

**FINDINGS FROM THE COUNCIL'S BUDGET PROPOSALS
2024/25 CONSULTATION**

February 2024

Contents

Background.....	3
Consultation Methodology.....	3
Responses.....	3
Feedback from the on-line survey.....	4
Response Rate	4
Comments on the Proposals	4
Proposals that received fewer comments.....	8
Other comments received not relating to specific proposals.....	10
Equalities.....	13
Ways to Make Savings	16
Pay for Services	17
Council Working Differently	19
Prioritisation of Services	21
Any other Comments.....	21
Profile of Survey Respondents	22
Email Responses	27
Feedback from Consultation Meetings with Local Residents	28
Feedback from Engagement Sessions with Council Workforce	28
Feedback from Engagement Session with Coventry Chamber of Commerce	28
Petitions	28

Background

Between December 2023 and February 2024, the Council undertook an eight-week period of consultation on its budget proposals for 2024/25, prior to making the final decisions on its budget.

The Council reported on its priorities, the budget setting context and local financial position and gave an outline of the proposals to balance the Council's 2024/25 budget. The Council asked for views on the proposals, suggestions for how we could do things differently and prioritisation of current services.

Consultation Methodology

The Council hosted a survey on its engagement platform Let's Talk Coventry asking for people's views on the budget proposals. This survey was publicised through the Council website, newsletters and social media. Hard copies of the survey were available in all our libraries and posters advertising the survey and engagement opportunities, alongside a phone number to request more information, at Libraries and Family Hubs.

Two drop-in sessions were held at Broadgate Customer Services Centre, offering support for people who did not have digital access themselves.

In addition, meetings were held with residents, the Council workforce and the Chamber of Commerce.

Three petitions were received relating to specific proposals within the Budget Setting Proposals 2024/25.

Responses

3,500 people visited the Let's Talk Coventry page, with 1,600 of them downloading a document or viewing a video and 423 respondents completed the survey.

21 email responses were received. Including representations from Zarah Sultana MP, Coventry Independent Advice Service, Central England Law Centre, TUC and Warwick Law in the Community.

The following sections summarise the main findings and questions that were raised through the public consultation on the Council's budget proposals. All feedback has been consolidated and included in the overall theming sections.

A full list of comments from the online survey and written feedback can be received by contacting budgetsetting@coventry.gov.uk

Feedback from the on-line survey

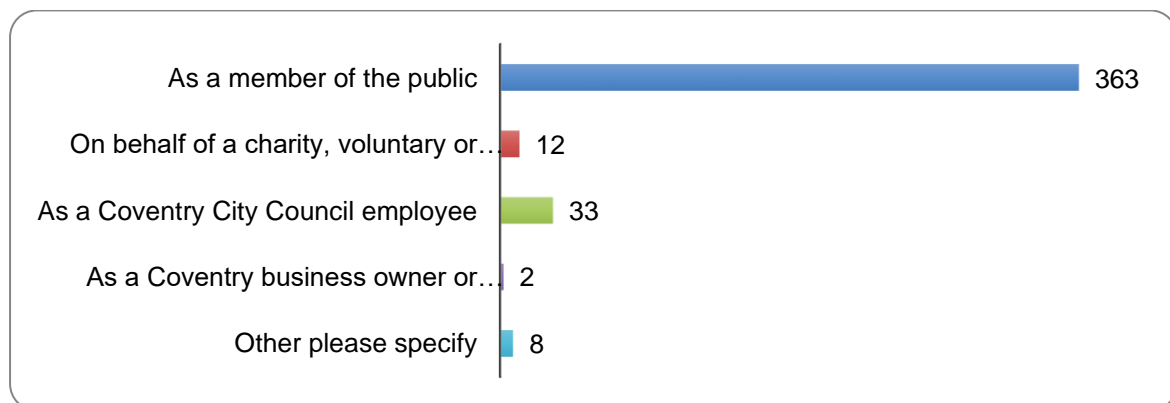
Response Rate

423 responses were received overall. We received 54 hard copy surveys and 379 online responses.

The majority of respondents were from members of the public, 363.

Responses were received from the following organisations:

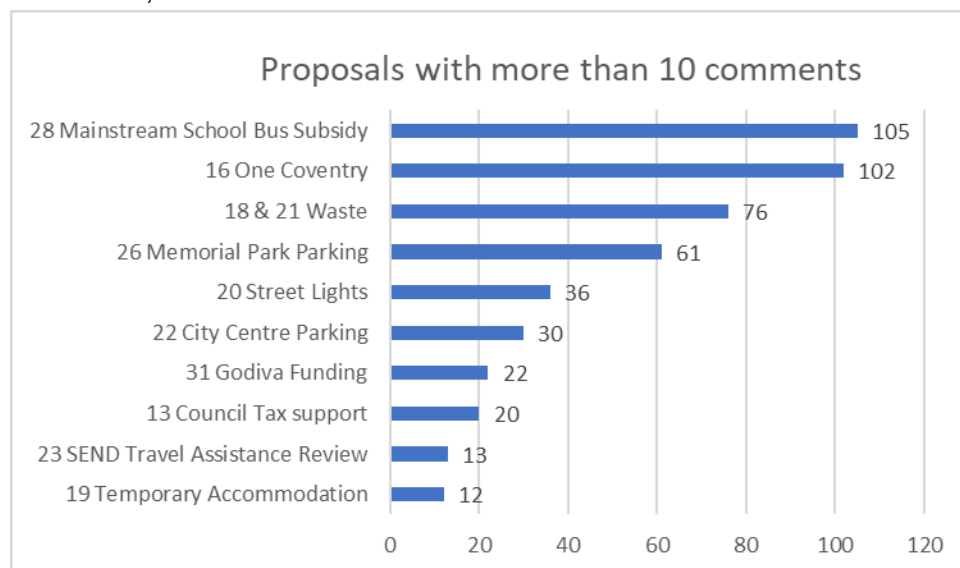
Coventry U3A, Bishop Ullathorne Catholic Secondary School, Coventry, Good Neighbours, Coventry Cyrenians, Mount Nod/Eastern Green school busses, Friends of The War Memorial Park, Band Hatton Button, Coventry University Group, Art Fund, Destination Ball Hill, Holy Cross Catholic MAC, Feeding Coventry, Coventry Foodbank and Central England Law Centre.



Comments on the Proposals

Respondents were asked to provide their views on the proposed cost savings.

The graph below shows the comments received by proposal that received the most comments, more than 10 comments.



School transport is an issue for many of those responding to the consultation with the specific bus to Bishop Ullathorne school directly referenced by 105 respondents. Fears include safety and safeguarding especially during winter and for pupils with Autism and anxiety specifically, other potential issues associated with withdrawing the service are environmental impact of extra traffic, anti-social parking, and minimising choice for families.

The way the Council conducts business, the processes and projects undertaken received 102 comments, comments include staff wages, major projects and spending plans. Value for money and future planning are also referenced within the theme.

Proposals around waste including the proposal to introduce charges for garden waste disposal and the introduction for separate food waste collection were themed together. This received 76 comments, some expressed willingness to pay the charges, while many feel that the Council taxes should cover this service. Many suggested that there may be issues with stolen stickers and stolen bins.

Increased parking charges at War Memorial Park, this proposal received 61 comments, the park is used by residents from across the whole city, changes may impact wellbeing with social and fitness groups attending, these include the many Park Runners. Free car parking is also utilised by parents with children attending local schools and there is a feeling that child safety could become compromised by anti-social parking as parents and carers seek to avoid paying £2 per day. The impact on the recently refurbished café is also highlighted.

Proposals to turn off streetlights received 36 comments, while some agree with the proposals put forward others feel that this could impact crime, anti-social behaviour, and public safety. Some feel that alternative arrangements could be made such as the 70% proposal, strategic use of lighting, especially in higher crime areas, and use of more energy efficient systems.

City Centre increase of parking charges. While some feel that this is understandable others fear that Coventry already has a poor shopping experience and that this may further exacerbate the image of Coventry as a ghost town.

Godiva festival should become self-funding and Coventry City Council should remove the subsidy according to most of the comments received. Many expressed surprise that this is not currently the case and while some suggested it would be a shame to see ticket prices increase, others suggest it has lost its community feel.

The proposal to reduce Council Tax support is mainly seen in a negative light.

The proposal to purchase property to support homeless, most comments suggested this makes sense as it will save money in the longer term, however a few suggested that homeless spending is not a good investment.

