

Appendix G

Business Planning 2021/22-2024/2025

General budget consultation 2021/22

21 December 2020 – 18 January 2021

Consultation Team, Strategy

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report sets out the consultation findings from the General Budget Consultation 2021/22 which will be presented as part of the budget paper at Policy and Resources on 8 February 2021 and Full Council on 2 March 2020.

1.1 Response to the consultation

- a total of 78 questionnaires were completed
- the majority of responses were from residents
- three written responses were also received, two via email and one letter.

1.2 Summary of consultation approach

- the consultation ran from 21 December 2020 to 18 January 2021
- the consultation consisted of an online questionnaire and summary consultation document which was published on engage.barnet.gov.uk
- paper copies and an easy-read version of the consultation were also made available on request
- as part of the council's statutory duty to consult with National Non-Domestic Rate (NNDR) payers, letters were sent out to all the council's NNDR payers inviting them to take part in the consultation
- the consultation was widely promoted via the council's residents e newsletter magazine, Barnet First; the council's website; Twitter; Facebook.
- super-users, i.e. users of non-universal services, were also invited to take part in the consultation through Community Barnet, Communities Together Network, Youth Board, Service area newsletters/circulars and super-user mailing lists.

1.2 Summary of key findings

1.2.1 Views on the overall budget for 2021/22

- 29% of respondents agree (23 out of 78 respondents) with the council's proposed budget for 2021/22 (5%, 4 out of 78 respondents strongly agree, and 24%, 19 out of 78 respondents tend to agree).
- just under half of respondents disagree (49%, 38 out of 78 respondents) with the council's proposed budget for 2021/22 (19%, 15 out of 78 respondents tend to disagree, and 29%, 23 out of 78 respondents strongly disagree).
- the remainder were either neutral (18 %, 14 out of 78 respondents) or said they did not know or were not sure (4%, 3 out of 78 respondents).

1.2.2 Views on the council's Council Tax proposals for 2021/22

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Overall, nearly three fifths of respondents (58%, 28 out of 48 respondents) **support a Council Tax increase to help fund the budget gap in 2021/22**. Table 4 below shows that:

- 29% of respondents support both the council's proposals on Council Tax: the proposal to increase general Council Tax by 1.99% and the proposal to apply a further 3% Social Care Precept in 2021/22.
- One quarter of respondents (25%, 12 out of 48 respondents) support only the proposal to increase general Council Tax by 1.99% in 2021/22.
- A minority of respondents (4%, 2 out of 48 respondents) support only the proposal to apply a 3% Adult Social Care Precept to Council Tax in 2021/22.
- Just over two fifths of respondents (42%, 20 out of 48 respondents) do not support either of the council's proposals to increase Council Tax in 2021/22: the proposal to increase general Council Tax by 1.99% and the proposal to apply an Adult Social Care Precept on Council Tax of 3% in 2021/22.

1.2.3 Views on theme committee saving and income proposals for 2021/22

- **Children's, Education and Safeguarding Committee (CES) received the highest level of support**, with just under half of respondents (48%, 24 out of 50 respondents) indicating they agree with the saving and income proposals identified within this committee for 2021/22.
- **Environment Committee (EC) had the second highest level of support**, with just over two fifths of respondents (42%, 21 out of 50 respondents) agreeing with the saving and income proposals identified within this committee for 2021/22.
- **Adults and Safeguarding Committee (AS) had the third highest level of support**, with just under two fifths of respondents (39%, 20 out of 51 respondents) agreeing with the saving and income proposals identified within this committee for 2021/22.
- **There were similar levels of support for saving and income generation proposals identified by Community Leadership and Libraries Committee (CLL)**, with just under two fifths of respondents (39%, 19 out of 49 respondents) agreeing with the saving and income proposals identified within this committee for 2021/22.
- **Public Health (PH) - Health and Wellbeing Board saving and income generation proposals also received similar levels of support to CLL**, with again just nearly two fifths of respondents (38%, 18 out of 48 respondents) agreeing with the saving and income proposals identified within this committee for 2021/22.
- **Housing and Growth Committee and Policy and Resources Committee received the least support for their saving and income generation proposals, with 29% of respondents (14 out of 49 respondents) agreeing** with the saving and income generation proposals identified within each of these respective theme committees.

Nearly half of respondents indicated they disagree (47%, 23 out of 49 respondents) with the **Housing and Growth Committee**, and just over two fifths (43%, 21 out of 49 respondents) disagree with **Policy and Resources Committee proposals**.

1.2.4 Further comments on Theme Committee saving and income proposals for 2021/22

Respondents were also asked if they had any comments to make about the saving and income proposals identified for each theme committee for 2021/22. Of those who responded to the consultation, 20 out of 78 gave a response to this question.

The responses to this question were varied and a summary of the most common themes, with a response of three comments or more, have been summarised below:

- *Do not cut Public Health and Wellbeing services.* (Four comments).
- *Do not agree with an increase in Council Tax.* (Three comments).
- *Saving and income proposals description are difficult to understand / Would be preferable and understandable if a further break down of what safeguarding for adults means in specific and what cover Links in the saving and income proposals don't work/ too many acronyms for the lay person.* (Three comments).

