

# ANNEX 6

## BUDGET CONSULTATION 2020

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# ANNEX 6: BUDGET CONSULTATION 2020

## SUMMARY

Nottingham City Council is setting next year's budget against the backdrop of having its Government funding reduced by three-quarters over the past decade. The budget proposals were discussed at Executive Board on Tuesday 17 December 2019 the report includes a list of the proposed savings and other changes to the budget.

The council will need to make **£14.623m** of savings in 2020/21, of which **£13.411m** was included in the December Executive Board budget consultation report. This will be achieved by innovating, trying to do things differently and making further efficiencies – but that still doesn't leave enough to fund vital services. The growing demand to look after the elderly is now by far the biggest single cost to the council and as a result Council Tax will have to go up again.

In line with the Council's commitment to citizen involvement, a full programme of consultation has been undertaken to support construction of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). This report details the results of that consultation and includes responses received up to and including 3 February 2020.

## 1. BACKGROUND

### Context

There are a number of practical difficulties to be faced when undertaking budget consultation. A unitary authority such as Nottingham City Council provides an enormous number of services and this creates a complex picture with many proposals to consult on.

### Impact of Consultation

Nottingham City Council has a long term commitment to incorporate the views of citizens into the processes of policy making and service improvement. This helps the Council to understand the issues and services that matter to local communities. Budget consultation ensures that citizens' priorities guide the Executive Board in developing the budget proposals.

The Council has been guided by the following principles:

- Address demographic and service pressures;
- Reflect the significant reductions in external funding (especially general and specific Government grants) by reducing expenditure on those activities;
- Support the Council's determination to be efficient, improve performance and modernise the organisation;
- Minimise the impact of service reductions and changes on vulnerable citizens by protecting frontline services;
- To pursue commercialisation opportunities to generate income for the Council.

## 2. THE CONSULTATION

### How we consulted

Consultation on the budget was conducted in two phases:

#### Pre-budget

Before the budget settlement for 2020 was announced in December, pre-budget consultation was carried out during October and November 2019. This gathered views through a survey, available both on-line and through the October edition of the Council's Arrow magazine. Citizens were asked:

- Which services are important;
- Issues of concern in the current economic climate;
- How the Council could make further savings or generate additional income;

Following this process, the Executive Board approved draft budget proposals for consultation on 17 December 2019.

#### Consultation on budget proposals

The Council are currently consulting on the draft budget proposals agreed from 17 December 2019. A consultation form is available online and in hard copy to enable everyone to have their say, as of 6 February 2019 there have been **54** responses.

As part of the consultation, events were arranged across the City, which have been publicised locally by neighbourhood management teams. Attendees were invited to provide feedback via the consultation form and verbal feedback from these events has been recorded and collated. Feedback was invited at a Business Event attended by Councillor Webster on 10 January 2020. One Nottingham partners and the voluntary and community sector were invited to a meeting on 29 January 2020 and young people's views were sought via a discussion at Youth Cabinet on 11 January 2020.

#### The consultation events

The local public consultation events provided the opportunity for citizens to engage directly with members of the Council's Executive Board and ask them about the proposals. The Council's neighbourhood management teams arranged five 'drop-in' sessions, in each of the Joint Service Centres throughout January 2020. At each event a presentation was available, providing background to the budget and information about the proposals. In addition, agenda items on the budget consultation were added to some pre-existing meetings.

A business event was organised on the 10 January 2020, where feedback from the local business community were sought. There was also an event for voluntary and community groups and One Nottingham. There was formal presentation from Councillor Webster followed by a Q&A session.

The views of young people in the City were also sought via a session at a Youth Cabinet meeting. Young people asked questions and were encouraged to discuss the proposals and the budget as a whole.

### 3 RESULTS AND FEEDBACK FROM THE CONSULTATION

#### Pre-budget consultation

The Your City Your Services consultation was undertaken in October and November 2019, in total there were **1,416** responses were received, **193** online and **1,223** received through the paper questionnaire printed in the October edition of the Council's Arrow magazine.

Respondents were asked to give their top three services, from a list of **26** council services. The top three most important services rated by respondents are:

- Care services to elderly and vulnerable people – average 1.64
- Child Protection – average 1.70
- Tackling Crime and Anti-Social behaviour – average 1.95

The full results of the survey are in **Appendix A** to this report.

## Responses via the budget consultation form

54 online and paper survey submissions have been received to date.