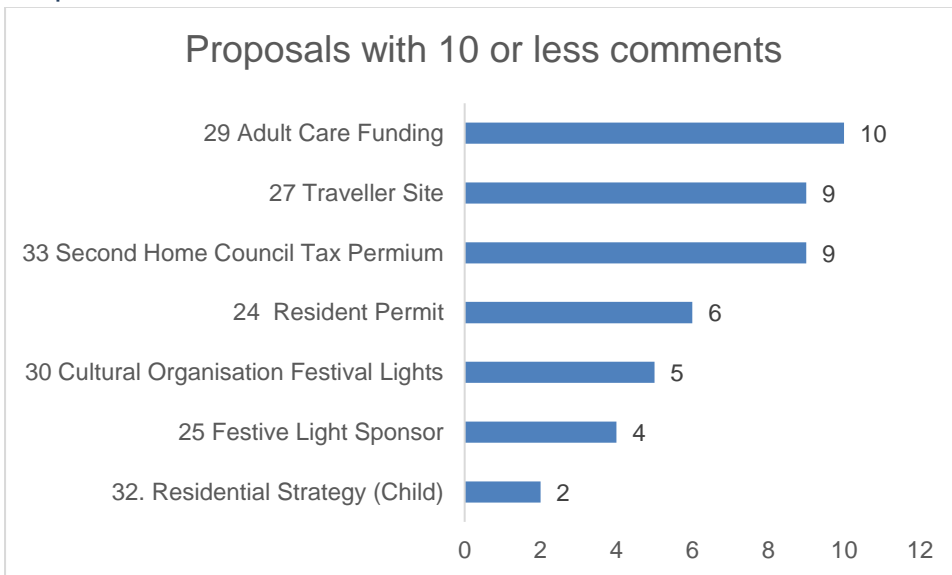
The proposed SEND transport review, most of these feel that SEN transport should not be cut and is an easy target. Many suggest this is would unfairly impact the most vulnerable.

Theme	Comments
28 Mainstream School Transport	<p><i>I feel this change has been poorly thought through and is possibly discriminatory to families who wish their child to attend their Catholic catchment school. This decision is in contradiction of the statements you make in your child Friendly Coventry pledges.</i></p> <p><i>..... no choice but to drive their children to and from school as the public bus provision is not going to be a viable alternative. Especially with younger children, and those with a disability or affected by neurodiversity..... Parents pay £330 + for the service. The number 9 bus service is already at full capacity; children are often late There are ~25 stops between Croft Road and the school. In the winter months, children as young as 11 will be leaving for school and arriving home in darkness. A child needs to be in the town centre for 7.20am in order to get the 7.30am bus to get them to school for 8.15. ...This puts the children in a very vulnerable position, being alone in the town centre, having to navigatemaking the school day for some children 9-10 hours long. Pupil absence rates should also be a concern, those already disadvantaged/ with barriers to learning.</i></p> <p><i>..... result in more traffic on the roads. huge detrimental environmental factor; putting even more cars/pressure on the roads which goes against what the council are supposedly trying to achieve.</i></p>
16 One Coventry	<p><i>It's not the residents fault you are in this position, it's yours. You should be looking at savings within the council itself before pushing costs onto the public who had no control over how you got in this mess Stop wasting money on things like the big wheel to show off to other cities, and things you did for city of culture that benefited no one but the council and cost so much. All what was setup, most gone now, it was all just for show then taken away. There has been signs this city is failing for years with retailers leaving the city and council failing to pull in what the public ask for. The council should take pay freezes for a few years like other people have had. Reviewing your own processes and departments and stream lining them would help. More efficient process and departments within the council would go a long way to resolving the shortfall.</i></p>
18 & 21 Waste Services	<p><i>Charging for garden waste is preferable to losing other services in the community. We should have done this years ago inline with other authorities</i></p> <p><i>I don't agree with charging for brown bins collection. We only put garden waste in ours, never food waste. That goes in the green bin. It's also not appropriate to charge for garden waste. If you start charging for garden waste than people will just dump their garden waste on the road and besides this is a basic service for which you should not charge extra.</i></p>
26 War Memorial Park Charges	<p><i>The fact that you are thinking of charging to park at the memorial park is abhorrent it is not fair for people who live in less affluent areas who cannot walk to the park and will be detrimental to families</i></p>

	<p>Agree with paying for festival Godiva, but not Memorial parking or lighting off. Memorial park is a symbol, as covered in the name, so should have some free parking, such as min 1 hour.</p> <p>implementing car parking charges at the War Memorial Park is absolutely the right thing to do. This is needed so as to ensure our parks can continue into the future and benefit Coventry residents and the wider region for generations to come.</p> <p>Proposals for imposing car park charges at all times at the War Memorial Park will be detrimental to many - responsible parents/guardians who walk and collect children from nearby primary school rather than irresponsibly park closer to the school, people including elderly driving to give dogs access to off-lead spaces, people taking part in Park-run events</p>
20 Turning off Street Lights	<p>I agree with shutting off street lights in some very low crime areas, I don't think all lights should be switched off. Take still a very busy road even during the hours of switch off. many people come and go from their houses during the early hours..... people walking and cycling through the night. ... drive down the road very fast, a few very bad accidents due to speed.no lighting on this road.....incredibly dangerous..... lead to an increase in crime. If the lights can be dimmed and this saves energy, perhaps this would be a better option</p>
22 City Centre Parking	<p>Finally, the parking charges, I have to use my own car for work and I do not get a parking pass paid for, like some, so an increase will impact on the time that I am in the office. I am able to work from home, but it is vital that I also spend time in the office too there seems to be a lot of charging the public, for waste, parking, council tax, transport</p> <p>Agree with increasing car park charges in line with inflation</p>
31 Godiva Funding	<p>Raise ticket prices at Godiva Festival. The fact that it was free for so long was generous. If people want to go they'll pay it. A family ticket price would be good to encourage families to attend.</p> <p>austerity measures should be implemented with no funding for non-essentials like the Godiva festival or Christmas decorations. These events can be funded from sponsorship or participants.</p>
13 Council Tax Support	<p>People on benefits, are the lowest income households in this city, and the ones most struggling in the cost of living crisis. The fact that Coventry Council are even considering reducing the Council Tax Support for this group takes my breathe away.</p> <p>Do not cut council tax support as people on benefits can not afford this as it is I am disgusted by reading these proposals</p>
23 SEND Travel	<p>Seem to be targeting the 'soft options' again e.g. SEND and school transport, good that you intend to get money from absent landlords etc for empty homes.</p> <p>..... some are really bad. Especially: increased costs for SEND school transport, increased costs for self-payers in residential care, reduced council tax support for low income families.</p>

<p>19 Increase Temporary Accommodation</p>	<p><i>.....council are so out of touch with residents wants and needs and what they can afford. People sleeping on streets increasing each year but you stop funding shelters in 2020 but in your own reports admit numbers sleeping rough went up over 300%! It is clear the lack of communication between departments and when deciding what needs funding. Increasing need but stop the shelters clearly makes no sense other than to save you money. This kind of logic and decision making is what has got to this mess.</i></p> <p><i>Stop spending our money on Housing and Homeless</i></p> <p><i>Good idea to buy more housing for TA to reduce reliance expensive B and Bs - well done cov, lots of LA not being so proactive. But need long term council housing also- spend to save initiative! Housing is the foundation for everything else.</i></p>
---	--

Proposals that received fewer comments.



The proposal to charge a Council Tax premium for second homes unanimous comments in support of the proposal.

The proposal to create a Traveller site, mixed views were expressed about this.

Plans to charge full cost recovery for Adult Social Care are mixed.

The proposal to standardise fees for parking permits scheme gained unanimous agreement that this is fair and proportional.

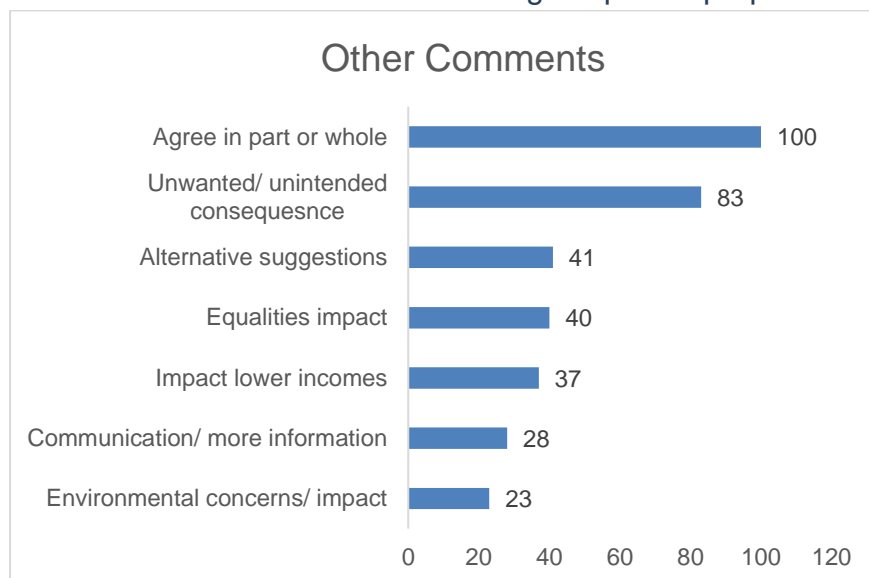
Finding a sponsor for the festive lights is seen as a good idea for those who commented about this.

Cultural Organisations financial efficiencies, 1 person suggested charging for entry to cultural organisations, others suggest that the grant should be maintained.

Expansion of residential strategy agreement with the proposal.

