

# YOUR SAY ON HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL'S BUDGET FOR 2021/2022: KEY FINDINGS

Version 1.1

Herefordshire Council Intelligence Unit

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# The consultation

The formal public consultation on Herefordshire Council's budget for 2021/22 was carried out using an online questionnaire published on the council's website from 18 December 2020 to 10 January 2021. There were two separate sets of questions: one for residents and one for businesses and organisations, although several questions were common to both. The consultation was promoted via the council's social media channels, and email invitations were also sent out to Herefordshire businesses/organisations to complete the survey online.

A total of 265 responses were received to the resident's questionnaire, a similar response to last year. There was an equal split of male and female respondents. The age profile shows a slight under representation of working age (16-64 years) respondents and a marked bias from residents from Council Tax band D – H was also observed.

There were 33 responses to the organisational questionnaire: 29 local businesses and 4 voluntary or community sector organisations, compared to only three responses from organisations last year. Note that because the number of responses to the organisational survey is small, it is not appropriate to present the results as percentages. It's also difficult to draw conclusions from such a small number of responses.

This summary is structured around the residents' survey, and the responses to the organisational survey are included at the relevant points. They are marked with this symbol:



## Results

### Satisfaction with council services (Q1)

The first section of the questionnaire asked about satisfaction with services that Herefordshire Council provides. Different services were listed for residents and for businesses/organisations, and respondents were asked to consider services that they have used themselves in the last year.

The graph (figure 1) below is ordered by the number of people who gave an opinion<sup>[1]</sup> on the service, with the most used services at the top. It shows three broad groupings of services in terms of usage.

Note that the percentages quoted in the text below are calculated out of only those people who had used the service, so don't match those on the chart (which shows the proportions of all respondents, to illustrate the wide variation in usage).

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<sup>[1]</sup> i.e. respondents who said that they used the services, and excluding those who answered 'don't know'.

Overall, there were five services for which at least half of users who gave an opinion<sup>1</sup> said they were satisfied with: waste and recycling (75%), schools (61%), parks and open spaces (58%), care for older people (58%), and public health (50%).

- Four services stand out as being used by most, and within these there is a clear distinction in satisfaction levels between 'waste and recycling' (75% of users satisfied/very satisfied) and 'parks and open space' (58%), compared to 'highways and roads' (19%).
- Amongst the lesser used services, satisfaction with services for older people is high (58% of users) – but less so for children's social services (31%) and care for physically disabled and those with learning difficulties (44%).
- Satisfaction was lowest for housing advice services but it should be noted that this was the least used service and had the highest proportion of don't knows.

Dissatisfaction was markedly higher for highways and roads than any other service (72%), followed by three other services where dissatisfaction was higher than 40%: local bus services (47%), planning (45%) and car parking (42%).