### Feedback

Respondents were asked to feedback their comments relating to budget proposals, some of these comments didn't define the exact proposal the respondent was referring to and some comments did not reference a proposal at all. In total there were 36 comments on the proposals with some identified themes. An example comment has been provided to illustrate the theme.

- Council tax increase is a concern, people are worried that wages are not increasing, but council tax is and state they will struggle paying bills.

*'I really think that raising by almost 4% will put a lot of strains in many families, with many of us deciding if to pay the tax or put food on our tables. The tax is currently very expensive and it is more than what I am paying for my other utility bills. I don't want not to pay it, but I might not have an option. I don't like being in debt and this is what it will create for many of our residents.'*

- Parking charges were mentioned in various context, firstly not putting up prices at it will discourage people to visit, secondly specific charges were mentioned on Edwards Lane and finally a comment on the cost of parking for builders, plumber, electricians etc who need a permit and it effects their ability to work.

*'Car parking in the city is already expensive and I think increasing them even more is unfair to the people that come into the City to work and shop. I understand the need to find money from somewhere but I feel that the people trying to make a living in this City are being discriminated against just because they are using their cars. It is not always possible for people to use public transport when driving in to the City for work and then having to travel between locations for work purposes.'*

- Importance of PCSO's and CPO's

*'The shops need more visibility and support from PCSO's and police officers in the town centre , we are so vulnerable and you don't see any PCSO's let alone police officers from one week to the next'*

- Other comments were around outsourcing as a last resort, looking at the way grants are allocated, looking at bulk buying for the catering in schools and how people rely on the council too much.

Respondents were also asked if they had any general comments or suggestions about the Council's budget proposals as a whole. There were **35** comments received with a few obvious themes were identified.

- Provide events that are cheaper and more family orientated
- Protest to central government
- Fines for littering and dog fouling as well as general comments about lack of cleaning
- More funding for the young or more youth provision
- References to senior roles and wages
- More affordable housing
- Charging for garden waste
- Fines for parking outside schools

The above is based on data received up to 6 February 2020.

## **Discussions with One Nottingham Partners and Voluntary and Community Sector**

A joint Voluntary Sector and One Nottingham Budget meeting was held on 29 January 2020 at the Angel Row.

Discussions covered a range of topics including:

- The effects of budget reductions on the voluntary sector
- Reductions in youth and play services
- The impact of a council tax rise to low income families
- Future of mental health and wellbeing services
- Future access to EU funding

## **Feedback from the Youth Cabinet**

Youth Cabinet met on 11 January 2020. The main areas of concern/interest were:

- They understand and sympathetic are to the Council's position and recognise the pressure local authorities are under as a result of reduced contributions from central government, and the pressure of increased demand particularly for children and adult social care.
- They raised the issue of the 10% reduction in Council contribution to NGY, the dedicated youth service facility on Castle Gate. They agreed to visit NGY and explore the impact of the cut, and look at ways in which NGY could look to make up the shortfall, such as the commercialisation of services there (e.g. renting out the kitchen, doing catering, starting a café etc)
- In a discussion around homelessness the young people commented on the Council's previous marketing campaign to discourage direct donating to people begging in the street, saying that it contributed to the climate of hostility towards homeless and vulnerably housed people.
- They also opposed any measures that would reduce support for users with housing, mental health or substance misuse issues.

## **4. CONCLUSIONS**

Throughout the consultation to date, feedback has been received from a wide-ranging group of respondents and this information has been fed into the decision-making process.

Overall, there is recognition of the difficult position the Council is in, regarding the scale of savings that have to be made.

The results from the '2019 Your City Your Services' survey undertaken of the consultation shows that Citizens' top service priorities have remained the same when compared to previous years.

The feedback we have received via the survey and at events shows that respondents are concerned that there continues to be both a financial and health strain on local people most especially with council tax. Concerns for the reduction in services for children and young people, older people and those with mental health problems.

There is a continuing and growing understanding and concern amongst citizens and organisations within the city about the more long term issues such as funding for social care and how the funding reductions are unfair on the council.

