themes to support analysis and interpretation. A word cloud is shown below:

Figure 1: Word Cloud – Budget Simulator Comments, 21 July to 20 November 2014.



4.10 Key themes emerging from the comments include:

- People found the Simulator difficult to balance given the sheer number of services provided by the Council, the size of the task in hand (£48 million savings as a minimum) and understanding the statutory minimum of services required.
- In some cases respondents questioned the legal minimum and whether savings could be achieved through re-interpreting the statutory minimum or via procurement or working collaboratively (such as working with the NHS or voluntary sector).
- Many of the suggestions were pragmatic and focused on doing things differently whilst maintaining minimum levels on 'must dos' - new approaches to service delivery (using online or self-service methods), the transformation and restructure of services to achieve more efficiencies or exploring self-funding, sponsored or social enterprise models.
- There was an acceptance of the need for charges in some areas that are currently free.
- Comments focused on reducing bureaucracy and layers of management.
- Whilst some felt Council Tax should not be increased, the average additional rise in the Simulator exercise was 1.59%.

4.11 The Your Council, Your Money, Your Views Budget Simulator will remain open until 31 March 2015. However the Big Conversation will continue on an ongoing basis as a key priority for the Council.

Public Consultation on 15-year Vision and Budget Proposals 2015-18

4.12 The Council launched its public budget consultation exercise on 3 December 2014 to inform the 2014/15 – 2016/17 budget setting process. The budget proposals are included in a separate report to Cabinet at Item 18.

4.13 To ensure the consultation was inclusive, residents living, working or with an interest in the consultation could take part in a variety of ways:

- An online survey made available on the council website and available on the PCs in the Council House for anyone wanting to take part.
- A PDF version of the survey available to print off of the website and return freepost
- A paper survey made available in all libraries across the city, in the Council House receptions and through neighbourhood forums.
- At a budget consultation event in January 2015, where people were invited to take part in focus groups and a question and answer session.
- By the close of the consultation period, the Council had received a total of 146 responses through either paper or online questionnaires and 13 comments from emails and letters, with 425 individual comments made on the budget proposals.

- 4.14 Two petitions were received on the budget proposals. One petition opposed the proposed closure of Moorways Swimming Pool, with 5,814 signatures and a second petition on the proposal to reduce funding to Derby Museums Trust, with 6,548 signatures.
- 4.15 Full results from the Budget Consultation are shown at **Appendix 3**. Respondents disagree with the Neighbourhoods proposals contained in the Revenue Budget Proposals 2015/16 – 2017/18 document. In all other areas respondents were neutral with the majority who said they neither agree nor disagree with the proposals. The most common themes arising from the comments made by respondents to the consultation were:
- Proposals to close Moorways Swimming Pool
 - Budgets should be spent on the most vulnerable
 - Front-line services should be protected from reductions
 - Cuts to funding for voluntary sector organisations
 - The Council needs to be more efficient and minimise wasting money.
- 4.16 Notes from the Budget Consultation event held can be found at **Appendix 4**.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 None

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer Financial officer Human Resources officer Estates/Property officer Service Director(s) Other(s)	Director of Strategic Services and Transformation Head of Performance and Improvement (Acting Head of Research & Consultation)
For more information contact: Background papers: List of appendices:	Shelley Merrett 01332 643475 shelley.merett@derby.gov.uk Helen Hathaway 01332 643474 helen.hathaway@derby.gov.uk None Appendix 1 – Implications Appendix 2 – Big Conversation Main Findings Report Appendix 3 – Budget Consultation Results Appendix 4 – Budget Consultation Event Notes

IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money

- 1.1 The Council has to make significant savings in 2015/16 and 2016/17 to balance its budget. The data generated by the Big Conversation, including Your Council, Your Money, Your Views – Budget Simulator and feedback from the Budget Consultation, will support the process for setting the Council's budget through the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and enable the views of stakeholders on budget reductions to be considered.
- 1.2 The cost of the Budget Simulator has been met from within existing budget provision. This will not be the case if the consultation was extended beyond 31 March 2015.