Theme	Comments
29 Adult Care Funding	<p><i>For adult social care, you should place a fee for the users, or the family of the users and not increase the Council tax just to keep funding on this second massive spending.</i></p> <p><i>23 and 29 are the ones most affecting vulnerable people but should still be looked at</i></p> <p><i>a 50% increase in fees for new dementia sufferers in Anchor-run council-funded PFI adult social care homes. These are precisely the communities which Labour was set up to protect;</i></p>
27 Transit Traveller Site	<p><i>27 - Introduce a Transit site for travellers - agree, good idea</i></p> <p><i>I can't believe that you want a transit site for travellers waste our money</i></p> <p><i>I've read it correctly you are putting money into traveler sites, not sure this is a good use of public monies</i></p>
33 Second Home Premium	<p><i>it would make sense to charge a Council Tax premium for second home and maybe remove the discount for single home owners like me.</i></p> <p><i>I agree with the premium on second homes, I would also suggest the council start to tax empty homes much more aggressively. Even up to 4 or 5 times premium.</i></p> <p><i>good that you intend to get money from absent landlords etc for empty homes.</i></p>
24 Resident Permit Scheme	<p><i>I also believe that permit areas/charges should all come into line across the board and be charged a little more than they do.</i></p> <p><i>I agree with some of the proposals, parking permits and premiums for empty homes are fair and proportionate.</i></p>
30 Cultural Organisation Funding	<p><i>I do not support the 'Cultural Organisations Financial Efficiencies' proposal. I would like to see funding for Culture Coventry Trust and Belgrade Theatre Trust maintained..... making Coventry a pleasant place to live and putting Coventry on the UK's cultural map.</i></p> <p><i>you should also CHARGE admission to Museums and art galleries.</i></p>
25 Festive Light Sponsorship	<p><i>Also Christmas lights etc isn't a good use of public monies.</i></p>
32 Residential strategy	<p><i>32. Expansion of Residential Strategy - agree</i></p>

Other comments received not relating to specific proposals.



Many comments received agree with the proposals at least in part or feel that some changes are inevitable. However, respondents feel caution is advised as the changes may cause unwanted consequences, these include fly tipping, illegal or nuisance parking, bin stickers being stolen, anti-social behaviours and fears around crime and safety and that Coventry already has a reputation for poor shopping experience will have their image further tarnished., these changes could have a financial impact in higher outlay and lost revenue.

Alternative suggestions such as more investment, not charging parking for the first 20 minutes, rejecting some proposals, and utilising the proposed spending in other ways are some of the suggestions put forward.

Some felt that there are impacts on equalities because of the changes while the impact on those with lower incomes was highlighted by many.

Some felt that there was not enough engagement, information, or access to the consultation.

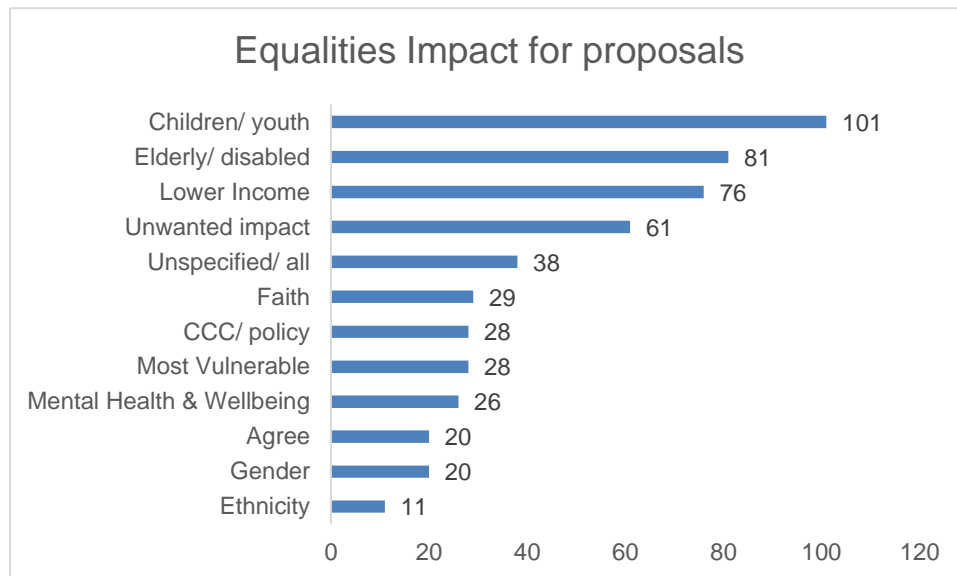
Theme	Comments
Agree in part or whole	<p><i>There appears to be little choice but to implement many of the proposals, sadly.</i></p> <p><i>I think the green bins are a good idea as many other la charge for this and the bin service in Coventry is not very good.....</i></p> <p><i>I think they are mostly good appropriate.</i></p> <p><i>Seem to be focussed in a way that protects essential services as far as possible.</i></p> <p><i>I understand that there is a limited amount of money to spend, and sometimes there have to be reductions in what we spend if the income can't be increased . When I budget the first thing I do is pay for the essentials and cut the luxury items. So, I would expect the same from the council.</i></p> <p><i>They seem reasonable, you are caught between a rock and a hard place.</i></p>
Unwanted/ negative consequences	<p><i>Fairly pragmatic, however stopping collecting garden waste will almost certainly lead to an increase of fly tipping which will need to be investigated/cleared.</i></p>

	<p><i>charging for green bin waste maybe see more fly tipping, misusing current bins like putting it in to the normal rubbish bins etc. Charging to park in Memorial Park again targets the vulnerable could have a knock on effect in our areas and put pressure on other council services like Mental Health. Reducing street lighting is very dangerous as it then could have an impact on crime, burglaries, attacks. People will not feel safe to walk about their areas.</i></p> <p><i>..... think the suggestion of charging for the war memorial park car park is terrible. It's such an important accessible free space for so many to use and will hugely affect people's access to this space. It will also encourage people to park on the grass verges on Kenilworth road and along the streets nearby which will increase road accidents and can be dangerous for pedestrians. I assume the council will then want to install bollards or fencing to deter the on road parking which will cost the tax payers a fortune and defeat the object of the parking charges.....</i></p>
<p>Alternative Suggestions</p>	<p><i>stop putting homeless people in hotels as temp accommodation, it costs a fortuneI would suggest as many streetlights off as possible.</i></p> <p><i>Cuts need to be mainly focused on the biggest spending areas Perhaps you should focus on people who don't pay their council tax rates.</i></p> <p><i>i think coventry council should abandon the food waste collection totally and not waste money on it. Increasing the charges for people for parking at the memorial shouldn't happen until the cycle network to the park is developed</i></p>
<p>Equality Impact</p>	<p><i>Any cuts to services for those most in need e.g. SEND is a concern.....</i></p> <p><i>Some cuts may be necessary but overall safety and welfare of residents, particularly children and elderly is of prime importance</i></p> <p><i>biggest concern is that the proposals overall place the responsibilities for services back onto the service user, who may not be able to afford the measures, particularly given rising costs - onus for adult social care on the adults dependent on it, or on transporting vulnerable groups to education back onto the families who create inequality and put barriers to access in place, in the name of saving costs. Access to leisure spaces will be restricted based on who can afford the fees, and the same with accessing the town centre.</i></p>
<p>Impact Low Income Households</p>	<p><i>People on benefits, are the lowest income households in this city, and the ones most struggling in the cost of living crisis. The fact that Coventry Council are even considering reducing the Council Tax Support for this group takes my breathe away. It certainly seems that although having worked all my life in full time employment, that now I am disabled and have ill-health the council want to make my life even more difficult than it already is.</i></p> <p><i>..... the proposals will put more stress and worry on the poorest and most vulnerable energy price rises, rents,</i></p>

	<p><i>food, mortgages and car fuel costs, for some income is already not enough to cover the basics of managing their own family budgets. It is wrong to expect those on the lowest incomes to have to contribute to filling the funding gaps created by Central Government's restricted funding to Councils across the UK.</i></p> <p><i>The new £40 charge/bin whilst sounding small is more significant as a % for the lower tax bands, a tax band A is an effective CT (Council Tax) increase of 2.7%, Band D 1.8% increase and Band H 0.9% increase (assuming household has a single bin). On top of the proposed 5.2% CT increase this is effectively a stealth tax.....</i></p>
<p>Communication/ Information</p>	<p><i>The budget proposals document is way too complex for a regular member of the public to understand. As such, you should not expect to receive any constructive feedback on this from the Coventry public.</i></p> <p><i>I think there is not much detail in the documentation provided - the largest savings seems to come under "management actions" which is extremely vague and is likely to have an impact on staff across the organisation.</i></p> <p><i>Difficult to have a view on proposals that are not fully explained.</i></p>
<p>Environmental concerns</p>	<p><i>..... If people travel to tips it will have a negative impact on the environment.</i></p> <p><i>brown bins should still be covered by council tax and not paid extra - adding the extra charge will discourage people from maintaining the green areas, which will mean more astroturf and slabs in the city which will contribute to warming up, also, people will simply start using green bins, nobody will go to the tip.</i></p> <p><i>..... over 300 pupils will need to make their way to school independently and a proportion of those will have no choice but to be transported via car. This would cause massive disruption to the local area as well as having a significant environmental impact on the local areas. As a local resident I am concerned about this.</i></p>

Equalities

Respondents were asked which groups they thought may be impacted and how by the proposals. The graph below shows the comments received by theme.



Those responding to the consultation feel that those within the young people category would be disproportionately negatively impacted especially by the withdrawal of a bus service to Bishop Ullathorne School, this includes safety and safeguarding fears, parents say that girls as young as 11 will be leaving home at 6:30am to get to their preferred school, some felt that the changes specifically negatively impact faith groups.