1.2.5 Further comments on the proposed budget for 2021/22

Respondents were also asked if they had any further comments to make about the council's proposed budget for 2021/22. Of those who responded to the consultation, 27 out of 78 gave a response to this question.

Again, the responses to this question were varied and the most common themes, with a response of three comments or more have been summarised below:

- *Council Tax increases should not be implemented - residents and businesses are already struggling because of the pandemic and Brexit / Pensioners won't be able to afford.* (Eight comments).
- *More money needed for other Committees / I Support a further increase in Council Tax but to pay for other essential services in Public Health and Community Leadership and to provide basic services to the community / More money for the Environment, Community Leadership, and Libraries, Housing and Growth and CAMHS in the Royal Free / Could be imposed a lower percentage on adult social care precept on council tax for instance: 1.5% and the remaining 1.5% could be applied to other services in order to achieve a balanced budget for 2021/22.* (Five comments).
- *Adult Social Care should be funded by Central Government and not through an Adult Social Care Precept Council Tax increase: Do not agree with applying an Adult social care precept of 3%.* (Three comments).

Further details of the types of comments received can be found in section two of this report.

2. DETAILED FINDINGS

2.1 Introduction

The budget proposals for 2021/22 have been subject to a formal public consultation.

This report sets out the full findings from the council's consultation on its Business Plan 2021/22. The findings will be considered by Full Council on 2 March 2021, where the final decision on the council's budget for 2021/22 will be taken.

2.2 Summary of consultation approach

The 2021/22 General Budget Consultation began after Policy and Resources Committee on 21 December 2020 and concluded on 18 January 2021.

In terms of service-specific consultations, the council has a duty to consult with service users where there are proposals to vary, reduce or withdraw services. Where appropriate, separate service-specific consultations have already taken place or will take place in the next few months for the 2021/22 savings. The outcomes of these consultations are being reported into committee decision-making processes.

2.3 Technical details and method

2.3.1 In summary, the consultation was administered as follows:

- the general consultation consisted of an online questionnaire published on <http://engage.barnet.gov.uk> together with a summary consultation document which provided background information about the council's budget setting process and the financial challenges the council faces. Paper copies and an easy-read version of the consultation were also made available on request.
- as part of the council's statutory duty to consult with National Non-Domestic Rate (NNDR) payers, letters were sent out to all the council's NNDR payers inviting them to take part in the consultation.
- the consultation was widely promoted via the council's residents e newsletter magazine, Barnet First; the council's website; Twitter; Facebook.
- super-users, i.e. users of non-universal services, were also invited to take part in the consultation through Community Barnet, Communities Together Network, Youth Board, Service area newsletters/circulars and super-user mailing lists.

2.3.2 Questionnaire design

The questionnaire was developed to ascertain residents' views on the overall size and individual components of the proposed 2021/22 budget. In particular the consultation invited views on the:

- overall budget, and saving and income generation proposals for 2021/22;
- proposal to increase General Council Tax by 1.99%
- proposal to apply an Adult Social Care Precept on Council Tax of 3% to help pay for adult social care.

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Throughout the questionnaire and where applicable, hyperlinks were provided to the relevant sections of the consultation document and to the detailed savings and/or income proposals for each committee. Links to further information on each of the Theme Committee's portfolio was also provided.

Those respondents who elected to receive a paper copy were also sent the consultation document and a copy of the 2021/22 saving and/or income proposals.

2.4 Response to the consultation

A total of 78 questionnaires have been completed - all these were completed online.

2.4.1 Response profile

The table below shows the profile of those who responded to the questionnaire.

Table 1: Profile of those who responded to the General Budget Consultation

Stakeholder	%	Base
Barnet resident	92%	44
Working within the London Borough of Barnet area	0%	0
Barnet business	2%	1
Representing a voluntary/community organisation	0%	0
Representing a public-sector organisation	0%	0
Representing a school	0%	0
Other	2%	1
Prefer not to say	4%	2
Total who answered this question	100%	48
Not Answered		30
Total response to the consultation		78

There were also three written responses two via e-mail and one by letter. These responses have been incorporated into the findings and further details are provided in section 4.4 of this report.

2.4.2 Profile of protected characteristics

The council is required by law (the Equality Act 2010) to pay due regard to equalities in eliminating unlawful discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, and fostering good relations between people from different groups.

The protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

To assist us in complying with the duty under the Equality Act 2010 we asked the respondents to provide equalities monitoring data and explained that collecting this information will help us understand the needs of our different communities and that all the information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence and will be stored securely in accordance with our responsibilities under data protection legislation (such as the General Data Protection Regulation or the Data Protection Act 2018).

Table 2 below shows the profile of these who answered these questions. However, due to the low completion of these questions (40% -76%), it has not been possible to do any demographic analysis on the consultation findings.