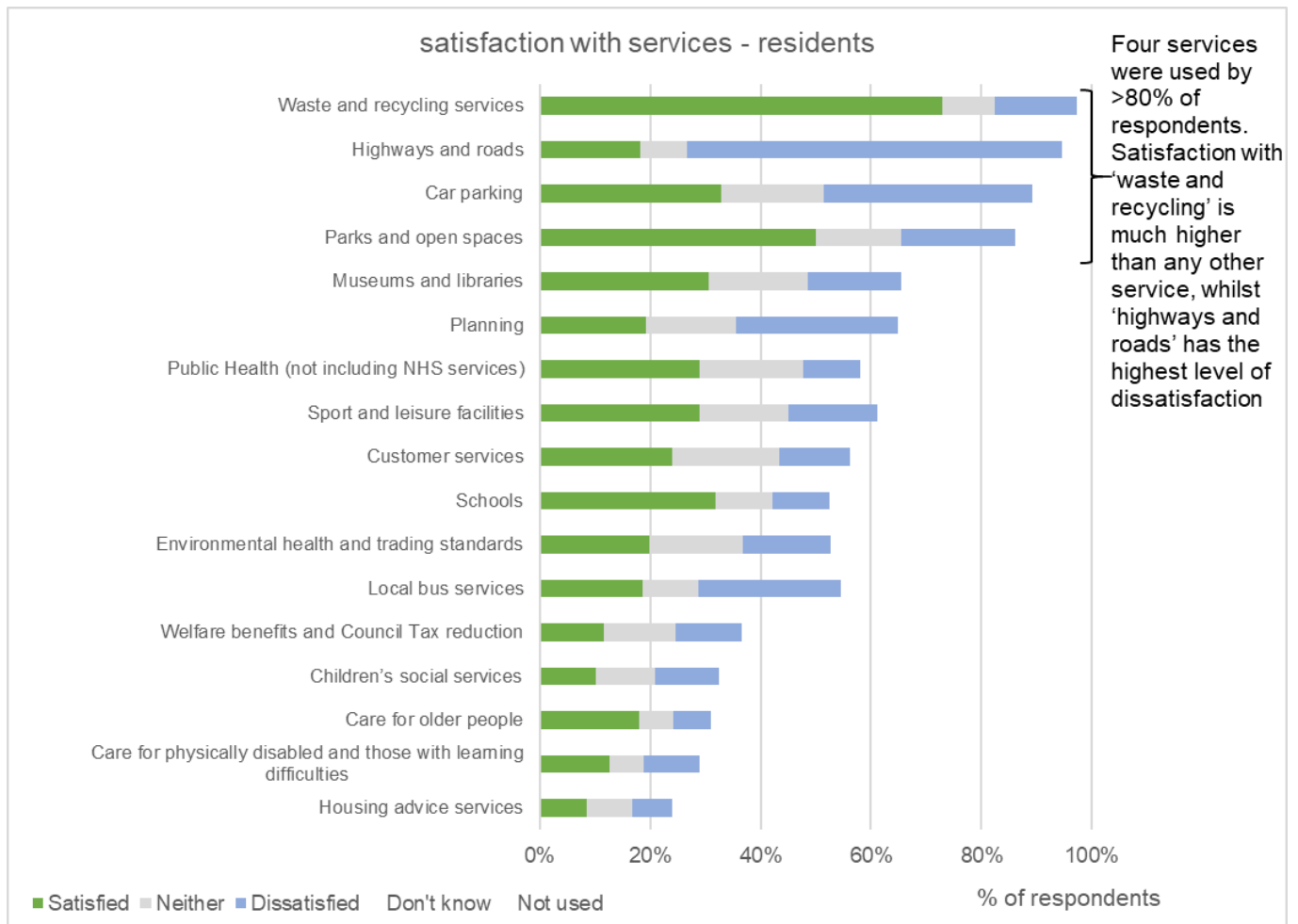


There appeared to be a broadly similar pattern in terms of the services with the highest and lowest satisfaction levels. Two services had been used by more organisations than the rest, and of these there was a strong level of dissatisfaction with 'maintenance of roads, footpaths and cycle paths', whilst the majority were satisfied with 'street cleansing and lighting'.



Organisational users of the services who gave an opinion were also relatively satisfied with 'health and safety', 'business support resource' and 'commercial waste'. Conversely, the other services with the highest levels of dissatisfaction amongst organisational users were 'sustainable transport', 'parking', 'planning' and 'contracts and tenders'.

Figure 1: Residents' satisfaction with council services (ordered by usage)



Four services were used by >80% of respondents. Satisfaction with 'waste and recycling' is much higher than any other service, whilst 'highways and roads' has the highest level of dissatisfaction

## The council's budget and savings programme (Q2 to Q6)

This section asked for views on the council's proposed plan of savings for the next year and for the next 5-10 years. Also respondents were asked to select their three highest priorities of investments which form the County Plan commitments. The questions in this section were common for both residents and organisations.

### Proposed savings by directorate (Q2 & Q3)

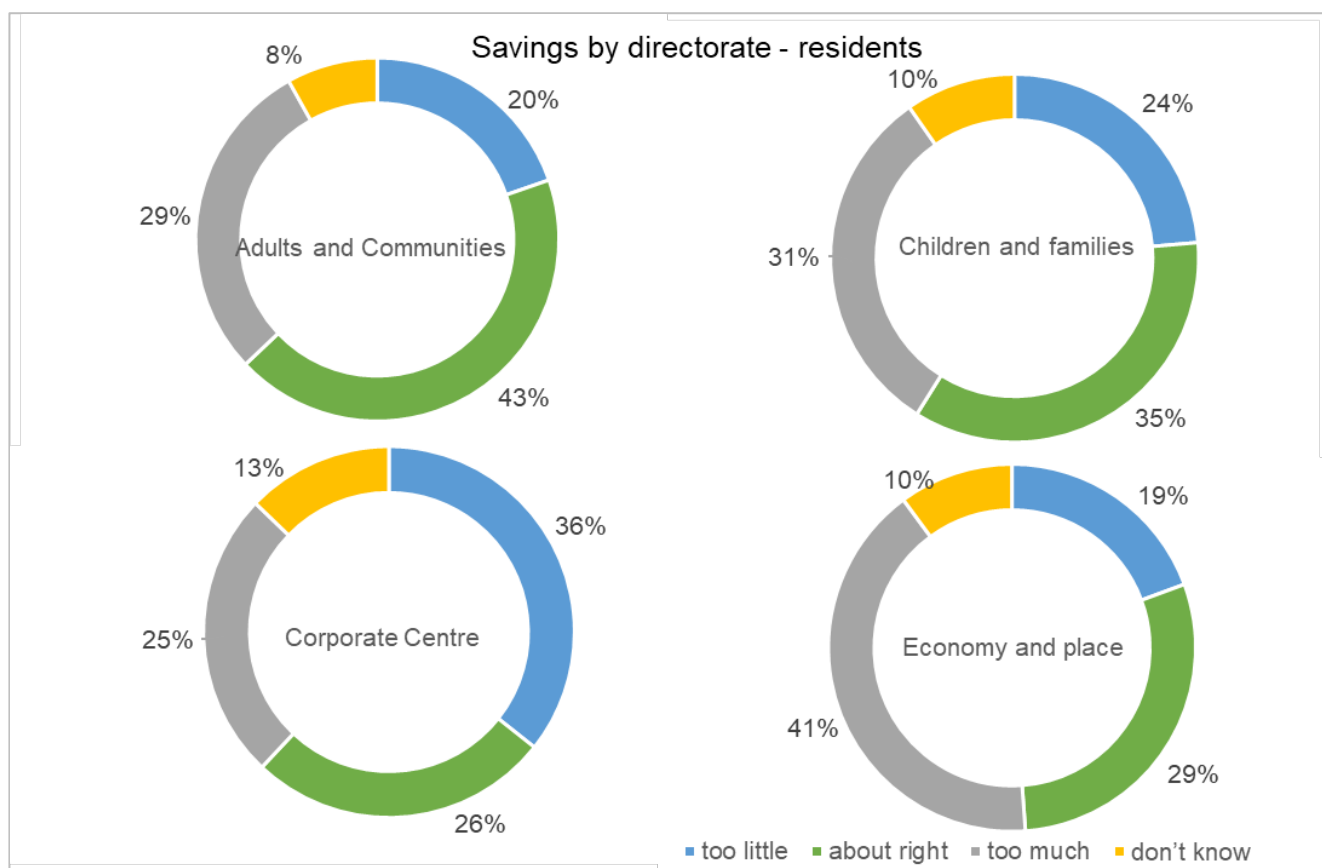
See figure 2: in summary, residents indicated that the proposed savings for:

- Adults and Communities were 'about right' (43% of respondents)
- Children and Families are either 'about right' (35%) or 'too much' (31%)
- Economy and Place are 'too much' (41%)
- Corporate centre aren't enough (36%)



Responses to the organisation survey were broadly similar, although the most common response for Economy and Place was that the level of savings was 'about right'.

Figure 2: Opinion of the proposed amount of savings by directorate



Around 100 residents provided a comment on the proposed savings by directorate. The most common theme (about one third of comments) were complaints about the council’s performance and service, including being inefficient and not providing value for money. On the other hand, the next most common theme (about a fifth) expressed concern about the size of the proposed cuts and the impact that they may have on services.

### Impact of previous savings reductions (Q4)

Of the 119 comments answering this question, three common themes emerged:

- Almost half mentioned transport infrastructure – for example the state of the roads, or complaints about the bypass not being built.
- Another common theme was about the running of the council – for example not providing value for money / wasting resources / being badly run.
- Conversely, a number of comments raised concern about the impact of previous and future savings on services for children, families and vulnerable people.

## Ways to make services more affordable to run (Q5)

Figure 3 shows the options given in order of the number of resident respondents who said they strongly agreed or tended to agree. Two stood out as being most favoured:

- making more efficient use of council assets such as land and buildings (88%)
- changing working practices to make better use of technology and more efficient ways of working (87%)

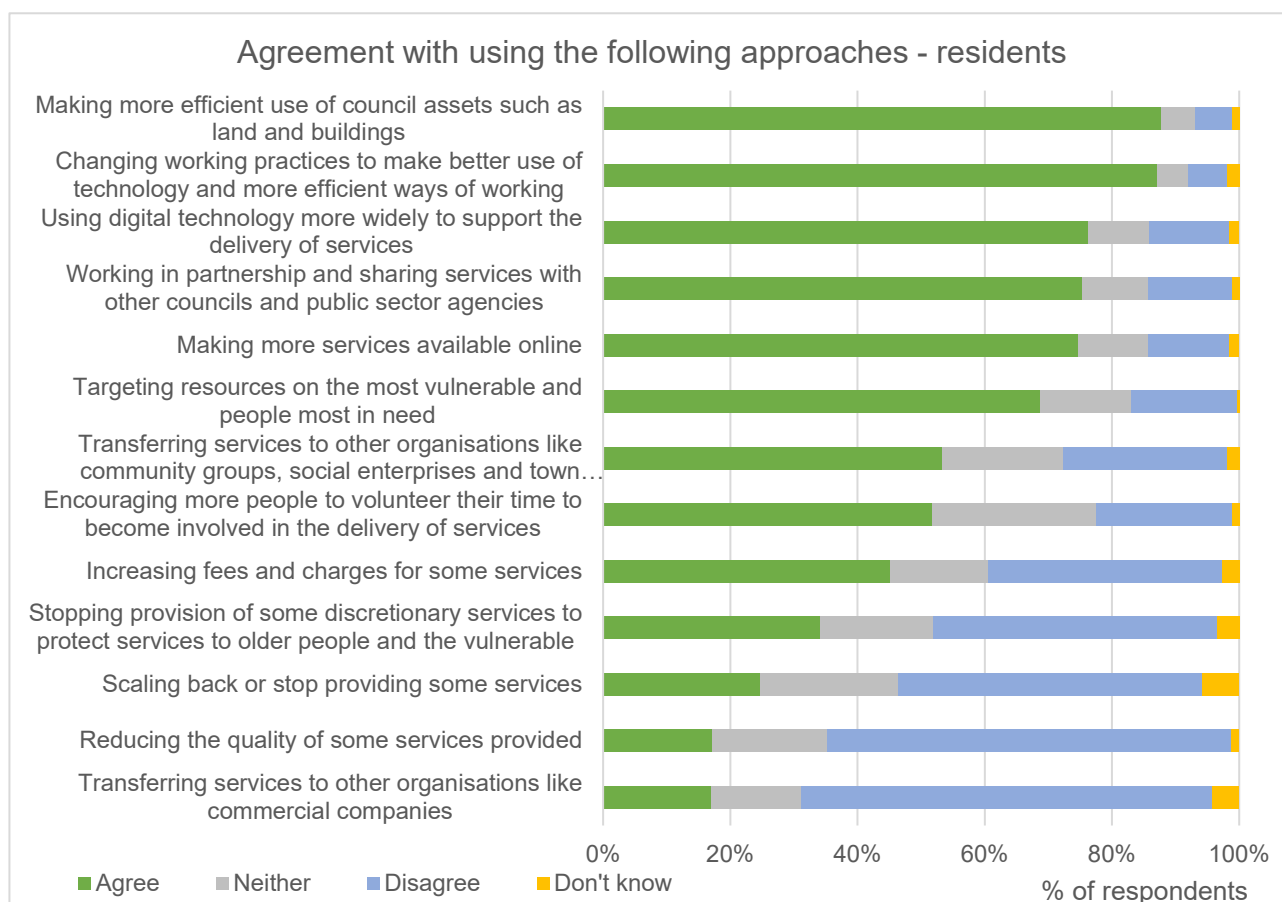
Those with the highest levels of disapproval were:

- transferring services to other organisations like commercial companies (65% strongly/tend to disagree)
- reducing the quality of some services provided (64%).