Those within the elderly/disability category could be negatively impacted closely followed by those with lower incomes including those in work, this is especially in relation to War Memorial Park parking, the SEN evaluation and garden waste charges. Again, caution was advised as respondents feel that the changes may have consequence or negative impact. The impact on those on low incomes and the impact of the cost of living received many comments, especially around changes to garden waste removal and council tax support changes.

The proposed fees at the War Memorial Park could have a detrimental impact on mental health and wellbeing, and the impact on the most vulnerable were raised, some felt the changes would negatively impact everyone equally. Others said it would impact parents on the school run, who feel that congestion and on street parking could present an increased danger to their children.

Women and those pregnant would be disproportionately negatively impacted, being especially vulnerable should lights be switched off, they are more likely to have childcare responsibility, a small number felt that some ethnic groups would be more likely to work shifts and be vulnerable to both crime and hate crime should the lighting be switched off.

Equality Theme	Comment
Children & Young people	<p><i>Danger and risk for our vulnerable teens/young people. Town is not a safe space to allow your teenagers to walk through alone and the current infrastructure means this has the potential to increase her school day by 4 hours in total</i></p> <p><i>My daughter already leaves the house at 7.20am in the dark to walk to the local bus stop 10 minutes away, the thought of her having to leave even earlier & travel into Coventry city centre on public transport concerns me a great deal and is something I do not consider safe for an 11 year old. I would not let her travel on a bus at this age by herself outside of school let alone on a daily basis.</i></p>
Elderly/ disabled	<p><i>car charges at the park will deter children, Mums, the disabled, the elderly, walkers and dog exercisers. The park businesses will suffer as a result.</i></p> <p><i>The park was given to the people of Coventry and this proposal is counter to the original intention.</i></p> <p><i>The charge on garden waste will have a disproportionate effect on the elderly and disabled.</i></p>
Low-Income Households	<p><i>This will cause more of an issue for people in low budgets and the disabled who often have lower income.</i></p> <p><i>As ever, the proposals WILL impact most on those who can least afford to pay more, and the suggestion that 'free' refuse disposal is available to those with cars and time is outrageous and fundamentally discriminatory.</i></p> <p><i>I suspect those who work hard but aren't on high incomes may lose out (despite the 'disregarded amounts'). Those who don't declare all income or moonlight "off record/cash in hand" - no doubt, some of whom are on C/Tax support, are sitting pretty because locally and centrally, government is not doing enough to look at/investigate this.</i></p>
Unwanted Consequences	<p><i>I am going to have to either reduce my hours or stop work to be able to get my child to Bishop Ullathorne</i></p> <p><i>Clearly switching off street lights will eventually cause a death through an attacker not being seen - but that may not be visible as its hard to quantify. The council tax relief cut will hit less well off but they mostly don't vote</i></p> <p><i>Anyone without their own transport cannot take items to the tip. They should not be expected to pay more on top of the council tax. This will only increase fly tipping.</i></p>
All impacted/ No specific group	<p><i>I don't think this is a win for anyone.</i></p> <p><i>The proposals seem quite balanced with no groups disproportionately impacted. I would like to have seen something more around industry and business contributing to the load alongside residents in terms of income generation, but perhaps that features elsewhere.</i></p> <p><i>stop categorising people we are all in this together rich or poor</i></p>
Faith Groups	<p><i>It will have a negative impact on Roman Catholics, and a further negative impact of those at secondary schools who access SEND.</i></p> <p><i>Religious discrimination to the Catholic Community by removing the bus service with no alternative solution for these children to get to school and have an education.</i></p>
Mental Health & Wellbeing	<p><i>Charging to park in memorial park is going to impact peoples mental and physical health. Many people rely on daily exercise, or just sitting</i></p>

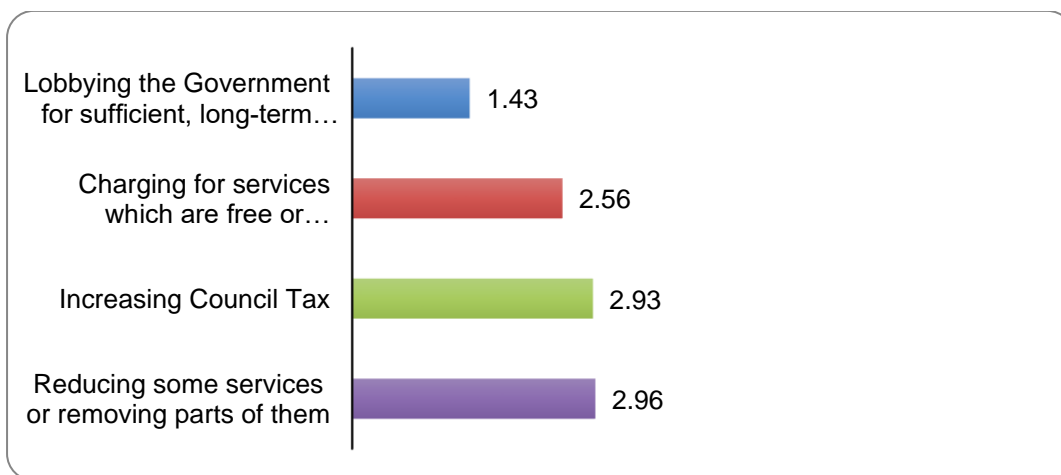
	<p>on a park bench to get into the fresh air, de stress, or meet with friends. Park run has been very popular, and many people come to the memorial , as it has free parking. They then spend money in the cafe, go to central six or city centre. They are left with a feeling Coventry is a welcoming city and may be more likely to think to come here for shopping or leisure activities. If you start charging for parking, people may stop going out, which will impact on their mental and physical health. This will then cost more in the future with support services.</p> <p>If parks, libraries, leisure centres are cut or closed completely, this could have a detrimental effect on people's health and mental wellbeing which in turn will put even more pressures on Adult and Children's social care.</p>
Council & Policy	<p>Reducing cars on Coventry roads should be given more priority by the council in order to reduce the carbon foot print of the city and a more pro active approach to provide alternatives for people without cars.</p> <p>..... lived in Coventry all my life and in the last 50+ years the roads have got worse, the rubbish has built up, the crime has increased ... it's not the party who is in charge - that doesn't matter - it's how well the people who have the power to do good things spend it and get things done in the right way - in Coventry that it our council and as a working, straight, white, male with children who drives a car because I have to be able to do my job, I've seen very little good done by our council really, I'm afraid.</p>
Most vulnerable	<p>Street lighting - negative for the majority of residents, including women and vulnerable people. My partner tells me she avoids unlit pathways, and this upsets her as it takes her longer to walk home from work. Cutting services will have a knock on impact on the most vulnerable service users above all else. Placing the cost back on the consumer when we have record levels of tax burden and record levels of inflation whilst at the same time increasing council tax across the board is a callous way to close the funding shortfall in a part of the country where families are already struggling and without support</p>
Agree in part/ understand	<p>About time people stopped expecting hand outs and support for every day things, we did not have support for everything years ago and managed quite well.</p> <p>Good idea to get more partners on board for Godiva festival and the Caribbean festival if they can't be found then cancel them. Rate payers shouldn't pay. Personally, I think. It's got to big it's lost it's community spirit.</p>
Women	<p>Negative for disabled people, pregnant/maternity, age - eg parking charges even though these groups may have low income. Potentially dangerous for these groups if street lights turned off and they have to leave their home at night and it'll be completely dark due to no street lighting (eg to catch a flight, go to emergency hospital go into labour etc)</p> <p>Women will be more impacted as they often take on a caring role - for example with the increased costs for SEND school transport. Things which affect low-income households like the council tax support reduction will disproportionately affect many marginalised groups who are already disadvantaged in the job market due to discrimination</p>

Race/Ethnicity	<p><i>Turning lights off will impact minority communities as it would further enhance fears having to walk in the dark and will make them feel less safe.</i></p> <p><i>- racial and religious minorities may face more hate crime while its done as statistically darker areas are more prone to crim</i></p> <p><i>elderly people - negative and BAME - disproportionately affected as they earn less than white</i></p>
-----------------------	--

Ways to Make Savings

Respondents were asked to rank ways the Council could make savings.

They were asked to rank them with 1 being their most preferred option and 4 their least preferred option. The smaller the number shows the most preferred option.