Table 2: Protected Characteristic, profile of those that completed the questionnaire

Protected Characteristic	Response	
	Number	%
Age		
16-17	0	0%
18-24	1	2%
25-34	4	9%
35-44	15	32%
45-54	6	13%
55-64	10	21%
65-74	7	15%
75+	0	0%
Prefer not to say	4	9%
Not answered	31	40%
Total	78	100%

Gender		
Female	16	21%
Male	25	32%
If you prefer your own term	5	6%
Prefer not to say	0	0%
Not answered	32	41%
Total	78	100%

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Protected Characteristic	Response	
	Number	%

Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?		
Yes, it's the same	41	53%
No, it's different	0	0%
Prefer not to say	3	4%
Not answered	34	44%
Total	78	100%

Disability		
Yes	3	4%
No	39	50%
Prefer not to say	2	3%
Not answered	34	44%
Total	78	100%

Ethnicity		
Black	3	4%
Asian	5	6%
White	28	36%
Mixed	3	4%
Other	2	3%
Prefer not to say	3	4%
Not answered	34	44%
Total	78	100%

Faith		
Baha'i	0	0%
Buddhist	0	0%
Christian	18	23%
Hindu	1	1%
Humanist	0	0%
Jain	1	1%
Jewish	3	4%
Muslim	0	0%
Sikh	1	1%
No religion	10	13%
Other Faith	0	0%
Prefer not to say	8	10%

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Protected Characteristic	Response	
	Number	%
Not answered	36	46%
Total	78	100%

Pregnancy	Number	%
Pregnant	1	1%
On maternity leave	0	0%
Neither	17	22%
Prefer not to say	3	4%
Not answered	57	73%
Total	78	100%

Sexuality	Number	%
Bisexual	0	0%
Gay or Lesbian	0	0%
Straight or heterosexual	35	45%
Other sexual orientation	0	0%
Prefer not to say	7	9%
Not answered	36	46%
Total	78	100%

Marital Status	Number	%
Single	6	8%
Co-habiting	6	8%
Married	21	27%
Divorced	2	3%
Widowed	0	0%
In a same sex civil partnership	0	0%
Prefer not to say	7	9%
Not answered	36	46%
Total	78	101%

2.5 Calculating and reporting on results

- The results for each question are based on “valid responses”, i.e. all those providing an answer (this may or may not be the same as the total sample) unless otherwise specified. The base size may therefore vary from question to question.
- Where percentages do not add up to 100, this may be due to rounding, or the question is multi-coded - i.e. respondents could give more than one answer. The open-ended questions are multi-coded, as respondents could write in more than one comment, and therefore the tables on verbatim comments add up to more than 100%.

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- Due to the small total sample size the findings have been reported on in terms of percentages and numbers.
- All open-ended responses have been classified based on the main themes arising from the comments, so that they can be summarised. It should also be noted that the responses were very varied, however there were a number of common themes that were evident, and the most common themes have been summarised in this report.

3. Results in detail:

3.1 Views on the budget for 2021/22

Respondents were asked to what extent they agree or disagree with the proposed budget for 2021/22. Table 3 below shows that:

- 29% of respondents agree (23 out of 78 respondents) with the council's proposed budget for 2021/22 (5%, 4 out of 78 respondents strongly agree, and 24%, 19 out of 78 respondents tend to agree).
- just under half of respondents disagree (49%, 38 out of 78 respondents) with the council's proposed budget for 2021/22 (19%, 15 out of 78 respondents tend to disagree, and 30%, 23 out of 78 respondents strongly disagree).
- the remainder were either neutral (18%, 14 out of 78 respondents) or said they did not know or were not sure (4%, 3 out of 78 respondents).

Table 3: Respondents' level of support for the proposed budget for 2021/22

To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposed budget for 2021/22?	%	Base
Strongly agree	5%	4
Tend to agree	24%	19
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	14
Tend to disagree	19%	15
Strongly disagree	30%	23
Don't know / not sure	4%	3
Total	Total base	78

3.2 Views on proposals to increase general Council Tax and to apply an Adult Social Care precept on Council Tax in 2021/22

Respondents were asked to indicate which of the following statements most closely aligns to their opinion in terms of the Council Tax proposals for 2021/22:

- I support the proposal to increase general Council Tax by 1.99% in 2021/22 and I also support the proposal to apply an Adult Social Care Precept on Council Tax of 3% in 2021/22
- I support the proposal to increase general Council Tax by 1.99% in 2021/22 only

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- I support the proposal to apply an Adult Social Care Precept on Council Tax of 3% in 2021/22 only
- I do not support the proposal to increase general Council Tax by 1.99%, and I do not support the proposal to apply an Adult Social Care Precept on Council Tax of 3% in 2021/22.

Overall, nearly three fifths of respondents (58%, 28 out of 48 respondents) **support a Council Tax increase to help fund the budget gap in 2021/22**. Table 4 below shows that:

- 29% of respondents support both the council's proposals on Council Tax: the proposal to increase general Council Tax by 1.99% and the proposal to apply a further 3 % Social Care Precept in 2021/22
- One quarter of respondents (25%, 12 out of 48 respondents) support only the proposal to increase general Council Tax by 1.99% in 2021/22
- A minority of respondents (4%, 2 out of 48 respondents) support only the proposal to apply a 3% Adult Social Care Precept to Council Tax in 2021/22
- Just over two fifths of respondents (42%, 20 out of 48 respondents) do not support either of the council's proposals to increase Council Tax in 2021/22: the proposal to increase general Council Tax by 1.99% and the proposal to apply an Adult Social Care Precept on Council Tax of 3% in 2021/22.