Legal

- 2.1 The Council has a statutory duty to consult with local businesses and communities on major policy and budget decisions. The Budget Simulator and Consultation provides information to inform decision making and evidence that the Council has consulted with local people. It is important to undertake consultation with people who may be affected by any decisions made by the council. Evidence may be required to show that consultation results have been taken into account when decisions are made. Recent cases of judicial review have ruled against local authorities and found their consultation has failed to meet the public sector equality duty (PSED) under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010.

Personnel

- 3.1 Any decisions arising from the consultation will impact on employees delivering services through the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). Potential cuts may impact on staff redundancies.

IT

- 4.1 None arising directly from the report.

Equalities Impact

- 5.1 The engagement activity carried out included presentations to the Council's Diversity Forums and a workshop with representatives of the deaf community. A pilot BSL video was produced. A representative of the Consultation Team also attended the Derby Pride event – Out Derby LGBT.

Decisions on any cuts in services through MTFP will require EIAs to be completed, to determine the impact on service users.

Health and Safety

- 6.1 None arising directly from the report.

Environmental Sustainability

- 7.1 None arising directly from the report.

Property and Asset Management

- 8.1 None arising directly from the report.

Risk Management

- 9.1 None arising directly from the report.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 10.1 The data generated by the Budget Consultation and Your Council, Your Money, Your Views – budget simulator will support the process for setting the Council's objectives and priorities for change over the next three years.

FEEDBACK FROM PUBLIC BUDGET CONSULTATION 2015/16

1. Background and Methodology

This report sets out the findings from the public budget consultation exercise undertaken to inform the 2015/16 – 2017/18 budget setting process. The consultation ran from 3 December 2014 to 14 January 2015.

To ensure the consultation was inclusive residents living, working or with an interest in the consultation could take part in a variety of ways:

- An online survey made available on the council website and available on the PC's in the council house for anyone wanting to take part.
- A PDF version of the survey available to print off of the website and return freepost
- A paper survey made available in all libraries across the city, in the Council House receptions and through neighbourhood forums.
- At an event held on 7 January 2015, where people were invited to take part in a question and answer session.

By the close of the consultation period, the Council had received a total of 144 responses through either paper or online questionnaires and 13 comments from emails and letters, with 425 individual comments made on the budget proposals.

2. Summary

Respondents disagree with the Neighbourhoods proposals contained in the Revenue Budget Proposals 2015/16 – 2017/18 document. In all other areas respondents were neutral with the majority who said they neither agree nor disagree with the proposals.

The response to the consultation was dominated by comments about Moorways Swimming Pool.

The most common themes arising from the comments made by respondents to the consultation were:

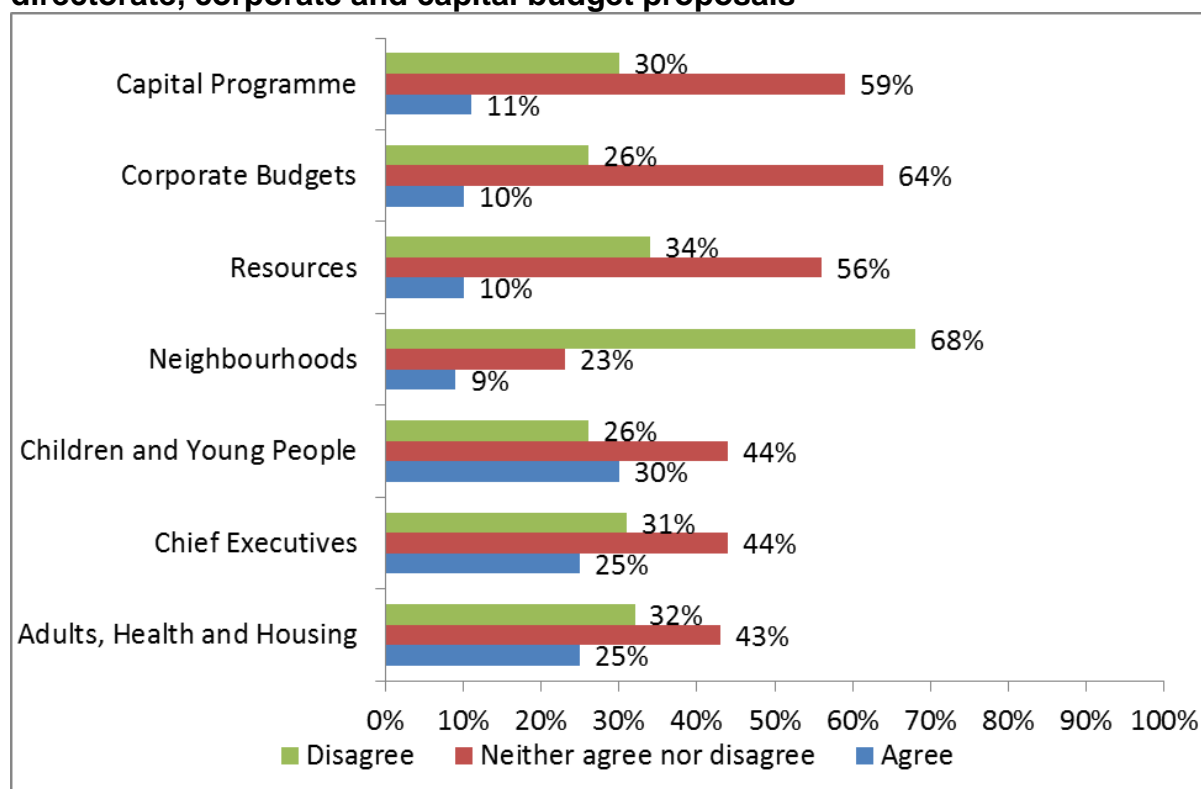
- Proposals to close Moorways Swimming Pool
- Budgets should be spent on the most vulnerable
- Front-line services should be protected from reductions
- Cuts to funding for voluntary sector organisations
- The Council needs to be more efficient and minimise wasting money.

3. Key Findings

The survey asked respondents the degree to which they agree or disagree with the budget proposals for each of the Council's directorates and corporate budgets as set out in the document. In addition it asked if they had any comments to make about the budget proposals overall.

Figure 1 shows the percentage of respondents who agree, neither agree nor disagree, or disagree with proposals by directorate. The highest level of disagreement was for the proposals regarding the Neighbourhoods directorate where 68% of respondents stated they disagree. Overall there was a neutral response to agreement from respondents to all other areas of the proposals - with 25% of respondents who agree and 31% who disagree with the proposal for Chief Executives, 25% agree and 32% disagree with the proposals for Adults Health and Housing and 30% who agree with the proposals for Children and Young People and 26% who disagree.