## Appendix A: Your City Your Services 2019 Data Report

### 1.0 Methodology

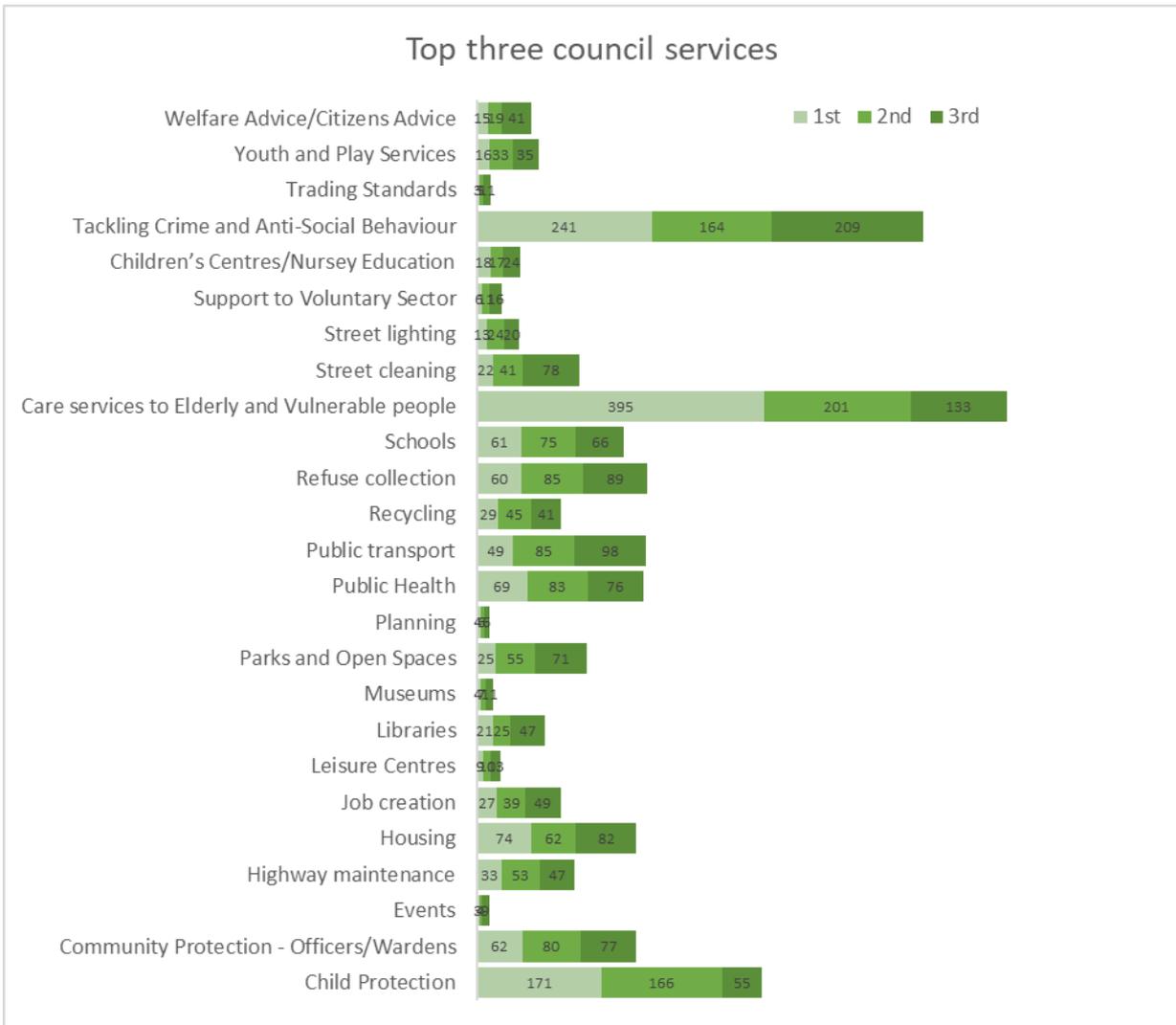
- 1.1 This report highlights the final results for the 2019 Your City, Your Services consultation.
- 1.2 Households in Nottingham City received the council's Arrow magazine in October 2019; the questionnaire was included as an insert in the magazine and allowed respondents to have their say on what they feel is most important to them as a resident, and for them to express any concerns and comments.
- 1.3 The survey was also available online and was promoted through the engage hub.