Organisation responses were broadly similar with regard to the most and least favoured, with just a slight variation in the order.

Figure 3: Degree of support for different options for savings (ordered by level of agreement)



## Highest priorities for investment (Q6)

This question asked respondents to rank their top three priorities from the list in figure 4. The results are based on a weighted average of those responses.

There were three clear priorities for respondents to the residents' survey:

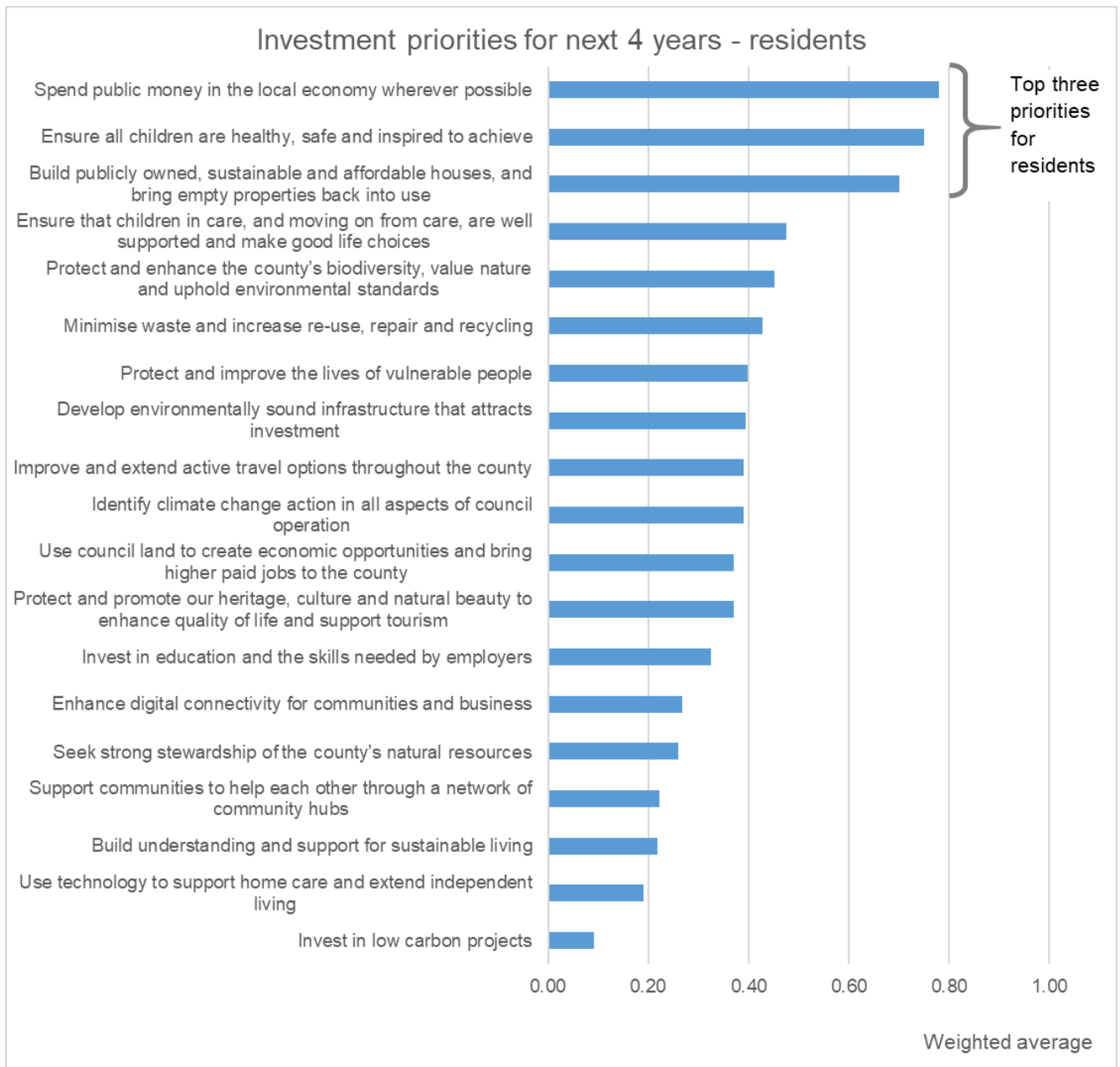
- Spend public money in the local economy wherever possible
- Ensure all children are healthy, safe and inspired to achieve
- Build publicly owned, sustainable and affordable houses

In respect of organisational responses, although numbers were again too small to draw meaningful conclusions, two priorities did stand out from the rest: Spend public money in the local economy wherever possible and Build publicly owned, sustainable and affordable houses.

Investment in low carbon projects was the lowest priority for both residents and organisations, but it should be noted that this priority would be implicit in some of the other, higher priority choices.



Figure 4: Investment priorities order by weighted score – residents



## **Council Tax and social care precept (Q7 & Q8)**

In this section, residents were asked about their preference on the level of Council Tax increase that the council should consider for 2021/22: increase Council Tax by 4.99%, or by 3.99%. A further question asked about support for a larger increase if the government were to allow it.