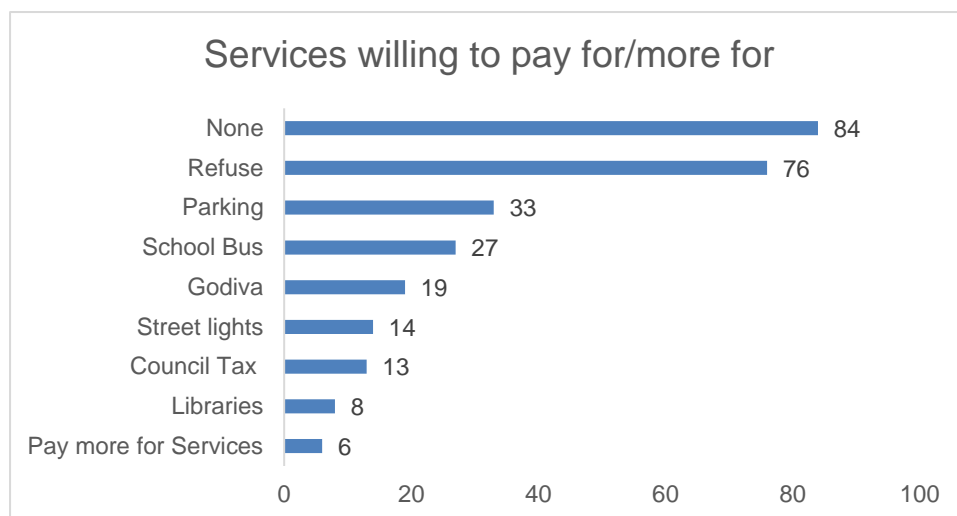


Lobbying the government was the most popular response, followed by charging for services which are free.

The least popular responses were increasing council tax and reducing some services or removing parts of them.

Pay for Services

Respondents were asked if there were any Council services that respondents would be willing to pay for/pay more for. All comments have been themed manually. The graph below shows the number of comments by theme.



Most comments reflect the view that people pay enough in Council Tax and do not feel they access many of the services provided.

Respondents on the whole seemed prepared to pay for garden waste collection, although a number queried how this may raise incidences of fly tipping. Some respondents were also prepared to pay more for parking with the proviso that enforcement was increased. On the other hand, the issue of not paying for parking at the War Memorial Park was raised.

A number of respondents stated that they would be happy to pay more to ensure they had school bus services.

A few respondents stated they would be happy to pay more for Godiva and see street lighting turned off between certain hours.

Libraries were mentioned as services they were keen to see preserved. It was queried whether there could be a voluntary donation scheme introduced for using libraries, like in museums.

Some respondents stated they would be happy to pay more Council Tax if this ensure that services for the most vulnerable remained, Similarly, respondents stated they would be happy to pay more for services they received and that this should be means tested so the most vulnerable are not affected by this.

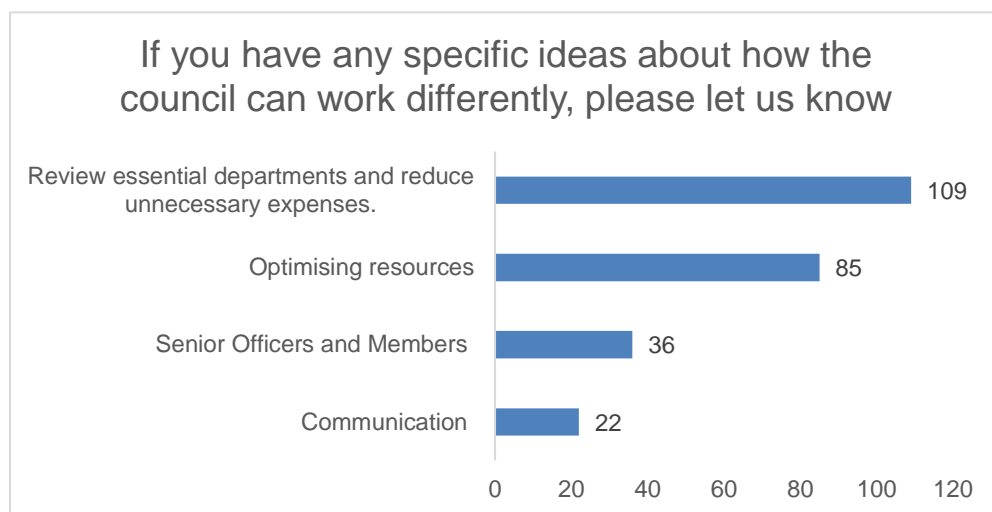
Other suggestions received were for the Council to go paper free in terms of their Council Tax billing, Citivision etc.

Theme	Comments
None	<i>No - already pay very high council tax and see little benefit from it - particularly disappointed at litter and state of pavements. I don't think I use any free services. I'm not sure of what services I use.</i>

	<i>No. I use very little and feel I am not getting value for money already</i>
Refuse	<i>£40 a year for garden waste seems low - however this may increase fly tipping Garden waste disposal is charged for in other areas. Regarding the Garden bin scheme, £40 per year is good value. Charging £40 per year for the 'normal' rubbish bin collection as well, I would be willing to do that too. I would pay to use the tip, up to £5 a time. I would pay for garden waste bin but it comes with some provisos 1. Could it lead to garden waste being dumped elsewhere (ditches, common land etc.) and 2. Could bins with a 'paid' sticker be stolen and used elsewhere.</i>
Parking	<i>Parking provided the funds raised went to council funds and not a third party- including parking at local parks I DO NOT agree with charging for first 2 hours to park at War Memorial Park Increase car park charges in line with inflation. I'd like to see more/stronger parking enforcement.</i>
School Bus	<i>I would pay more to keep the mainstream home to school bus routes I am already paying £330 per child for the school bus service. I would be willing to pay more to keep the service and remain in full time employment. would pay more for the subsidised school buses. to ensure my children get to School safely</i>
Godiva	<i>Godiva Festival - ticket prices should be increased. You could charge more for tickets for people who are not Coventry Council taxpayers Godiva festival - charge more in line with other festivals. It is a choice to attend as leisure activity.</i>
Street Lights	<i>I would advocate for most streetlights to be turned off at night. I like the idea of reducing lighting overnight as this will reduce the overall light pollution that the city is creating</i>
Council Tax	<i>I would not mind an increase in council tax if it was going on public services not on paying for early retirement and golden handshakes to people. I think it would be more efficient to increase council tax for everyone (with reductions for those on benefits/low wages etc) rather than administer complex charging systems for individual services.</i>
Libraries	<i>I would pay to use the public library but charge for that service would deter people on low incomes - could there be voluntary donations like in museums? I would be willing to pay more for library services - education is a help when you are trying to get back into work</i>
Pay for services	<i>I would be happy to pay for any service and pay moderate increased in line with inflation. I would not appreciate less of any service. It depends on one's financial circumstances. I would pay more for all services if I could afford them. If people cannot afford them, they should not have to pay.</i>
Other	<i>Council tax annual paperwork could be by email to save on postage if people opt for this. Happy to stop receiving City Vision - I can get update information on CCC webpage</i>

Council Working Differently

Respondents were asked “If you have any specific ideas about how the council can work differently, please let us know”. The graph below shows the comments received by theme.



Many suggestions were to review essential services, reduce unnecessary spending, reduce and improve staff performance.

Encouraging corporate social responsibility, using cost-cutting measures such as turning off streetlights, reducing the frequency of bin collections and minimising unnecessary maintenance, along with enforcing parking fines and car parking fees were all suggestions on how the council could work differently.

Reducing the number of councillors per ward and significant salary cuts for executive positions and councillors alongside a reduction on spending and excessive travel for those in senior positions were proposed by some respondents.

Other ways the council could work differently was through the accessibility of information, recognising that not everyone is digitally inclined. There was a desire amongst respondents to ensure that crucial information is disseminated both online and in print. Respondents welcomed more public consultation, highlighting the importance of asking residents about their needs and concerns.

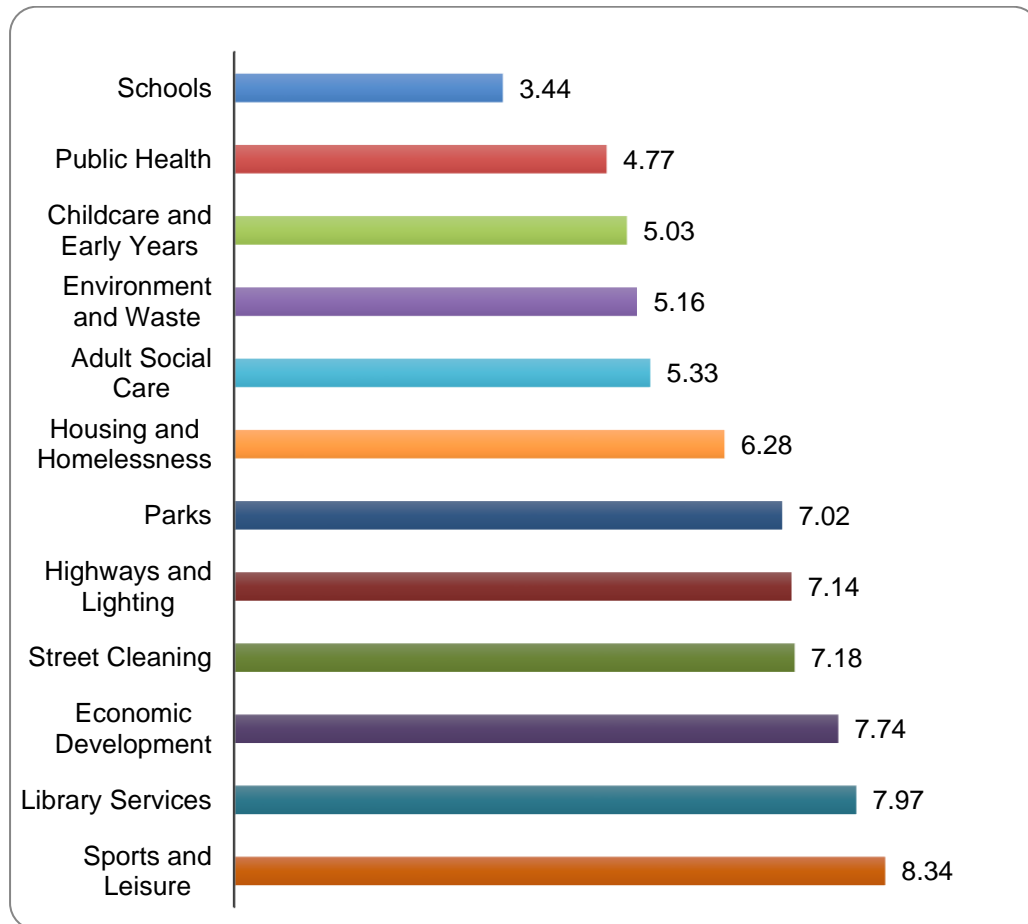
Theme	Comments
Review essential departments and reduce unnecessary expenses.	<p><i>Review what are essential departments and what are 'nice to have' departments. Encourage work from home to reduced business running costs.</i></p> <p><i>Higher standards for staff at all levels would reduce costs.</i></p> <p><i>Stop wasting money on pointless roadworks when there's more important fixes to be done. Rather than building barely used additions.</i></p> <p><i>Review the internal structure of how Coventry City Council operates, review where there are similar or duplicated roles within the structure.</i></p> <p><i>Conduct a time and motion analysis of how all staff spend their time to understand true productivity. Cost savings could be made through streamlining the internal departments and structures.</i></p>