Table 4: Respondents' level of support for proposed Council Tax increases

Please indicate which of the statements below most closely aligns to your opinion in terms of our Council Tax proposals?	%	Base
I support the proposal to increase general Council Tax by 1.99% in 2021/22 and support the proposal to apply an Adult Social Care Precept on Council Tax of 3% in 2021/22	29%	14
I support the proposal to increase general Council Tax by 1.99% in 2021/22 only	25%	12
I support the proposal to apply an Adult Social Care Precept on Council Tax of 3% in 2021/22 only	4%	2
I do not support the proposal to increase general Council Tax by 1.99%, and I do not support the proposal to apply an Adult Social Care Precept on Council Tax of 3% in 2021/22	42%	20
Total	100%	48

3.3 Theme Committee saving/income proposals for 2021/22

Respondents were asked to what extent they agree or disagree with each of the saving and income proposals identified for each of the Theme Committees in 2021/22. Table 5 over the page shows that:

- **The saving and income generation proposals in Children's, Education and Safeguarding Committee (CES) received the highest level of support**, with two fifths of respondents (48%, 24 out of 50 respondents) indicating they agree with the saving and income proposals identified within this committee for 2021/22.

Just over a quarter of respondents (28%, 14 out of 50 respondents) indicated that they disagree with the saving and income proposals identified by CES. The remainder were either neutral (12%, 6 out of 50 respondents) or said they did not know or were not sure (6%, 3 out of 50 respondents), with a further 6% of respondents (3 out of 50 respondents) indicating they did not wish to comment on this theme committee.
- **Environment Committee (EC) had the second highest level of support**, with just over two fifths of respondents (42%, 21 out of 50 respondents) agreeing with the saving and income proposals identified within this committee for 2021/22.
- A third of respondents (34%, 17 out of 50 respondents) indicated that they disagree with the saving and income proposals identified within EC. The remainder were either neutral (14%, 7 out of 50 respondents) or said they did not know or were not sure (6%, 3 out of 50 respondents), with a further 4% of respondents (2 out of 50 respondents) indicating they did not wish to comment on this theme committee.
- **Adults and Safeguarding Committee (AS) had the third highest level of support**, with just under two fifths of respondents (39%, 20 out of 51 respondents) agreeing with the saving and income proposals identified within this committee for 2021/22.

A third of respondents (33%, 17 out of 51 respondents) indicated that they disagree with the saving and income proposals identified within AS. The remainder were either neutral (18%, 9 out of 51 respondents) or said they did not know or were not sure (6%, 3 out of 51 respondents), with a further 4% of respondents (2 out of 51 respondents) indicating they did not wish to comment on this theme committee.
- **There were similar levels of support for saving and income generation proposals identified by Community Leadership and Libraries Committee (CLL)**, with just under two fifths of respondents (39%, 19 out of 49 respondents) agreeing with the saving and income proposals identified within this committee for 2021/22.

A quarter of respondents (25%, 12 out of 49 respondents) indicated that they disagree with the saving and income proposals identified within CLL. The remainder were either neutral (25%, 12 out of 49 respondents) or said they did not know or were not sure (6%, 3 out of 49 respondents) with a further 6% of respondents (3 out of 49 respondents) indicating they did not wish to comment on this theme committee.
- **Public Health (PH) - Health and Wellbeing Board savings and income generation also received similar levels of support to CLL** with again just nearly two fifths of respondents (38%, 18 out of 48 respondents) agreeing with the saving and income proposals identified within this committee for 2021/22.

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A third of respondents (33%, 16 out of 48 respondents) indicated that they disagree with the saving and income proposals identified within PH. The remainder were either neutral (15%, 7 out of 48 respondents) or said they did not know or were not sure (8%, 4 out of 48 respondents), with a further 6% (3 out of 48 respondents) indicating they did not wish to comment on this theme committee.

- **Housing and Growth Committee and Policy and Resources Committee received the least support for their saving and income proposals, with 29% of respondents (14 out of 49 respondents) agreeing** with the saving and income generation proposals identified within each of these respective theme committees.

Nearly half of respondents indicated they disagree (47%, 23 out of 49 respondents) with the **Housing and Growth Committee**, and just over two fifths (43%, 21 out of 49 respondents) disagree with **Policy and Resources Committee proposals**.

The remainder were either neutral about the Housing and Growth Committee saving and income proposals (12%, 6 out of 49 respondents); Policy and Resources Committee (14%, 7 out of 49 respondents); or said they did not know or were not sure (Housing and Growth Committee 6%, 3 out of 49 respondents; Policy and Resources Committee, 8%, 4 out of 49 respondents), with a further 6% of respondents (3 out of 49 respondents) indicating they did not wish to comment on these two theme committees.