### 2.0 Responses

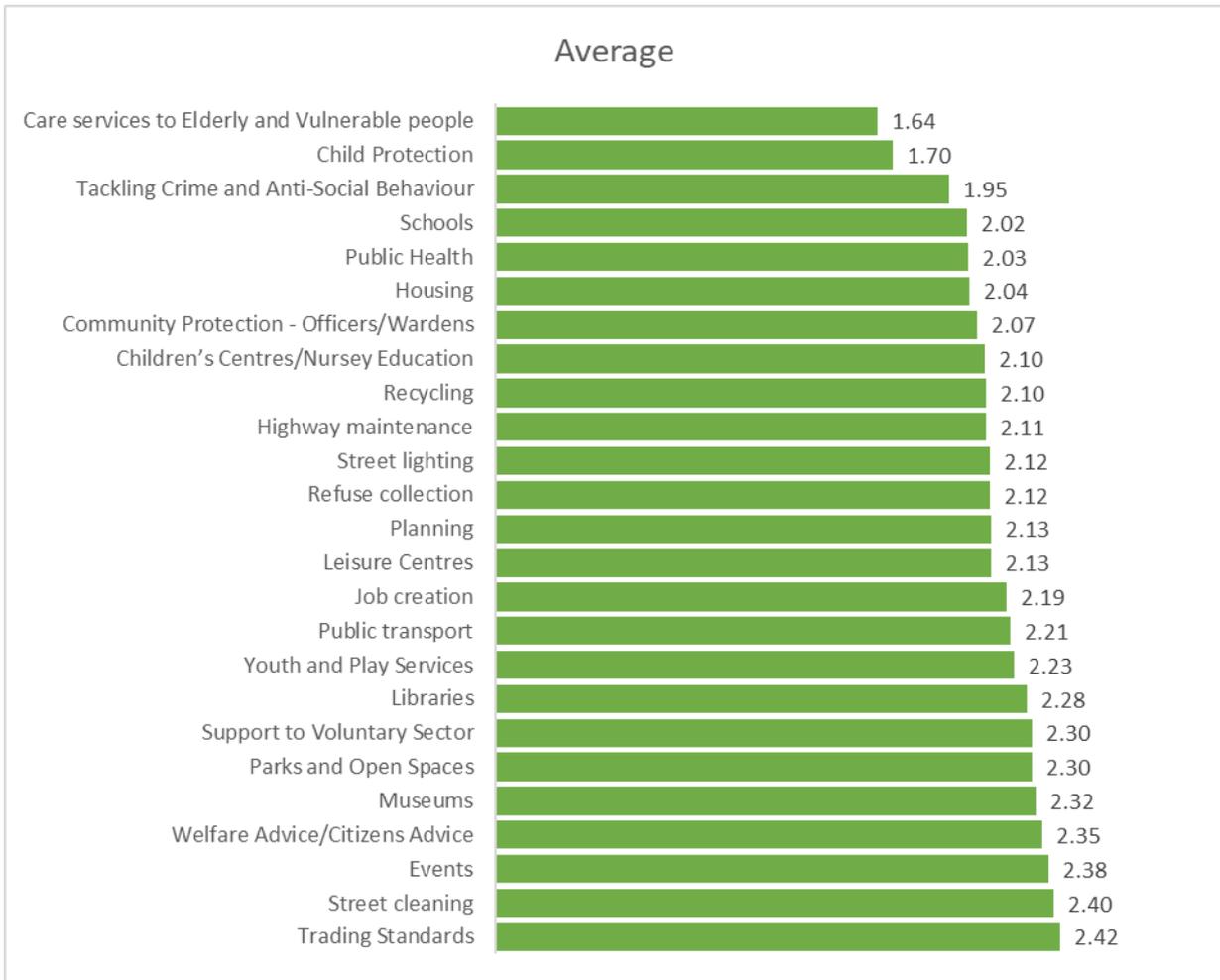
- 2.1 In total **1,416** responses were received, **193** online and **1,223** received through the post. In 2019 there has been a significant decrease in responses completed online.
- 2.2 Compared to previous years there has been a significant drop in responses, in 2018 there were a total of **2,187** responses.
- 2.3 This report outlines the final results for the **1,416** responses received, please note that this is statistically significant and representative of the population. Albeit comparisons based on ward may not be.

### 3.0 Importance of services

- 3.1 Respondents were asked to give their top three services, from a list of **26** council services. Figure 1 shows the order of respondents preferred services. Note this shows the scores for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> stacked together.
- 3.2 Figure 2 breaks down the data further to provide a different view of the most important services, by calculating the average score from 1 to 3. The lower the score the more important it is considered by respondents.
- 3.3 The top three most important services rated by respondents are:
  - Care services to elderly and vulnerable people – average 1.64
  - Child Protection – average 1.70
  - Tackling Crime and Anti-Social behaviour – average 1.95