<p>Optimising resources</p>	<p><i>Maybe ask local larger business to give back to the communities? i.e. contributing towards supporting homeless eat / low income families. What social value will they bring bar local jobs...</i></p> <p><i>Switch off the streetlights, cutback on unnecessary mowing during summer and stop cutting down trees altogether except when they actually cause an obstacle</i></p> <p><i>Investing more to generate income and save long term has to be a thoughtful long term solution. i.e. Coffee shops in libraries is a good idea and good use of space to generate income. They also encourage more footfall in those services and promote more use.</i></p> <p><i>More parking fines for reckless parking around schools.</i></p> <p><i>Find the money for school buses by removing other services.</i></p> <p><i>Change green lidded bin collections to once a month so people start recycling more. So many people in Coventry don't bother and dump all of their waste together in the green bins! I haven't even ever used my green bin!! London has a much stricter policy and hardly collects black bags.. Coventry should follow suit.</i></p>
<p>Senior officers and members</p>	<p><i>Reduce the number of Councillors per ward or just vote for all of them every 4 years instead of one each year for three years.</i></p> <p><i>Please have a look at positions within the Council top levels and have their salaries reviewed.</i></p> <p><i>Stop wasting money on corporate events, monies used on travel / mayor.</i></p> <p><i>Stop wasting money on those higher up and start using it as it should be for those who need it. Including bus service for children to keep them safe</i></p>
<p>Communication</p>	<p><i>Not everyone is digitally able, so may not see things on-line, print media is still important to some, yet the C E Telegraph tends to be mostly adverts now, and hard to find really news items. Decide how best to get information to all residents as the same time.</i></p> <p><i>ask residents what needs to change</i></p> <p><i>The council has not spoken to community groups about the impact this will have of children all over the city. More consultation is needed. Consultation, listening and responding ! Taking into account the feelings, ideas and needs of Coventry citizens.</i></p>

Prioritisation of Services

Respondents were asked to rank Council services in order of importance to themselves.

They were asked to rank them with 1 being their most preferred option and 12 their least preferred option. The smaller the number shows the most preferred option.



This is the first time this type of question has been asked and a number of respondents stated that they could not rank the services as they are all equally as important.

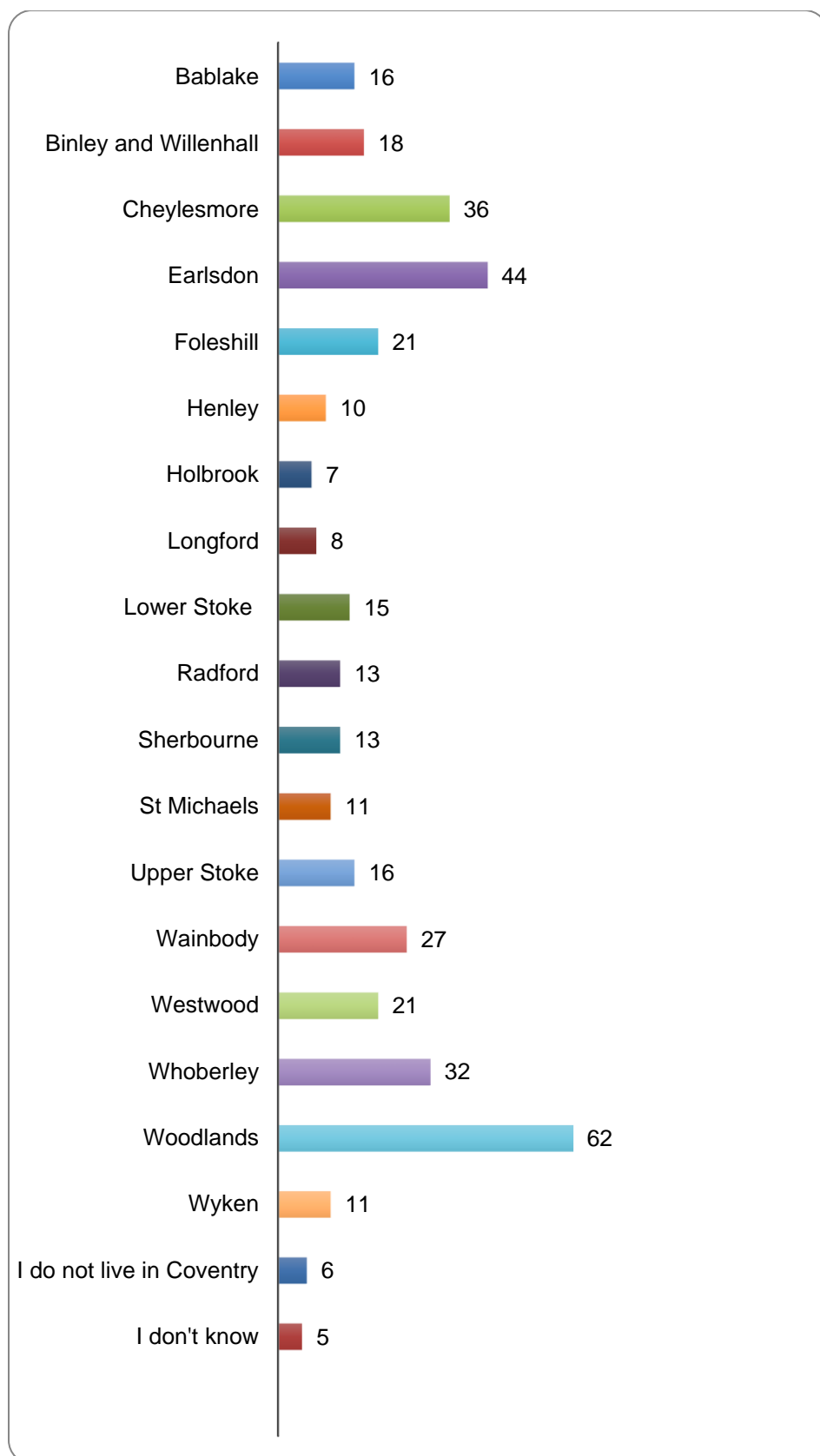
Any other Comments

Many of the comments received reiterated the points already raised within the Consultation. A number of respondents described difficulties with ranking services, one person said it was like picking a favourite child. Some suggested more engagement and opportunities to have a say earlier and in different formats.

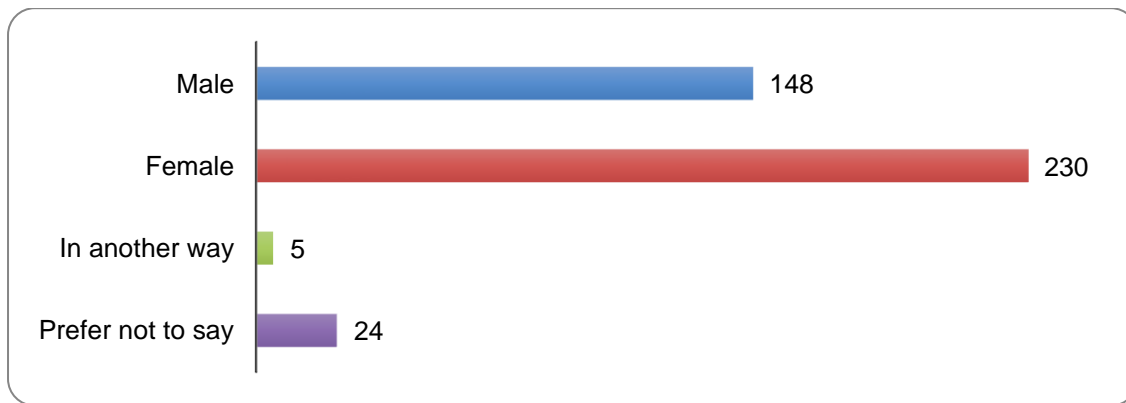
The political landscape was raised throughout the survey, as was the cost of living and an understanding by many that difficult decisions need to be made. The importance of equity and prioritisation of the most vulnerable, early years, and the elderly is evident throughout.