Table 5: Views on the savings and income proposals identified by each Theme Committee

Theme Committee	Agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree		Don't know / not sure		No comment		Total
	%	Base	%	Base	%	Base	%	Base	%	Base	Base
Children, Education and Safeguarding	48.0%	24	12.0%	6	28.0%	14	6.0%	3	6.0%	3	50
Environment Committee	42.0%	21	14.0%	7	34.0%	17	6.0%	3	4.0%	2	50
Adults and Safeguarding	39.2%	20	17.7%	9	33.3%	17	5.9%	3	3.9%	2	51
Community Leadership and Libraries	38.8%	19	24.5%	12	24.5%	12	6.1%	3	6.1%	3	49
Public Health - Health and Wellbeing Board	37.5%	18	14.6%	7	33.3%	16	8.3%	4	6.3%	3	48
Policy and Resources	28.6%	14	14.3%	7	42.9%	21	8.2%	4	6.1%	3	49
Housing and Growth	28.6%	14	12.2%	6	46.9%	23	6.1%	3	6.1%	3	49

3.4 Further comments on Theme Committee saving and income proposals for 2021/22

Respondents were also asked if they had any comments to make about the saving and income proposals identified for each theme committee for 2021/22. Of those who responded to the consultation, 20 out of 78 gave a response to this question.

The responses to this question were varied and a summary of the most common themes, with a response of three comments or more, have been summarised below. Further details of the type comments received are provided in table 6 over the page.

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- *Do not cut Public Health and Wellbeing services (Four comments):*
- *Do not agree with an increase in Council Tax (Three comments)*
- *Saving and income proposals description are difficult to understand / Would be preferable and understandable if a further break down of what safeguarding for adults means in specific and what cover Links in the saving and income proposals don't work/ too many acronyms for the lay person (Three comments)*

Table 6 below gives full details of the types of comments received.

Table 6: Comments on the saving and income generation proposals that have been identified in each committee for 2021/22

Do you have any comments to make about the savings and income generation proposals that have been identified in each committee for 2021/22?	
Number of respondents who completed this question	20
Description / Type of verbatim comments	Number of comments
<p>Don't cut Public Health and Wellbeing: Public Health-Health and wellbeing board should be placed further millions £ into this aspect especially in a moment of pandemic that will last for all the year 2021 and will have repercussions to physical and mental well-being of the population even in the 2022. / Don't cut on public health and wellbeing / I strongly disagree with the lack of budget for public health given the current situation / And why the small reduction in Public Health spending? Surely, we should be spending much more in this vital area going forward.</p>	4
<p>I do not agree with an increase to Council Tax: The Council Tax for Mill Hill is already very high and in light of the ongoing economic uncertainty it seems unfair to increase this even higher (above inflation). / The residents of Barnet should not have their council tax increased. The quality of service is ever decreasing. The green bin collection scheme is an example of the backwards thinking / Given the Mayor is raising the GLA by 10% and all the pressures of COVID and job losses how can you possibly raise taxes for the 4th consecutive year?</p>	3
<p>Saving and income proposals description are difficult to understand / Would be preferable and understandable if a further break down of what safeguarding for adults means in specific and what cover: Not sure why are needed all the extra millions £ and in fact would be preferable and understandable if a further break down of what safeguarding for adults means in specific and what cover /</p>	3
<p>Adults and Safeguarding Committee comments on saving lines: A&S 22 utilising technology - in many cases this is not feasible as many vulnerable people do not have the skills to use the technology and/or cannot afford it. It further isolates the vulnerable in a time when isolation is a significant issue. A&S 27 - the emphasis has to be on the patient and not on savings - this needs to be monitored closely if any savings achieved do not negatively impact patients / Every year Adults and Safeguarding set a budget and then fail to meet it. Proposal this year are a rehash of previous proposals and there are a number of areas which are entirely dependent of a swift reduction in Covid cases such as the leisure budget. It seems unrealistic to forecast a £747k surplus when you do not know when they will be reopened and for how long social distancing will</p>	2

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Do you have any comments to make about the savings and income generation proposals that have been identified in each committee for 2021/22?	
Number of respondents who completed this question	20
Description / Type of verbatim comments	Number of comments
remain in place. A&S 27 is just plain wrong. The text says the full impact will be seen in 2022/23 yet two thirds of all the saving are front loaded into 2021/22.	
Your priorities should be flipped, the larger spend should be on safety, health, housing and the environment / There should not be a focus on 'growing' the population of the borough and on building more properties, particularly where those properties will be high-density and low in living space. Instead, the focus should be on making the borough a less unpleasant place to live.... the street scene (including but not limited to condition of roads and pavements) and community facilities (parks, libraries etc) have deteriorated greatly over the past two decades or so and stringent efforts should be made to rectify these failures before seeking to increase the population of an already over-crowded borough./ .	2
Cut salaries and benefits of the management: During such drastic times the Council is proposing to increase Council charges up to the maximum permitted level by the government. I would propose to cut the salaries and benefits of the management who are paid far too much compared to the frontline workers that include nurses & junior doctors. Like some of the responsible companies the management salaries & benefits should be cut in half. This would ensure that the Barnet council management are making sacrifices like the rest of the country / Stop the white elephant projects and huge council salaries and give the people a break for once.	2
Concern for Environment Committee income and saving proposals in terms of achieving parking revenue / The £1 million of waste service savings is also something that has been talked about for a number of years but time and again councillors refuse to vote for it : Environment Committee includes some huge savings including £3m over four years through increased parking revenues. Bearing in mind how hard retail has been hit how town centres will struggle, further parking charges seems optimistic at best and in fact there is a risk parking income will decline, especially reflecting the step change shift towards online shopping. The £1 million of waste service savings is also something that has been talked about for a number of years but time and again councillors refuse to vote for it / ...Car parking seems to be reducing.	2
Savings on the CSG contract are not credible / Concerned about fees paid to Capita: Savings on the CSG contract are not credible especially as additional charges for additional services have been added every year since the contract started / Concerned about fees paid to Capita. Why do we still use them? .	2
Links in the saving and income proposals spreadsheets don't work	2
Concerned about reduction in waste collection	1
The proposals are not sufficiently ambitious. The options are too conservative. What about more radical proposals such as, for example, dimming streetlights at light, or reducing frequency of bin collections?	1
The services experienced for Planning and Enforcement are insufficient - any further cuts to budget to these third parties will reduce service drastically. They should either move in-house, or as a minimum retain budget.	1
Cancel non-essential services: Cancel ALL non- essential services and events for the next 2 years and you'll have plenty of money spare.	1