- 71% of respondents supported an increase of either 3.99% or 4.99%, with notably more in favour of the higher increase (41%). There wasn't an option of a lower increase, but 27% of respondents said that they preferred neither option.
- If the government were to relax the current thresholds and allow a bigger increase, a clear majority of respondents (65%) were opposed to the council increasing Council Tax by more than 4.99%.

## **Potential schemes to support vulnerable residents (Q9 to Q12)**

Residents were asked if they would be prepared to pay more Council Tax to help households on low incomes. They were also asked if they would support a voluntary scheme that would allow them to contribute towards community schemes, for example to help create the best start in life for children and young people.

- Whilst 41% of respondents indicated that they would be willing to pay more Council Tax if the increase was used to help households on low incomes, 59% said they wouldn't.
- A majority (61%) would support a Herefordshire Community Contribution Scheme, with respondents almost equally divided as to whether they would consider making a contribution to such a scheme: 51% yes, 49% no. A large majority of residents who indicated that they would support the scheme would also consider making a contribution (79%).
- The majority of people who would be prepared to pay more Council Tax to support households on low incomes would also support a Community Contribution Scheme, and would consider paying into it (69%). However, it is also interesting to note that a significant proportion of people who were not willing to pay more Council Tax towards helping people on low incomes, would consider paying into a community contribution scheme (49% of 156 people).

Of the 103 people who indicated they would not be prepared to contribute and also provided a comment, over half expressed a view that they didn't feel it was for them to be making these kinds of contributions. For example, they thought that it should be left to individual charities or the government, or that they could not afford to contribute. The next biggest theme (about a third) was that they were not confident that the council would spend the money wisely.

Notably, almost one third of those who would be prepared to contribute raised trust issues, raising concerns around whether the council would spend the money appropriately or as the contributor intended. A third also indicated that they would want some kind of control or choice as to how the money was used, or reassurance that it would only be used for purposes they approved of. More

positively, over half the people who said they would contribute felt it was their responsibility, or moral duty to make such a contribution.

## **General comments about the budget and council savings plan (Q13)**

The most common themes amongst the 144 answers to this question were:

- 69 respondents expressed dissatisfaction with or mistrust of the council.
- 29 indicated that they either can't afford any more increases in Council Tax, raised concerns about the size of the proposed increases or thought more funding should come from central government.
- 24 respondents thought the council should be doing more to support the most vulnerable and/or the environment.

## **Local area and the council (Q14 to Q20)**

The final section asked about respondents' views of the council generally and their local area.

### **Satisfaction with local area (Q14 to Q16)**

- Over three quarters of residents (76%) were satisfied (fairly or very) with their local area as a place to live.
- However, almost half (46%) felt that Herefordshire has become a worse place to live in the past two years; 36% thought it was the same and 15% that it has become a better place.

Of the 33 comments from people who thought things had got better, most were positive comments about the council and/or the new administration.

Amongst the people who thought things had got worse, three main themes emerged:

- Complaints about the state of the roads, congestion, the bypass cancellation or parking issues (67 comments).
- Dissatisfaction with the way the council has been running things (53).
- Comments about a worsening of the environment in its widest sense – a view that the county has become more run-down, for example concerns about empty shops, litter, lack of facilities, crime or anti-social behaviour.

### **General opinions of the council (Q17 to Q20)**

- Responses were fairly evenly split about the way the council runs things: 43% dissatisfied and 41% satisfied. However, of those who were dissatisfied, almost half (20% of total) were very dissatisfied, whereas 6% of respondents were very satisfied.
- 23% of residents agreed that the council provides value for money whereas 50% thought that it doesn't, half of whom strongly disagreed.
- There was a strong association between satisfaction and perceived value for money, almost a fifth of people who were fairly satisfied with the way the council runs things tended to

disagree that it provides value for money.



The organisational response to both questions was broadly similar, but slightly more positive with regard to perceived value for money (about a third agreeing).

Responses to the questions about communication and influencing decisions are shown in figure 5 (Residents):

- A fairly significant minority (42%) agreed that the council keeps them informed.
- There was an equal split on being kept informed about proposals for change (40% agreed, 39% disagreed).
- However, there was much less agreement about being able to influence decisions affecting their local area; 20% agreed and 63% disagreed.



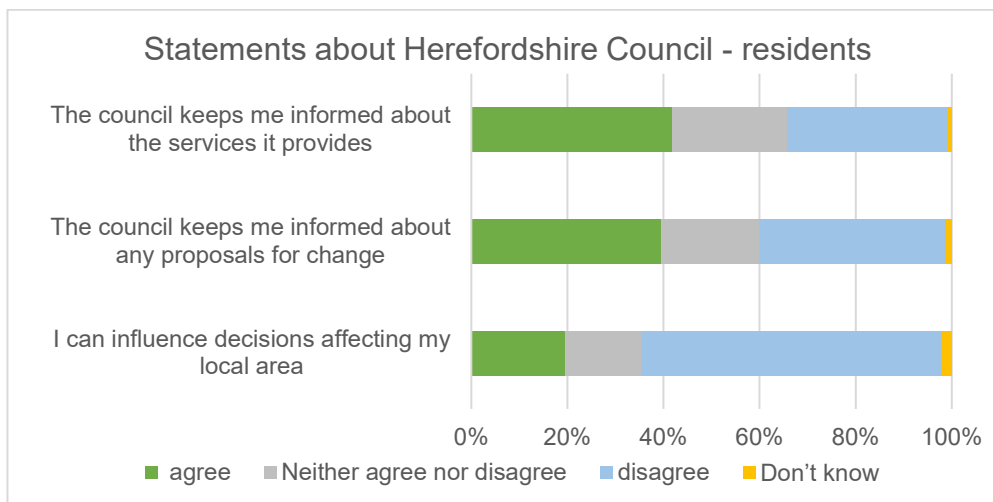
Organisations tended to disagree to a greater extent than residents with all three of these statements.