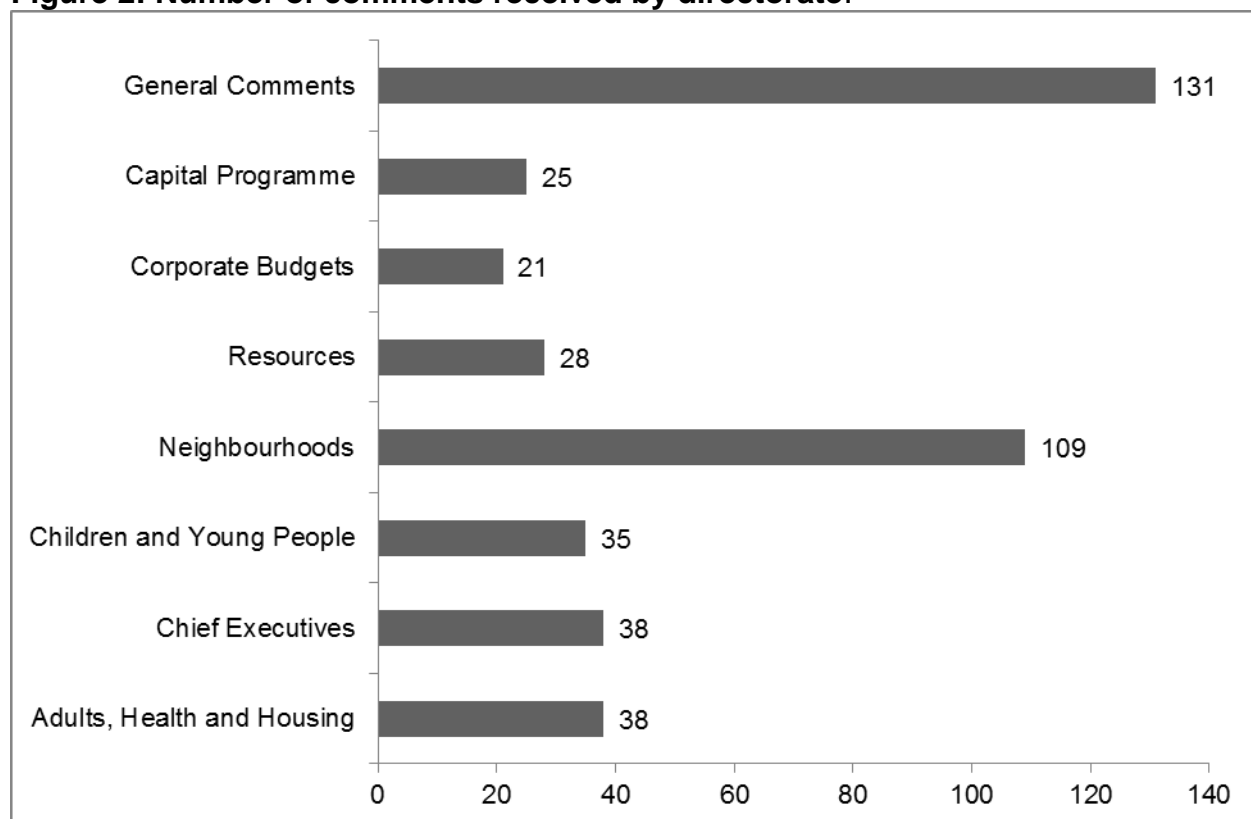
Figure 1: Percentage of respondents who agree /disagree with the directorate, corporate and capital budget proposals



Source: Qa Research. 155 online and postal completions

Respondents were invited to comment on the proposed changes outlined for each directorate. In total 425 separate comments were received. The number of comments made varied considerably by directorate, ranging from 21 comments for the Corporate Budget to 109 comments for the Neighbourhoods directorate (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Number of comments received by directorate.



Source: Qa Research. All comments made by each area.

In addition to the survey, the Council received written responses and emails about the proposals for Moorways swimming pool and Derby Museums Trust, charges for fridges and freezers, bin collections and proposals effecting PEST and Environmental Response teams.

Two petitions were received on the budget proposals. One petition opposing the proposed closure of Moorways Swimming Pool was received, with 5,814 signatures and a second petition opposing the proposal to reduce funding to Derby Museums Trust, with 6,548 signatures.

4. Analysis of Online Comments and Written Responses by directorate

The comments were analysed for the key themes which were contained within them. Some comments may have contained more than one theme and are therefore counted more than once. It is worth noting that comments were not necessarily directly related to that area, specifically with the proposals for Moorways swimming pool, respondents commented about this within all areas.