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Do you have any comments to make about the savings and income generation proposals that have been identified in each committee for 2021/22?	
Number of respondents who completed this question	20
Description / Type of verbatim comments	Number of comments
Policy and Resources Committee - It is not clear why there is such an increase in spending on the Policy and Resources Committee. These corporate services never go down well with the residents.	1
Children, Education and Safeguarding budget is unrealistic: Plans include saving £334k on negotiating out inflation from third party contracts. given the financial stress that almost every organisation has suffered, and the above inflation price increases many organisations are proposing this seems wildly optimistic. A "targeted international recruitment campaign to increase the number of permanent social work staff" saving £200k seems highly risky given Brexit and the much stricter immigration hurdles which are now in place. Saving £340k through the "release of DSG funding to deliver savings" is dependent on School Forum Agreement. How can this have been included in the budget without that agreement in place.	1
Housing and Growth committee budget is highly risky and dependent on large scale borrowing of £300 million and shifts some risk to Barnet Homes which ultimately is still 100% owned by the council. I also do not know how you can show a £1.5 million saving on Barnet House when you have just had to pay over £10 million to exist the lease with no recognition of the loan repayment. Same applies to the saving shown against moving out of NLBP something which should have happened 3 years ago.	1
The budget lacks credibility, I also have real concerns about the capital budget. It does not appear to reflect the recent purchase of the Brent Cross South or the cost overruns of the Thameslink station. While these are capital purchases and will be shown on the balance sheet as assets there is a revenue cost in interest charges which does not appear to have been included.	1
I am concerned that less trees will be planted: We need more trees in the area, especially in Child's Hill as we are over the A41. Studies show children living in the vicinity of an A road suffer from stunted lung capacity. We need more trees and greenery. It is also conducive to the well-being of the whole community. The Finchley Road and the Hendon Way are major traffic air and noise pollutants.	1
Total number of different types of comments	32¹

4.3 Further comments on the proposed budget for 2021/22

Respondents were also asked if they had any further comments to make about the council's proposed budget for 2021/22. Of those who responded to the consultation, 27 out of 78 gave a response to this question.

Again, the responses to this question were varied and the most common themes, with a response of four comments or more have been summarised over the page.

¹ Respondents gave more than one type of comment. A total of 32 different types of comments were received from the 20 respondents who answered this question.

GENERAL BUDGET CONSULTATION 2021/22

- *Council Tax increases should not be implemented residents and businesses are already struggling because of the pandemic and Brexit / Pensioners won't be able to afford. **(Eight comments)**.*

- *More money needed for other Committees / I Support a further increase in Council Tax but to pay for other essential services in Public Health and Community Leadership and to provide basic services to the community / More money for the Environment, Community Leadership, and Libraries, Housing and Growth and CAMHS in the Royal Free /Could be imposed a lower percentage on adult social care precept on council tax for instance: 1.5% and the remaining 1.5% could be applied to other services in order to achieve a balanced budget for 2021/22. **(Five comments)**.*

- *Adult Social Care should be funded by Central Government and not through an Adult Social Care Precept Council Tax increase: Do not agree with applying an Adult social care precept of 3% **(Three comments)**.*

Table 7 below gives full details of the types of comments received under each theme committee. Comments that were only cited by one respondent are grouped as 'other' under each theme committee.