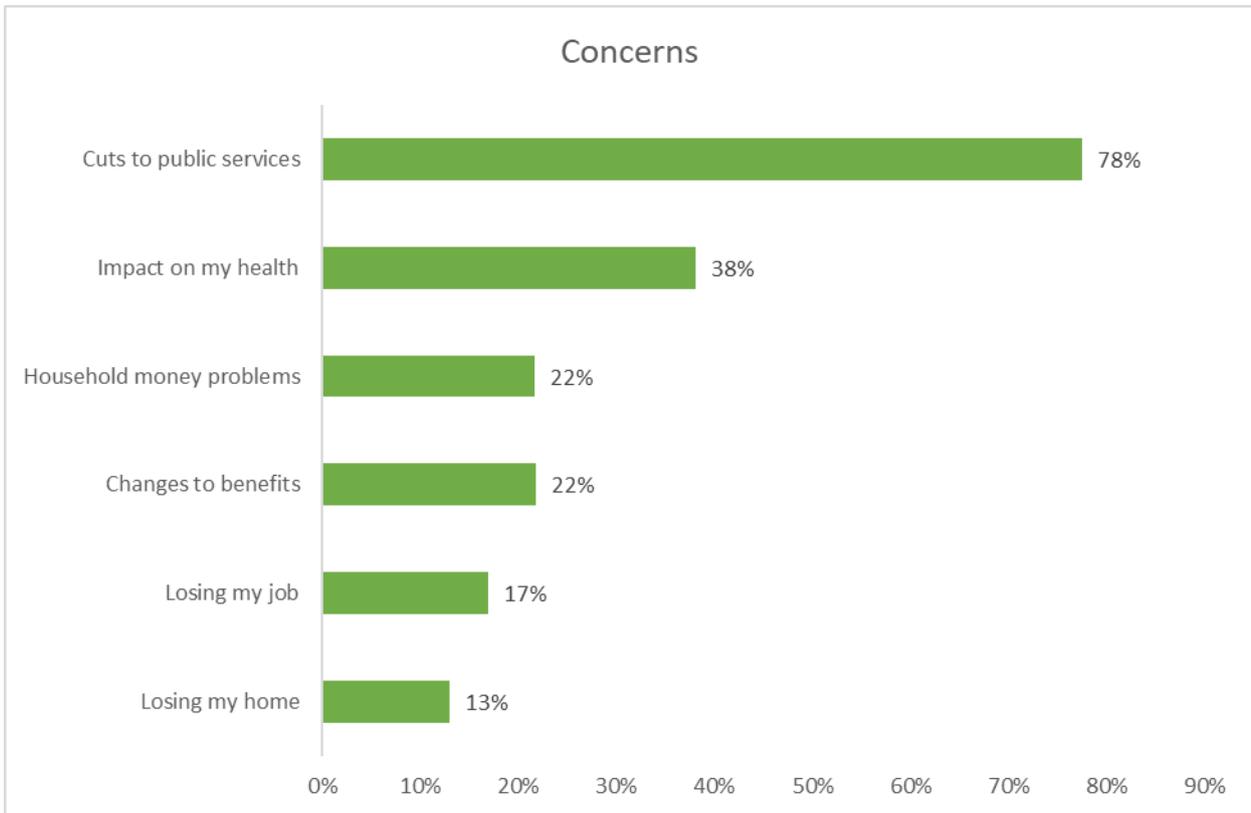
**Figure 1. Respondents top three council services rated as important (1,400 valid responses)**



**Figure 2. Respondents rating of importance of council services – average (1,400 valid responses)**

## 4.0 Areas of Concern

4.1 Respondents were asked to select which areas they were concerned with from a list provided. The most significant concern respondents said is cuts to public services, with 78% who state they are concerned.



**Figure 3. Respondents rating of concern % (1,416 responses)**

## 5.0 Comments

5.1 Respondents were asked to make comments on:

- What could we do differently?
- How could we work with other organisations to better provide services?
- Where else you think we could make savings?

5.2 In total **992** comments were received. Below are some of the main themes emerging from the comments along with a few example quotes:

### 1. Council are doing a good job

- *On the whole Nottingham services are good and I am proud to be a Nottingham lad!*
- *Council does a good job.*
- *Doing a good job in my view.*
- *We are lucky to live in Nottingham with such good council services especially public transport (no 27/28).*
- *General Nottingham services are very good, bus services are excellent.*
- *Generally the council provides good services with the limited resources available.*
- *Good job under circumstances. We hope the promised money from the govt will come in.*
- *Good luck, I think Nottingham city council is a great council.*
- *I think all the services are very good, people need to show more respect for what is done.*
- *I think Nottingham city council are great! You do a great job against the backdrop of massive cuts.*
- *I think that the council does very good work with very limited resources, and often doesn't get the credit it deserves. However, personally i do not think it should be spending money on 'events'.*
- *I think the council do a great job, if you ever got any more money from the government it would be good to see the council take back care homes for the elderly as you once did, they were so much better run by the council*