Profile of Survey Respondents

All charts show the number of respondents in each category



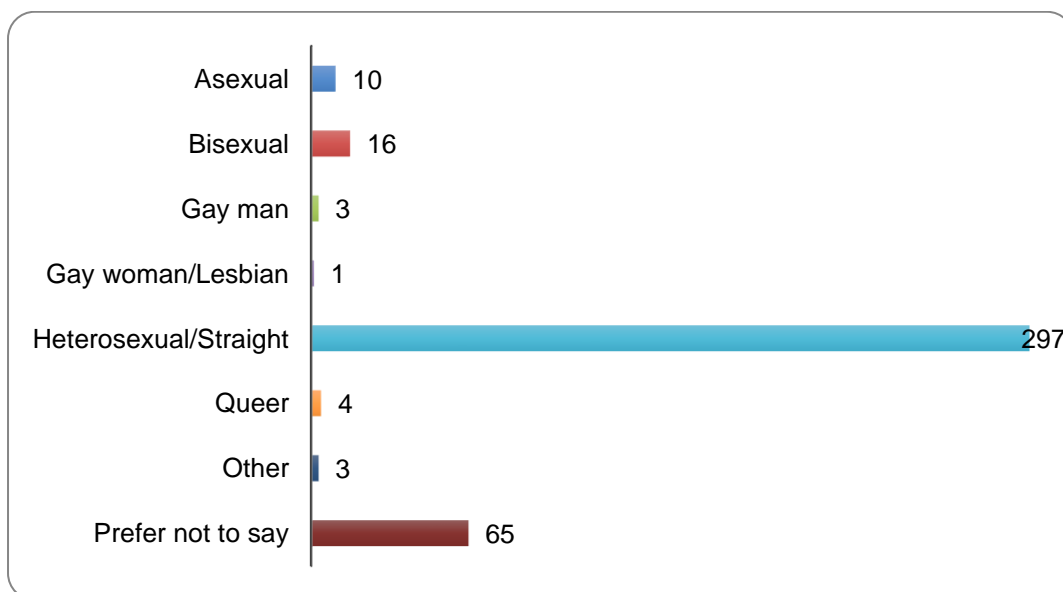
How would you describe yourself?



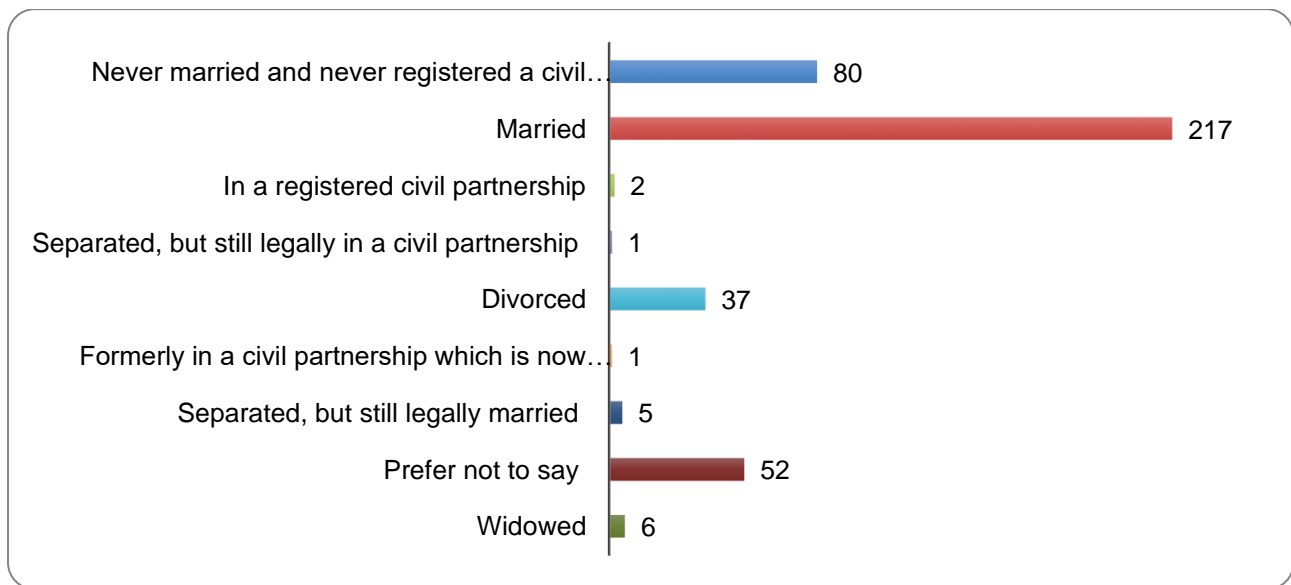
Is your gender different from the gender you were assigned at birth, or do you prefer not to say?



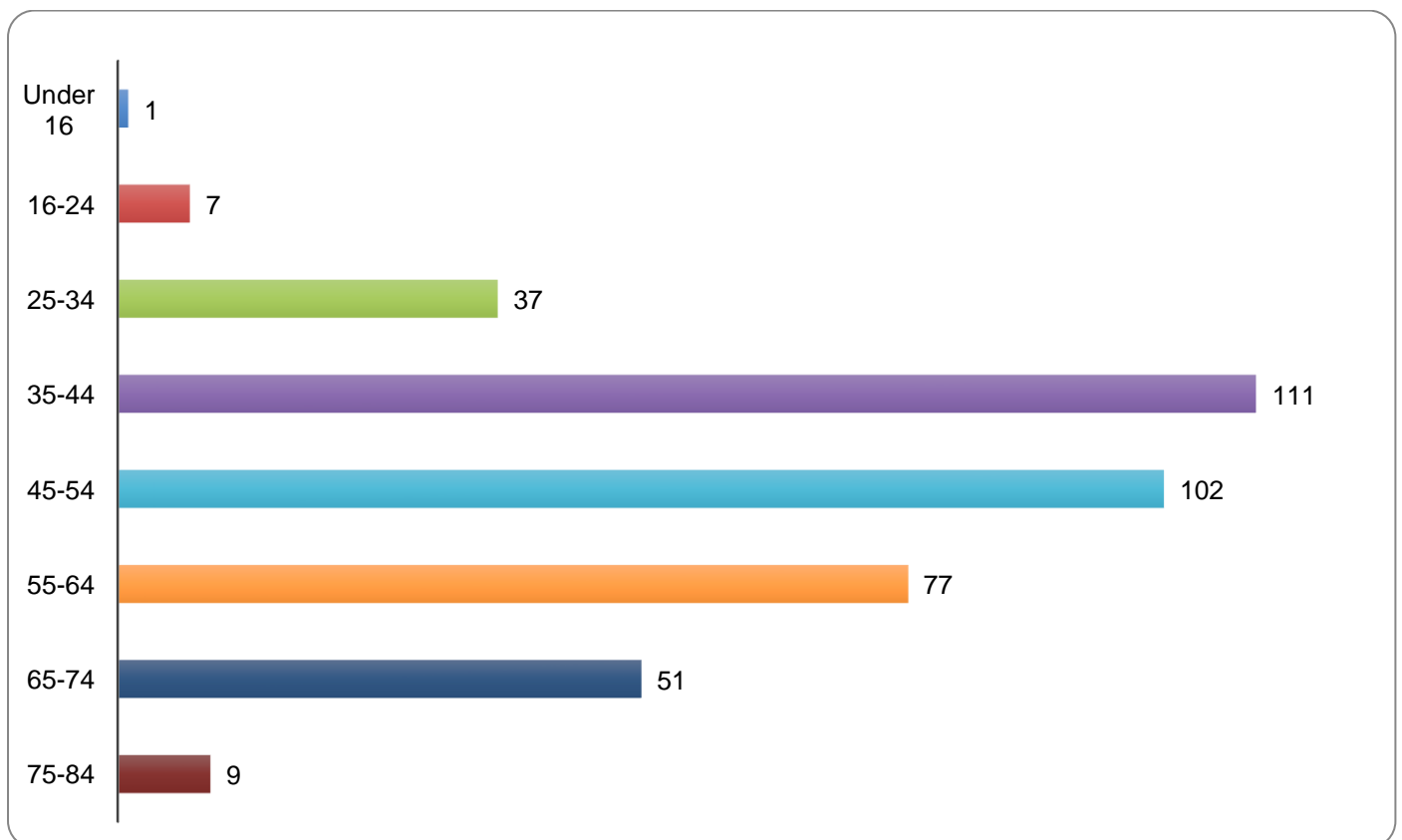
What is your sexuality?



What is your legal marital or civil partnership status?