Table 7: Further comments about the proposed budget for 2021/22

Do you have any comments to make about the savings and income generation proposals that have been identified in each committee for 2021/22?	
Number of respondents who completed this question	27
Description / Type of verbatim comments	Number of comments
<p>Council Tax increases should not be implemented residents and businesses are already struggling because of the pandemic and Brexit / Pensioners won't be able to afford: Proposal to increase council tax affects people who also are already struggling, even before the Covid-19 health and financial burden. No more hardship should be laid on people to benefit Council's services, most of which do not really yield benefit to the people as stated in the consultation document / I suspect that a large amount of the tax increase will be borne by pensioners who are living on a fixed budget . Who may be asset rich, but income poor /The people are struggling already? Don't make things worse. Stop the increase on council tax and social care / Increasing the council tax will bring more burden on the resident living in Barnet. We've been hit with a pandemic and Brexit as well; I believe it should be scrap for at least a year to give the resident and business to have stability.!. Think about ALL THE PEOPLE !!!./ You are proposing an increase to the council tax charge in a period where a big percentage of people have seen their income reducing while at the same time none of your services that is visible to the big majority of people has improved in any way in the last years. £63/year might not seem much to some of the Borough's leaders but that is not the case for everyone / People should be responsible for themselves. Stop spending my hard-earned money. I live in a flat that is somehow band E. I'm going to have to pay £35 more for your rise, £40 more GLA and £60 more for this 3% precept = £135 increase!!! 7% increase! Get lost!!! / We have to be realistic here. I appreciate the Council is having a budget shortfall but with all that has been happening with Covid people losing</p>	8

GENERAL BUDGET CONSULTATION 2021/22

Do you have any comments to make about the savings and income generation proposals that have been identified in each committee for 2021/22?	
Number of respondents who completed this question	27
Description / Type of verbatim comments	Number of comments
<p>their jobs, I think we need to wait before pushing for this increase. It sounds as bad a blunder the Council did to start charging for green bin collection when Covid hit as no consideration was given to the fact that people may need up choosing alternatives like burning green waste in their back garden and this often meant many could not get fresh air in even in their own gardens. The council needs to think more seriously about timing before imposing more charges.</p>	
<p>More money needed for other Committees / I Support a further increase in Council Tax but to pay for other essential services in Public Health and Community Leadership and to provide basic services to the community / More money for the Environment, Community Leadership, and Libraries, Housing and Growth and CAMHS in the Royal Free /Could be imposed a lower percentage on adult social care precept on council tax for instance: 1.5% and the remaining 1.5% could be applied to other services in order to achieve a balanced budget for 2021/22: I would more than gladly support an increase in council tax, however I think public health and community leadership should have priority and a more extensive budget - during the current pandemic even more so. I also support the increase with a view that it enables the local authority to fully provide their basic services to the community, as a minimum. Should the budget be divided differently and all the above considered, I would support a further increase to the council tax. / More money for the Environment, Community Leadership, and Libraries, Housing and Growth and more money for the underfunded CAMHS in the royal free / Could be imposed a lower percentage on adult social care precept on council tax for instance: 1.5% and the remaining 1.5% could be applied to other services in order to achieve a balanced budget for 2021/22. Could be spread the necessity to increase taxes across multiple services rather than mainly just from adult social care. / It seems like this budget has been prepared top down rather than bottom up. The Council has first calculated the maximum permitted increase in funding & then distributed the funds to the various sectors. This is the wrong way of calculating the budget / Not enough money being spent on housing. Shouldn't be an area to cut back on / would like to see the budget for a greener environment increased. I think this is vital for the well-being of the community.</p>	5
<p>Adult Social Care should be funded by Central Government and not through an Adult Social Care Precept Council Tax increase: Do not agree with applying an Adult social care precept of 3%. Adult social care must be funded by central government out of general taxation and yes income tax will need to rise for this and for so many other things. I wish the government would just accept this rather than hiding taxes within council tax budgets for example. We are not stupid / There has to be a much wider debate about social care funding. The requirements for social care funding going forward need to be addressed by central government with a coherent long-term national funding plan put in place. I do not support piecemeal efforts by my borough to plug funding gaps - this will act only as a sticking plaster to a far more deep-rooted problem / The Social Care amount should be provided by the government as a country wide imitative as this affects everyone and the government had dithered putting plans into fruition for years, so instead it falls to individual councils to make up the amount...</p>	3