### 2. Cleaning of streets more frequently – education and people taking responsibility is mentioned

- *I think street cleaning is very important, cleaning grates must save money eventually. Could these duties be handed to people on community service?*
- *No idea really, all I know is that I pay more in council tax than I do in Income tax, the area I live in is a total slum with constant fly tipping, drug dealing and street drinking. I complain and complain and nothing is ever done.*
- *In Radford, where I have lived for 30 years plus, the area has gone right down and it is now embarrassment to live here. The street is filthy, the street and surrounding areas are not cleaned on a regular basis and we will be overrun by pests if something is not done to sort this out.*
- *Incentives for shops and businesses to keep the street outside their premises clean.*

### 3. Roads – potholes and poor repairs

- *Just filling in potholes is not good enough, repair does not last very long, it would be better to resurface badly damaged roads.*
- *Do the roads properly instead of just filling the hole.*
- *If nothing is done about local roads (ng3 7hb – Dales ward) soon no one will be going anywhere. Cracked and sunken pavements, separated kerb stones (trip hazard) large and deep pot holes in roads. Have already had to spend £200 on pot hole due to damage to my car.*
- *Improve quality of road surfaces- ring road has gas ruts. Bernard Street has a huge number of potholes which are potentially damaging to cars and are unsightly.*

#### **4. Combining funding and responsibilities, working more closely with other organisations to coordinate support for people and communities working together**

- *Support voluntary services and work more closely with voluntary sector to see if they can help fill the short fall but need to offer support to them so both services-council/voluntary benefit.*
- *I think it's time for communities to become communities again. For people to no longer assume the council will pick up their litter, tidy their gardens, pick up their dog muck, clean and tidy public spaces. As a city we need to work together to make areas safer, nicer, cleaner and tidier like other communities can and do. Just a few people can make a big difference even if it is only picking up one piece of litter a day.*
- *It is not more savings that are needed it is more services! Life gets ever more complicated, particularly for the vulnerable, whether young or old, so easily accessed advice is vital. Are your advice centres well enough integrated with citizens advice and the numerous other voluntary agencies, in the same business.*

#### **5. Review senior management, trips abroad and joining up services**

- *Stop spending money on lavish trips abroad to learn nothing.*
- *Review management structures and joining up services with other local authorities.*
- *'Middle management' review - me and 4 colleagues have 3 bosses below head of service level, 2 on h and 1 on j grade - why do we need them all?*
- *Review management structures and joining up services with other local authorities.*

#### **6. Green matters, waste and recycling**

- *We need a recycling collection in place. We are throwing everything in the same bin including glass, paper and plastic. This is a shame Nottingham is better than this*
- *Complete policy shift towards goods reuse and recycling of waste as a priority. Reduction of carbon footprint by allowing only ULE vehicles within city centre*
- *Increase charges for bulky waste collection. Introduce charge for multiple drop off at city refuse sites.*
- *Do more clearance days when we can put our rubbish out for collection- it will stop requests for single pickups.*
- *I would love to have glass recycling facilities for homes in the city centre. It seems mad to me that to recycle my glass I have to carry it to the nearest recycling station - at a time when every effort should be made to encourage green living. It seems odd that glass recycling is so hard.*

#### **7. Parking - outside schools and more parking needed (linked to Green)**

- *Address the parking issues on double yellow line outside schools, fines for parents who park there would be a huge form of income as illegal parking happens every day and is a danger to the children.*
- *Make parking around schools illegal or no entry areas*
- *More parking spaces at the park and ride site, more parking in town to encourage people to use the town centre more frequently.*
- *At the moment, some of the work you're doing is putting the cart before the horse, e.g. a lot of the great work the council is doing to tackle climate change and air pollution are being undermined by a lack of supporting infrastructure to support this. One example is the lack of park & ride places in the car parks in the north of the city. This is detrimental, especially to those who have disabilities but who cannot get a blue badge for Nottingham city or Nottinghamshire. The disability parking is specifically for Nottingham city/Nottinghamshire residents. This means people are more likely to come into town, using more fuel and create more pollution.*