4.1 Adults Health and Housing

The top 4 themes that emerged from the survey around the Adults, Health and Housing directorate are shown in Table 1. In addition to the comments made about Moorways, 4 comments made were around the voluntary sector grants and that Adults, Health and Housing shouldn't be reduced or respondents disagree with the proposals.

Table 1: Adults, Health and Housing directorate – main comments

Theme	Number of Comments
Disagree with the proposal to close Moorways swimming pool	13
Speaking specifically about voluntary sector grants	4
Adult, Health & Housing needs to receive as much support as possible rather than having to make cuts	4
General disagreement with the proposed cuts to Adults, Health & Housing	4

Source: Qa Research

4.2 Chief Executive's Office

The most frequently mentioned comment (12), related to respondents feeling greater cuts could be made including the wages of the Chief Executive and Senior Managers, with 5 comments that this area needs greater cuts. 8 comments specifically mentioned protection of front line staff over Senior Managers and Councillors.

Table 2: Chief Executive's Office – main comments

Theme	Number of Comments
More cuts could be made in this department (including the wages of the CEO and Senior Managers)	12
Front line services should be protected instead of back room services (councillors, directors, CEO etc.)	8
This area needs greater cuts	5

Source: Qa Research

4.3 Children and Young People

The key themes that emerged from the survey responses around the Children and Young People's directorate budget are that this area should receive more investment (6) and that respondents are relieved there are minimal cuts to Children and Young People (5). 4 comments specifically suggested the Council needs to look at better ways of finding efficiencies.

Table 3: Children and Young People's directorate - main comments

	Number of Comments
Disagree with the proposal to close Moorways swimming pool	7
There should be more investment in this area and less cuts	6
Finally this area has been left alone (glad to see minimal cuts)	5

More focus needed on efficiency and minimising waste of money	4
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Source: Qa Research

4.4 Neighbourhoods

The largest number of comments received were for the Neighbourhoods directorate, the main themes were the proposals to close Moorways Swimming pool (60), a general disagreement on the reductions to Neighbourhoods (9), comments around the Livewell Scheme (8) and 7 comments disagreeing with the end of the Environmental Protection Response service.

Table 4: Neighbourhoods directorate – main comments

Theme	Number of Comments
Disagree with the proposal to close Moorways swimming pool	60
General disagreement with cuts in this area	9
Disagree with the cuts to the live well scheme	8
Disagree with the end of the Environmental Protection Response service	7

Source: Qa Research

In addition to the online and paper responses, 10 letters and emails were received opposing the proposals for Moorways Swimming pool, 1 letter opposing the proposed reductions in funding to the Derby Museums Trust and 2 emails with a mixture of comments ranging from a disagreement with the reductions to the Environmental Protection Response and PEST services, comments on planting in Derby and around the proposal to charge for large waste items to be collected.

4.5 Resources

Comments made for the Resources directorate were directed again at Moorways swimming pool (8). 6 comments were made to state that there needs to be more efficiencies made in this area, with 4 comments suggesting that priority should be given to more important services.

Table 5: Resources directorate - main comments

Theme	Number of Comments
Disagree with the proposal to close Moorways swimming pool	8
The Council needs to continue seeking efficiencies and there could be more made in this area	6
Cuts and budget should be better managed and priority given to more important services	4

Source: Qa Research

4.6 Corporate Budgets

21 comments were received on corporate budgets. Further comments were made in this section about the Moorways swimming pool, that the Council needs

to find further efficiencies to the Corporate budgets and that priority should be given to the more important services.