GENERAL BUDGET CONSULTATION 2021/22

Do you have any comments to make about the savings and income generation proposals that have been identified in each committee for 2021/22?	
Number of respondents who completed this question	27
Description / Type of verbatim comments	Number of comments
<p>Capita not generating savings anticipated or required / Outsourced services to RE, Capita and others are not delivering: -Much of this is because of outsourcing and use of Capita for multiple services. The relationship with Capita has been proven not to have generated the savings anticipated and indeed in many areas has ended up costing more. This has been accompanied by a corresponding reduction in level of customer service. The Council should seek to extricate itself from its relationship with Capita as a matter of urgency and to employ directly staff who are willing and capable of offering an effective service. This used to be the case several years ago and so has been proven to be possible. The stated ambition that "the council is well run and easy to deal with" highlights that it is recognised and accepted that this is not the case at present. It should be a matter of great embarrassment that the service levels have been allowed to drop so dramatically / There should be a holistic view on the services that are outsourced to RE, Capita and others. They are simply not delivering - planning control and enforcement in Warwick Road, Barnet EN5 has gone out of control with three properties (14, 43 and rear of 124 Bulwer Road) not enforced or checked without constant pressure applied. It's a shame the protected building on High St, High Barnet has been built too tall too - again no action. It's not all about saving money, there should be measures on fulfilling their duty and holding companies to account.</p>	2
<p>Social Care Precept increase is not enough income for social care: I am concerned that the Adult Social Care Precept generates an estimated additional £5.6million for Social Care. yet the theme committee's budget only increases by £5million. This doesn't seem right / I am concerned that the Adult Social Care Precept generates an estimated additional £5.6million for Social Care. yet the theme committee's budget only increases by £5million. This doesn't seem right.</p>	2
<p>Would be content for Council Tax to increase by 1.99% (or even more) but only if I received value for money / Increased costs but services have got worse: increased costs but services get worse, the bin services are not great but at least consistent, the street cleaning services are non-existent around Mill Hill east area yet we are expected to continually pay for council tax rises for services we are not getting although supposedly paying for. I have sympathy for CSC and ASC but stop squeezing residents when you are not providing the basics / would be content for Council Tax to increase by 1.99% (or even more) but only if I received value for money. However, as matters stand, there has been no value from the Council for many years. Services have declined significantly, and staff competence, courtesy and professionalism has reduced drastically /</p>	2
<p>Funding should be generated by cutting management salaries at the council/ You can make savings by reducing the layers of management: It is appalling to see Barnet council management raking in the money even during such hard times. This is totally unjustified. Unlike frontline workers they just sit in their comfortable offices & make decisions without the knowledge of how things are on the ground. As a goodwill gesture the management salaries should be cut by half & that money should be used to reduce council tax increase of 4.99%. / You can make savings by reducing the layers of management</p>	2

GENERAL BUDGET CONSULTATION 2021/22

Do you have any comments to make about the savings and income generation proposals that have been identified in each committee for 2021/22?	
Number of respondents who completed this question	27
Description / Type of verbatim comments	Number of comments
Would like more information: I would like to know what the increase will cover / Also the consultation overall does not tell us what the growth proposals are, which is particularly significant in terms of the Environment and Policy and Resources themes. How are we supposed to judge?	2
The proposed increase in general Council Tax is not in keeping with the Conservatives' 2018 election commitments	1
It is a work of fiction.	1
Refuse collection especially in flat developments needs to be improved. Recycling is poor and the council's policy is unclear - people leave neatly folded dry cardboard next to recycling bins on day of collection and council refuse to take it unless it is in a clear plastic (non-recyclable) bag. This results in wet cardboard going to landfill the following week. Taking dry neatly folded cardboard will save landfill costs	1
Can you have something called the Barnet fund for people to create funding for certain projects e.g. playground improvement, streetscape improvement, keeping libraries open longer etc.	1
Can you promote the various zero waste shop as a way of reducing the waste disposal budget?	1
To what extent contractors be sheets have been cut.	1
Essential services must carry on	1
Total number of different types of comments	34²

4.4 Written response to the consultation

There was also one written response and two e-mail responses. All three responses were from businesses. Full details of the written response have been summarised below:

Business 1 comments:

- Cut costs.
- Cut overhead count by 25% - most companies can reduce and so do - no hangers on or soft options.
- No compensation loss of office.
- No sick pay.
- Maximum paid Leave 4 weeks pa plus statutory holidays.
- What is happening to ex Ever Ready House building, Whetstone High Road? It would appear to be 95% empty for several years.! pass it night and morning.

² Respondents gave more than one type of comment. A total of 34 different types of comments were received from the 27 respondents who answered this question.

- The budget gap known to sink a private/public company - the Taxpayer not an "endless tap" - action now and cut costs all departments, no salary uplifts anywhere - if you want me to sort out, I will at no fee.
- Have been a resident Barnet (Mill Hill) circa so years - own several companies, also substantial
- Property holdings and employ circa 60 staff so I'm a reasonable sized employer, have ample knowledge of finance/budgets and you/the council employees must get on top of the known problem and action now, and not think about it for 6 months etc.

Business 2 comments:

It has been quite a stressful 2020 and I do not think 2021 will be any different and will in fact be even worse for many small businesses such as myself. We have been under enormous strain with the restrictions that have taken place due to COVID-19. And I do not see any improvements and day by day it is getting worse and I fear for worst. I really am wondering how the council will be able to find this budget gap, considering the state of all business in the Barnet area. All of the business's restaurants, supermarkets and other different businesses have suffered greatly and later in the evening the streets are deserted due to restrictions. I am really under enormous stress on how I would be able to pay these business rates in 2021-2022 and every time it comes to my mind it is quite stressful. I would like to really stress that if you really want these businesses to survive in the upcoming years, there should be some sort of opportunity to give businesses some breathing room not only on the council level but on the government level as-well. As a business owner on Golders Green Road and as someone who also lives in Golders Green, I have seen the enormous stress put out on the businesses in Golders Green from small businesses as well large brands such as Sainsbury's, Tesco's, Costa and many more. I have seen the way the pandemic has affected these businesses and as small businesses ourselves if they are struggling then how do we as small businesses possibly survive going forward. I really need some assistance from an official council on how I can prepare going forward.

Business 3 comments:

I want to share my thoughts on the budget, since the rate in our area (NW11 9) is very high, and there is so much parking restrictions many customers refraining from coming in to us, I would like to council to take it in consideration allowing more parking spaces in the area or lifting some restrictions.