## **8. Crime and Safety**

- *Please spend more on community protection, it saves lots of money by stopping problems early.*
- *Give CPO's more power so they are respected by the public.*
- *ASB is a massive problem in the city centre. We need more community protection officers on the streets*
- *All of my neighbours smoke marijuana, I have alerted the police on numerous occasions, no one cares one bit! And I raise two children that I don't want to subject to this. On my way to nursery I smell weed from every house and car that passes me by, disgusting! Drugs go hand in hand with knife crime - police and council do close to nothing about it. We need a change!*
- *More police protection where it is needed and not where it is not.*
- *If you had a few more wardens or CPO's you could nip a lot of problems in the bud and save the expense of sorting them out later.*

## **9. Council Tax/Benefits**

- *Spend less, reduce council tax and let residents decide how to spend their money.*
- *We are paying our council tax and nothing being done at the moment so I cannot see where you are going to cut to make savings.*
- *I cannot believe you spend so much of my council tax on services to the elderly/vulnerable. No wonder my tax has gone up 5% in the last two years but unfortunately my pension has not. You need to spend far less in this area and leave it to central govt. My council tax could be halved if you were not so profligate.*
- *I think a review of adults in supported living services (especially those with own flats and tenancies) need review of benefits, amount of rent what is paid by benefits is excessive and what landlords charge. A tenant who I support has over £1,200 a month and pays no rent and council tax!*
- *Senior citizens deserve relief such as to pay very small amounts of council tax. They have paid enough taxes all their working lives. Council tax is one of the most unfair taxes. It should be based on individuals not properties. Save money control benefits, people on benefits enjoy life and go on holiday more than working class. It is not fair!*

## **10. Reduce the Events or charge more**

- *'It's time to ask what is "really essential". Events are nice to have i.e. Nottingham by the Sea - whilst these are nice, they are not essential and the money could be used elsewhere.'*
- *Reduce large events or charge more, they are good but not everybody uses them, money saved could go on essential services e.g. Splendour entry is relatively cheap-could charge more.*
- *All services named are essential to the city. Should the number of council funded social events be reduced?*
- *Why events? Why can't people entertain themselves without events being created for them?*
- *Given how much you've been cut, I think you seem to spend a lot on "shiny" things - splendour, events in market square, arts and music stuff and especially the high quality of the print materials you send out. I'd rather see these cut and vulnerable people prioritised as well as retaining our practical services such as garden waste collection.*
- *I would be happy to pay to enter more events to help generate more revenue. Please don't underestimate the value that the leisure/sports/cultural events play in community cohesion, which reduces anti-social behaviour.*
- *I think that money is generally well spent in Nottingham and it is great that there are so many free events for people that live here. However, maybe these could be cut down or charge people a small amount to access them, so that money can be spent on basic things such as street cleaning and clearing leaves out of drains which doesn't always happen in my area.*

## **11. Online services, website, arrow and other glossy materials**

- *Promote more to continue online surveys, the arrow etc., by the public to reduce cost of postage/publication cost.*
- *Are sent an arrow to know what is going on, otherwise we would not know. Appreciate this is the icing on the cake rather than a fundamental service such as care/schools etc. Could this go online with an email to let people know?*
- *Stop posting Nottingham arrow, put in libraries/online.*
- *Not printing loads of promotional leaflets for things. I work in a community centre and a lot of them get put in the bin- a complete waste of money. Your website does not have a telephone number easily available on the first page. Sometimes it is easier to phone with a specific query than report online.*
- *Put a lot of content online, but not just online people need to see in reality too.*
- *You do not need to send the arrow magazine, do it online. Put copies in libraries.*
- *Cease the publication and distribution of Nottingham arrow.*
- *Savings- stop posting Nottingham arrow, put in libraries/online.*
- *Make the arrow magazine an 'opt in' service. Where people can register to continue to receive by post, receive by email and nil return equates to no longer receive.*
- *I think that making it easier for elderly or people with a learning disability to use the website and more sign posting to organisations that can offer them support if they struggle with using a computer.*
- *Council website should be more user friendly.*

## **12. Community Services**

- *Differently- use more volunteers. Do not use a lot of interpreters but spend more on teachers. Other organisations-voluntary agencies. Use unpaid work/community service for savings via probation service for street cleaning. Savings*
- *Be a voice for the community charities. Get retired people active by using them when they are capable. Use prisoners to do street cleaning.*
- *All the services currently listed above are important. Children are our future, we residents could be encourage to care for their surroundings i.e. Picking up litter, plant flowers/care for them, be more involved in the local community.*
- *Long term unemployed people who are able to work should be required to do work in the community for free if they wish to carry on receiving any benefits*
- *Making savings by using people on community service to do more jobs.*

5.3 Figure 4 shows an illustration using a word cloud, which carries out a count of the main words respondents used. There were comments made on ideas for saving money and a number of comments gave ideas on where income could be generated.