- The majority (69%) of respondents felt that the council doesn't act on the concerns of local residents with a quarter thinking it doesn't at all. A third of respondents believed it does.



Organisations shared a similar view.

Figure 5: Communication and influencing decisions



## **Appendix 1: Top line report**

## **Your say on Herefordshire Council's budget and tax for 2021/2022 - Topline report**

**The following results are from 265 respondents for the residents questionnaire and 33 for the business / organisations questionnaire.**

**The percentages are based on respondents to each question/statement.**

## Residents questionnaire

Herefordshire Council is responsible for a range of services in your local area, such as refuse collection, education, social care services and road maintenance. The Council Tax paid by residents currently makes up 35% of the council's budget for these services, so we're keen to get your views on how we can make the best use of our budget and give you even better value for money.

### What do you think of our services?

Q1 In considering the following questions, please think about the range of services Herefordshire Council provides to the community as a whole, as well as the services your household uses.

Thinking about services you have used in the last year, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with each of the following services provided or supported by Herefordshire Council?

	Not used	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Don't know
Care for older people	143 (55%)	12 (5%)	35 (13%)	16 (6%)	15 (6%)	3 (1%)	37 (14%)
Care for physically disabled and those with learning difficulties	143 (55%)	9 (3%)	24 (9%)	16 (6%)	18 (7%)	8 (3%)	42 (16%)
Children's social services	138 (53%)	10 (4%)	16 (6%)	28 (11%)	19 (7%)	11 (4%)	37 (14%)
Customer services	89 (35%)	16 (6%)	44 (18%)	49 (20%)	18 (7%)	14 (6%)	21 (8%)
Environmental health and trading standards	97 (38%)	23 (9%)	28 (11%)	44 (17%)	28 (11%)	13 (5%)	25 (10%)
Housing advice services	145 (56%)	10 (4%)	12 (5%)	21 (8%)	10 (4%)	9 (3%)	51 (20%)
Highways and roads	8 (3%)	11 (4%)	36 (14%)	22 (8%)	77 (30%)	99 (38%)	6 (2%)
Museums and libraries	71 (28%)	33 (13%)	46 (18%)	46 (18%)	27 (10%)	17 (7%)	18 (7%)
Local bus services	104 (40%)	9 (4%)	39 (15%)	26 (10%)	29 (11%)	37 (14%)	13 (5%)
Parks and open spaces	31 (12%)	35 (14%)	94 (36%)	40 (16%)	36 (14%)	17 (7%)	5 (2%)
Planning	74 (29%)	11 (4%)	38 (15%)	42 (16%)	31 (12%)	44 (17%)	16 (6%)
Public Health (not including NHS services)	81 (31%)	25 (10%)	50 (19%)	49 (19%)	16 (6%)	11 (4%)	28 (11%)
Schools	97 (37%)	30 (11%)	53 (20%)	27 (10%)	17 (7%)	10 (4%)	27 (10%)
Sport and leisure facilities	82 (32%)	24 (9%)	50 (20%)	41 (16%)	21 (8%)	20 (8%)	17 (7%)
Waste and recycling services	5 (2%)	113 (43%)	78 (30%)	25 (10%)	24 (9%)	15 (6%)	2 (1%)
Welfare benefits and Council Tax reduction	128 (50%)	11 (4%)	19 (7%)	33 (13%)	11 (4%)	20 (8%)	35 (14%)
Car parking	19 (7%)	23 (9%)	62 (24%)	48 (19%)	41 (16%)	57 (22%)	9 (3%)

# The Council Transformation and Savings Programme

All councils continue to experience constraints on spending, alongside increasing demand for some of their services. To balance the books, councils must continue to review what they do and how they do it.

Additionally, there is currently uncertainty over the amount of funding we will have in future and levels of funding from the government have yet to be confirmed, and the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has made it hard to be sure how much funding we will receive.

However, Herefordshire Council has a successful track record of delivering savings and has already delivered substantial savings of £90 million. Through early planning and carrying out a range of efficiency measures, the council has protected frontline services and minimised the impact of spending reductions.