4.7 General Comments

Respondents to the survey were asked if they had any further comments on the budget they would like to make. Table 6 shows the top 8 themes of comments made. The majority of comments repeated the main issues identified in directorates:

Table 6: Comments on overall Budget Proposals

Theme	Number of Comments
Disagree with the proposal to close Moorways swimming pool	55
More focus needed on efficiency and minimising waste of money	15
The cuts are short sighted and will create more expense in the long term	12
Cuts and budget should be better managed and priority given to more important services	10
MPs and the council in general should also suffer the cuts through pay cuts and increased efficiencies	8
More consideration needed about the budget cuts overall	7
Overall the budget cuts would put the most vulnerable people at risk	6
Cuts unfairly affect normal Derby residents	6

Source: Qa Research

5. Budget Consultation Event

Members of the Derby 50+ Forum, Voices in Action, Disabled People's Diversity Forum, Minority Communities Diversity Forum, Gender and Sexuality Diversity Forum, Derby City Parents & Carers of Children with SEN and Disabilities Forum, Derby Learning Disability Partnership Board, the Reach Out Panel and Voluntary Sector Organisations were invited to attend an event in January 2015. Members of the public were also able to attend and details of the events were published on the Council website.

The event was held in the evening from 6pm to 8pm in the Council House on 7 January 2015. Welcome and introductions were given by Councillor Martin Rawson, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration.

Councillor Sarah Russell, Cabinet Member for Housing, Finance and Welfare gave a presentation about the Council's Budget for 2015 to 2018 before inviting questions from those attending the event.

Attendees then selected to attend one of three groups to discuss the proposals in more detail, in these sessions they were given further opportunities to ask questions about the proposal for that area:

- Chief Executives/Resources
- Children and Young People/Adults, Health and Housing
- Neighbourhoods

Notes were taken as part of the main question and answer session and can be found in Appendix 4.

DERBY CITY COUNCIL

**NOTES OF PUBLIC BUDGET CONSULTATION MEETINGS INCLUDING
REPRESENTATIVES OF NON-DOMESTIC RATEPAYERS AND THE BUSINESS
COMMUNITY AND PARTNERS**

HELD 7 JANUARY 2015 AT COUNCIL HOUSE, CORPORATION STREET, DERBY

Present: Representing Derby City Council

Councillor Martin Rawson
Councillor Sarah Russell
Councillor Martin Repton
Paul Robinson – Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods and Deputy
Chief Executive
Martyn Marples - Director of Finance and Procurement

Representing Non-Domestic Ratepayers and the Business Community
and Partners

George Cowcher – Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Chamber of
Commerce
Adam Buss – Quad
Simon Cartwright – Community Minister
Janet Tristram – St James Centre

1 Introduction

Councillors Rawson (Deputy Leader) and Russell (Cabinet Member for Housing, Finance and Welfare) gave a presentation on the budget position.

The Deputy Leader of the Council explained that the Council Cabinet would be meeting on 18 February 2015, to make recommendations to the City Council about setting the budget for the 2015/16 financial year. This meeting was part of the programme of consultation, which would help to inform the decisions made by the Council Cabinet and its recommendations to Council.

2 Budget Process

The Cabinet Member for Housing Finance and Welfare explained the Council's priorities and budget for 2015/16 onwards revenue budget timetable. It was noted that over a three year period a total of £69m savings needed to be made.

3 Comments from the Meeting

Comments were invited from those present, both on the reports circulated beforehand and on the information presented at the meeting. The substance of these and the replies given were:

Why is this happening? Our budget gap is increasing, thanks to Barnet graph of doom and gloom, it is not fair, it should be fair for all authorities.

Councillor Russell – yes, absolutely, we need to face the challenges and move forward.

Question re the difference between discretionary and statutory services – reference to the Olympic legacy, positive activities, young people 2010 guidance and Moorways.

Councillor Russell – The majority of the services the Council provides are statutory, these are prescribed in law. Guidance is just that, it gives best practice. There is clear direction on statutory services and what has to be delivered.

New capital scheme for 2017/18 proposing £7m spend on ICT renewal – please can you give a breakdown of how this will be spent?

Councillor Russell undertook to provide a response to this question.

Neighbourhoods budget £100k pressures towards cleaning windows on Council buildings – is this needed?

The Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods – the pressure was highlighted due to the glass on buildings needing platforms and specialist equipment to enable it to be cleaned. This is not a saving it is an additional requirement.

A member of the public requested that copies of the presentation be made available as some people were not able to read them on screen.

Due to the Christmas period it had been difficult to contact voluntary group members. The budget consultation was announced on 3 December 2014 and was due to close on 14 January 2015. Normally there would be a 12 week consultation, there was concern that communities had not had the opportunity to feedback.

The Director of Finance and Procurement accepted the point raised, but stated that this was outline consultation and that for specific issues a full 12 week consultation would take place with an Equality Impact Assessment. An equality impact group had been arranged for 21 January 2015 to look at which proposals would require a longer consultation period.

How could individual circumstances be fed in?

The Equalities Officer said to contact her and that anyone was welcome to attend the meeting on 21 January 2015 at 10.30am if they wanted to contribute.

We are aware that central government were causing these cuts, how can we feed back to central government?

Councillor Russell – through local MPs, join our campaign around 'fair deal for local government' campaign. Councillor Rawson – Eric Pickles is the minister for local government, you can contact him direct.

Why spend money on non statutory services?

Councillor Russell – we have explored the option of other people running such as parks. We work with the faith sector about welfare and partners from the private sector.

I understand the museums needed volunteers, I volunteered but got no response.

Councillor Russell - This needed to be taken up with the museums trust. We use volunteers around citizens on patrol, litter picks, in libraries and we explore avenues to keep services going by other means.

Partnership / community help, you don't seem to be proactive on this, why was it not addressed earlier?

Councillor Russell – we have one of these meetings every year. We have been campaigning for a 'fair deal for Derby' for at least 3 years. We always try to engage with groups, for example, Voices in Action. We talk to people in our Wards. We do try.

Councillor Repton – We have been raising issues for a number of years and we have engaged with many groups, if we can engage, we will.

I volunteered to sort out Moorways 12 months ago.

Councillor Repton - There is no smoke and mirrors the situation really is dire, services will go, this is way above party politics, services will stop being delivered. I want to protect what we have, recognise the seriousness of the situation and try and resolve it.

Budget cuts, consultants being used for 3 departments, doesn't seem to go anywhere couldn't we cut the consultants?

The Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods – we need to try, we have increasing demands particularly around older people. There are issues around waste and keeping the streets clean. We need to get people to do more for themselves. Consultation is important, what should the Council provide, people provide for themselves and partners provide? If we carry on as we are we will only provide social care. We need to lower demand for services.

Private consultants – Impower, pay a lot of money and not impressed. Are you planning to cut money to external consultants?

The Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods – it is disappointing if you didn't think they were asking the right questions. Consultancy inevitably will be cut, but there has to be a balance if greater savings could be achieved by using consultancy.

Central government issue – how closely are you working with local MPs?

Councillor Russell – we are working closely with them, C Williamson MP will be submitting an early day motion around 'fair deal' and has agreed to be with us when we lobby government.

Outdoor sports, didn't consult on athletics, we aren't getting the answers, lost feasibility grants.

Councillor Russell agreed to look at this issue separately.

There has been an obscene amount of money squandered on the public art work at Alvaston and they clock at the front of the Council House, money is just being frittered away.

Councillor Russell explained the difference between the capital budget and the revenue budget. She also explained that in relation to the art work at Alvaston, this project had been on going for a number of years, local people had been consulted on it and the works were from capital funding and didn't impact on revenue funding. An explanation was also given on S106 monies and how they were used.

Why can't things be transferred between pots?

Councillor Russell – it is complicated, we have a certain amount to spend each year and the revenue is decreasing year on year. The capital budget covers unforeseen pressures.

4. Conclusion

Councillor Russell reported that written responses would be considered by Council Cabinet at its meeting on 18 February 2015 and thanked the representatives and the businesses and partner representatives for attending the meeting.

MINUTES END