Figure 4. Comments – word cloud

## 6.0 Who responded?

6.1 This section highlights the demographics of respondents to the Your City Your Services survey. There were respondents who declined to give this information.

6.2 Table 1 shows the gender of respondents, 58% female and 38% male. Comparing to the city population female respondents are over represented.

	Survey responses		City Profile*	
	count	%	count	%
Male	521	38%	153,777	50.3%
Female	789	58%	151,903	49.7%
Prefer not say	54	4%		
Total	1364	100%	305,680	100.0%

Table 1. Gender of respondents comparison city profile\* ONS Census key statistics 2011

6.3 Table 2 shows the representation of respondents by age. Over half of respondents are aged 60 and over (54%) with just 2% from those under the age of 24. Looking at responses compared to the city profile, older respondents are over represented whilst those under 24 are highly unrepresented.

	Survey responses		City Profile*	
	count	%	count	%
16 - 24	25	2%	66,497	21.8%
25 - 44	313	23%	87,751	28.7%
45 - 59	304	22%	47,678	15.6%
60 - 64	161	12%	12,626	4.1%
65+	573	42%	35,552	11.6%
Total	1376	100%	305,680	100.0%

Table 2. Age of respondents comparison city profile\* ONS Census key statistics 2011

6.4 Table 3 shows the respondents who consider they have a long-standing illness or disability, 36% feel this applies to them. Comparing to the city profile, those with a disability are over represented in the responses.

	Survey responses		City Profile*	
	count	%	count	%
Yes	466	36%	55382	17.6%
No	841	64%	250298	82.4%
Total	1307	100%	305680	100.0%

Table 3. Respondents with a long standing illness or disability comparison city profile\* ONS Census key statistics 2011

- 6.5 The majority of respondents (87%) are from a white background. Table 4 shows the ethnicity breakdown of respondents. Looking at the city profile White respondents are over represented.

	Survey responses		City Profile*	
	count	%	count	%
White	1092	87%	218698	71.5%
Black	78	6%	22185	7.3%
Asian	40	3%	34051	11.1%
Mixed	30	2%	20265	6.6%
Chinese	11	1%	5988	2.0%
Any other ethnic group			4493	1.5%
Prefer not to say	74	6%		
Total	1325	100%	305680	100.0%

Table 4. Ethnicity of respondents comparison city profile\* ONS Census key statistics 2011

- 6.6 Respondents were asked to provide a postcode to identify the area they live in. 29 of the responses were from outside Nottingham and are not included in the ward analysis in table 5 below. The largest response from those living in Nottingham is from people who live in Sherwood (8.8%) and Wollaton West (8.6%). Responses are not representative of the city profile by wards.

	Survey responses		City Profile*	
	count	%	count	%
Aspley	41	3.2%	13,321	4.4%
Basford	71	5.6%	17,622	5.8%
Berridge	70	5.5%	16,207	5.3%
Bestwood	66	5.2%	18,651	6.1%
Bilborough	63	5.0%	16,753	5.5%
Bulwell	57	4.5%	16,792	5.5%
Bulwell Forest	69	5.4%	14,669	4.8%
Castle	64	5.0%	16,157	5.3%
Clifton East	58	4.6%	13,614	4.5%
Clifton West	54	4.2%	12,888	4.2%
Dales	61	4.8%	13,947	4.6%
Hyson Green & Arboretum	32	2.5%	16,754	5.5%
Leen Valley	46	3.6%	10,920	3.6%
Lenton & Wollaton East	54	4.2%	10,702	3.5%
Mapperley	105	8.3%	15,846	5.2%
Meadows	49	3.9%	21,414	7.0%
Radford	25	2.0%	15,414	5.0%
Sherwood	102	8.0%	19,316	6.3%
St Ann's	78	6.1%	9,952	3.3%
Wollaton West	107	8.4%	14,741	4.8%
Grand Total	1272	100.0%	305680.0	100.0%

Table 5. Ward Area of respondents comparison city profile\* ONS Census key statistics 2011

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**LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE  
DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION**

Your City Your Services Arrow and Online Survey October to December 2019

Comments on budget proposals: 17 December 2019 - 6 February 2020

Notes of consultation meetings: January 2020

**PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS ANNEX  
REPORT**

None