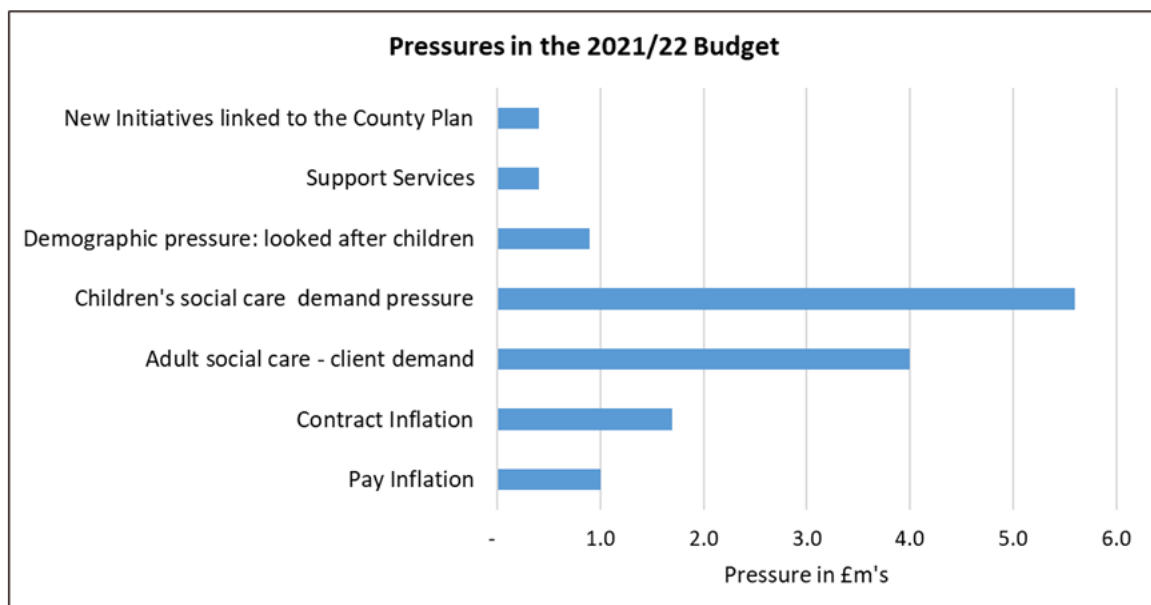
To reduce the continually increasing gap between our available resources and our expenditure, we will need to make further reductions in spending. Whilst the value and timing of such cost reductions is predicated on the level of financial support provided by central government and the impact of Covid-19 on the council's finances and demand for our services, the council is looking to make preparations for areas where cost reductions may need to be made. Current indications are that savings of up to £16m are required in 2021/22.

Savings of this level would involve continued changes to our role and the services we provide and we will continue to review our priorities, as shown in the County Plan summary, to make sure our more limited resources are focused on our 'core' activities.

## The next year

Meeting our proposed plan of continued savings would require finding potential savings of up to £16 million in 2021/22.

The main source of these financial pressures, driven by coronavirus and coronavirus legacy issues, are shown in the diagram below:





Q2 Looking at the information in the consultation document, how do you feel about the proposed amount of savings by directorate? Summary of what directorates do.

	Far too little	Too little	About right	Too much	Far too much	Don't know
Adults and Communities Up to £5m or 5.2% of directorate budget	17 (7%)	34 (13%)	112 (43%)	57 (22%)	18 (7%)	21 (8%)
Children and Families Up to £2.9m or 7.9% of directorate budget	18 (7%)	43 (17%)	91 (35%)	59 (23%)	22 (9%)	25 (10%)
Economy and Place Up to £6.71m or 13.5% of directorate budget	14 (5%)	36 (14%)	76 (29%)	67 (26%)	39 (15%)	26 (10%)
Corporate Centre Up to £1.49m or 7.9% of budget	31 (12%)	61 (24%)	68 (26%)	35 (14%)	30 (12%)	33 (13%)

Q3 If you have any comments on the proposed savings please let us know:

104 comments

Q4 To help us plan for the future, please tell us what impact, if any, the council's previous reductions in spending have had on you, your local community, or the services you receive? Please be as specific as possible.

119 comments

Q5 In the next 5 to 10 years, the council will continue to find ways to make services more affordable to run. How strongly do you agree or disagree with using the following approaches?

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree or disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Targeting resources on the most vulnerable and people most in need	70 (27%)	108 (42%)	37 (14%)	26 (10%)	17 (7%)	1 (0%)
Reducing the quality of some services provided	12 (5%)	32 (13%)	46 (18%)	92 (36%)	71 (28%)	3 (1%)
Increasing fees and charges for some services	24 (9%)	93 (36%)	40 (15%)	50 (19%)	45 (17%)	7 (3%)
Making more services available online	87 (34%)	105 (41%)	28 (11%)	22 (9%)	11 (4%)	4 (2%)
Using digital technology more widely to support the delivery of services	86 (33%)	114 (44%)	25 (10%)	21 (8%)	12 (5%)	4 (2%)
Making more efficient use of council assets such as land and buildings	142 (54%)	87 (33%)	14 (5%)	10 (4%)	5 (2%)	3 (1%)
Scaling back or stop providing some services	27 (10%)	37 (14%)	56 (22%)	75 (29%)	49 (19%)	15 (6%)
Stopping provision of some discretionary services to protect services to older people and the vulnerable	25 (10%)	63 (24%)	46 (18%)	77 (30%)	38 (15%)	9 (3%)
Changing working practices to make better use of technology and more efficient ways of working	134 (51%)	95 (36%)	13 (5%)	9 (3%)	7 (3%)	5 (2%)
Working in partnership and sharing services with other councils and public sector agencies	88 (34%)	108 (42%)	27 (10%)	18 (7%)	16 (6%)	3 (1%)
Transferring services to other organisations like commercial companies	22 (8%)	22 (8%)	37 (14%)	63 (24%)	105 (40%)	11 (4%)
Transferring services to other organisations like community groups, social enterprises and town and parish councils	44 (17%)	95 (36%)	50 (19%)	42 (16%)	25 (10%)	5 (2%)
Encouraging more people to volunteer their time to become involved in the delivery of services	40 (15%)	96 (37%)	68 (26%)	35 (13%)	21 (8%)	3 (1%)

Q6 Which of the following County Plan commitments would you say are the three highest priorities for investment over the next 4 years? (Please select only three). Please ignore the % for this question, it is analysed differently in the final report.