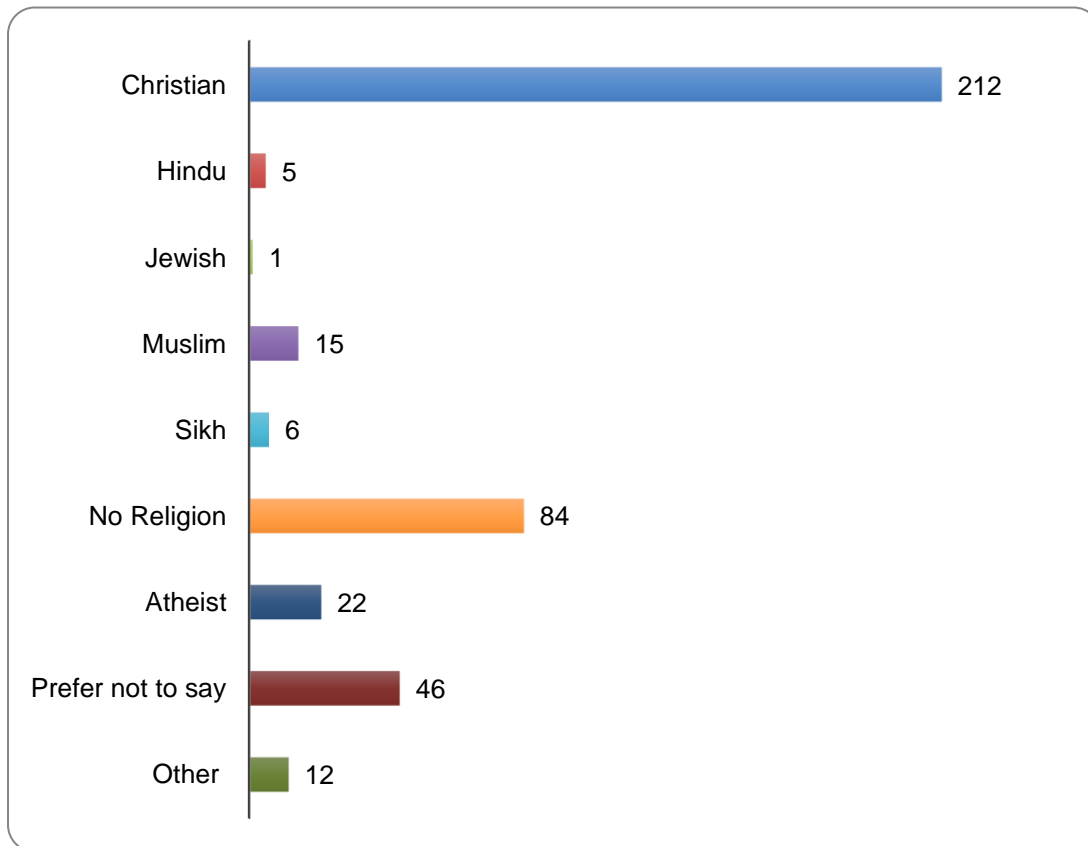
What age group are you in?



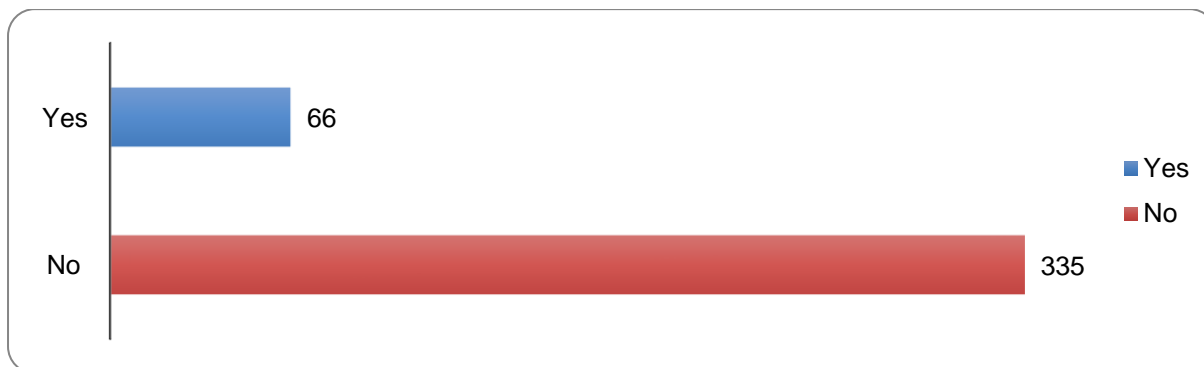
Which of the following best describes your ethnic background?



Do you consider yourself to be?



Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?



Do you, or a member of your immediate family, currently serve, or have previously served, in the armed forces?



Email Responses

21 responses were received, the majority of which were relating to the school bus service. Two were relating to car park charges, Memorial Park and City Centre.

Coventry TUC opposes the Council's budget proposals and criticises the Labour Council for cutting jobs and services, raising fees and charges, and increasing council tax by 5%. They argue that the Council's strategy of accepting the central government's financial constraints has failed to protect the city's services and communities. They oppose the cap on council tax benefits, the increase in charges for transport and care services, the switch-off of streetlights, and the review of Council-owned assets.

Zarah Sultana, MP urges the Council to find a way to continue the subsidised bus routes to Bishop Ullathorne School and Blue Coat School and believes it is vital that the Council maintains a maximum Council Tax Support (CTS) entitlement of 85%, as the proposed reduction to 75% will impact over 15,000 low-income households in Coventry and force them into debt. She acknowledges the challenges faced by the Council due to the funding cuts and the unfair local government funding formula imposed by the Conservatives.

Emails were received from Coventry Independent Advice Service, Central England Law Centre and Warwick Law in the Community all relating to Proposal 16 – One Coventry. These responses were given detailed consideration.

These consultation responses highlighted:

- Their opposition to potential cuts in funding for advice provision and the negative impact that they perceive this would have on the most vulnerable groups at a time when people are still struggling with:
 - The Cost-of-living crisis,
 - Poor, or lack of, housing
 - Universal Credit migration,
 - Digital exclusion,
 - Poverty and
 - Fuel poverty.
- The value of independent advice provision in supporting residents who engage with voluntary sector partners and who do not come into contact with council services and/or residents who are from hard-to-reach groups.
- That any future model of delivery for advice services needs to focus on the most vulnerable residents irrespective of whether residents approach the council or other partner agencies.
- Importance of face-to-face service delivery to support the most vulnerable residents.
- The additional funding that the advice sector brings to the city, either from other funding arrangements and/or by helping residents to increase their income.
- The importance of core funding from the Council and how this supports the advice sector to attract other sources of funding.
- Specific comments were raised in relation to the Equality Impact Assessment, which has been updated to reflect, as appropriate, the comments received, including those relating to:
 - Use of the most appropriate data sources including local and national research to assess any potential equality impacts.
 - The need to ensure that further data analysis makes use of comparable data.
 - The need to ensure that equalities monitoring data is fully captured at the right point of contact and/or reflects instances where this isn't captured.

Comments to Consultation Response

The review and redesign of the Council's advice provision along with the Equality Impact Assessment will continue to be developed and updated as the work progresses around the most appropriate future delivery model. Any appropriate governance needed will be put in place following the completion of the review and prior to the implementation.

All comments have been incorporated into our theming of open-ended responses.

Feedback from Consultation Meetings with Local Residents

Two sessions were held on January 24 and February 1, one face to face and one online session. 41 people registered to attend. The sessions involved discussion on the challenges and opportunities of managing the council's finances in the face of funding cuts, rising demand, and changing needs.

Questions raised, covered include council housing, homelessness, council tax, green waste, taxi licensing, school buses and public assets: The participants expressed their views and opinions on various aspects of the council's services and policies, such as whether to pay landlords or provide their own homelessness accommodation, whether to charge for green waste collection, whether to lobby for re-establishing council housing, and whether to use reserves or sell assets.

They also questioned the role of the council in the LGA, the status of the university and business rates, and collection of council tax. The lack of recently published accounts was raised.

Feedback from Engagement Sessions with Council Workforce

Two sessions were held on January 10 and 23. Thirty-nine employees registered to attend.

The questions covered topics such as the council's role as a tariff authority, the funding formula, the possibility of issuing a section 114, the details of proposal #16, the LGA's actions, the impact of student housing, fly tipping fines, ulez charge, energy costs, central government change, and raising money through more use of school car cameras.

Feedback from Engagement Session with Coventry Chamber of Commerce

A meeting was held with the Chamber of Commerce on 2 February 2024 to understand the views of local businesses on the Council's budget proposals.

Questions were asked on what proportion of the Council revenue is from collection of Council Tax and if Coventry is looking to promote itself as an "energy cluster". Issues raised were on the pressures on the education system, city centre occupancy rates and what incentives could be offered to encourage occupancy and the lack of flexible workspace for micro businesses in the city centre.

The Chamber were supportive of our approach and offered to be used as a network to aid lobbying of central government. They are also keen to partner with the Council to promote the city.

Petitions

On 5th February 2024, the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources heard three petitions that had been submitted in relation to the budget setting proposals for 2024/25 to 2026/27. In line with the Council's Petition Scheme, the Petition Organisers and Councillor Sponsor had been invited to attend the meeting to outline their concerns to the Cabinet Member. The comments and issues raised would be considered as part of the consultation process for the Budget Setting proposals for 2024/25 which would be considered by Cabinet and Council at their meetings on 20th February 2024.

Details of the three petitions and the issues raised are presented within Appendix 4 to the 2024/25 Budget Report.