	Highest priority	Second priority	Third priority
Minimise waste and increase re-use, repair and recycling	17 (29%)	20 (34%)	21 (36%)
Improve and extend active travel options throughout the county	21 (43%)	11 (22%)	17 (35%)
Build understanding and support for sustainable living	11 (39%)	7 (25%)	10 (36%)
Invest in low carbon projects	6 (27%)	12 (55%)	4 (18%)
Identify climate change action in all aspects of council operation	24 (55%)	10 (23%)	10 (23%)
Seek strong stewardship of the county's natural resources	14 (47%)	10 (33%)	6 (20%)
Protect and enhance the county's biodiversity, value nature and uphold environmental standards	21 (39%)	22 (41%)	11 (20%)
Ensure all children are healthy, safe and inspired to achieve	47 (59%)	22 (28%)	11 (14%)
Ensure that children in care, and moving on from care, are well supported and make good life choices	23 (40%)	21 (37%)	13 (23%)
Build publicly owned, sustainable and affordable houses, and bring empty properties back into use	29 (31%)	32 (34%)	32 (34%)
Protect and improve the lives of vulnerable people	18 (34%)	15 (28%)	20 (38%)
Use technology to support home care and extend independent living	6 (22%)	11 (41%)	10 (37%)
Support communities to help each other through a network of community hubs	6 (19%)	14 (44%)	12 (38%)
Develop environmentally sound infrastructure that attracts investment	18 (34%)	14 (26%)	21 (40%)
Use council land to create economic opportunities and bring higher paid jobs to the county	13 (27%)	23 (48%)	12 (25%)
Invest in education and the skills needed by employers	14 (32%)	13 (30%)	17 (39%)
Enhance digital connectivity for communities and business	11 (33%)	15 (45%)	7 (21%)
Protect and promote our heritage, culture and natural beauty to enhance quality of life and support tourism	15 (29%)	16 (31%)	20 (39%)
Spend public money in the local economy wherever possible	48 (52%)	15 (16%)	30 (32%)

## Council Tax options for 2021/22

### Proposed Council Tax increase

Following the Chancellor's Spending Review on 25 November 2020, the council's preferred option for the 2021/22 budget is a 1.99% increase in general Council Tax and 3.00% social care precept (Option A), as this will lead to the least reduction in spending on services.

This is on the basis that additional savings of around £1.1m per 1% of Council Tax will need to be found in each year that an increase is not made over and above the savings that the council is already working to deliver.

Due to the large scale savings that the council will need to find in 2021/2022, the council is unable to consider a Council Tax freeze.

please note: the council has no control over the Council Tax collected on behalf of the police, fire service, or parish and town councils. Each of these bodies will make their own independent decisions.

The council would like your views on the level of Council Tax the council should consider for 2021/22:

Option A: To increase Council Tax in 2021/22 by 4.99% (1.99% general Council Tax and 3.00% social care precept)

This would be an increase of £78.53 per year (or £6.54 per month) for a band D household. This would raise an additional £5.4 million.

Option B: To increase Council Tax in 2021/22 by 3.99% (1.99% general Council Tax and 2.00% social care precept)

This would be an increase of £62.79 per year (or £5.23 per month) for a band D household. This would raise an additional £4.3 million.

Q7 Which of the following options would you prefer?

109 (41%) Option A: increase Council Tax by 4.99%

79 (30%) Option B: increase Council Tax by 3.99%

5 (2%) No preference

71 (27%) Neither

1 (0%) Don't know

Q8 The government currently sets limits to the annual increases in both general Council Tax and the social care precept. Should government relax the current annual Council Tax increase thresholds, to what extent would you support or oppose a Council Tax rise greater than 4.99%?

25 (9%) Strongly support

40 (15%) Somewhat support

28 (11%) Neither support nor oppose

39 (15%) Somewhat oppose

133 (50%) Strongly oppose

## Potential schemes to support vulnerable residents

Herefordshire Council provides financial support in certain circumstances to households that are in financial difficulty.

There is growing evidence that people are struggling financially as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, and applications to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme have increased compared to previous years.

Q9 In principle, would you be willing to pay more Council Tax if the increase was used to help households on low incomes?

108 (41%) Yes

156 (59%) No

Q10 Would you support a Herefordshire Community Contribution Scheme that allows residents to pay a voluntary sum to contribute towards community schemes, for example schemes to help create the best start in life for our children and young people?

161 (61%) Yes

102 (39%) No

Q11 If a Herefordshire Community Contribution Scheme was introduced would you consider making a contribution?

134 (51%) Yes

129 (49%) No

Q12 Please tell us the main reason that you would, or would not, consider making a contribution:

208 comments

## Any other comments about the budget and council savings plan

Q13 Please use this space to make any other comments about the budget and council savings plan:

144 comments

## What do you think of your local area and the council?

Throughout this survey we ask you to think about 'your local area'. When answering, please consider your local area to be the area within 15 to 20 minutes walking distance from your home.

Q14 Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?

93 (35%) Very satisfied

106 (40%) Fairly satisfied

22 (8%) Neither satisfied not dissatisfied

24 (9%) Fairly dissatisfied

17 (6%) Very dissatisfied

0 (0%) Don't know

Q15 Over the past 2 years, do you feel that Herefordshire has become a better place to live, is the same, or is worse?

40 (15%) Better

95 (36%) The same

120 (46%) Worse

8 (3%) Don't know

Q16 If you said that Herefordshire has become either better or worse in the last two years, please tell us what you feel has changed:

147 comments

Your local area receives services from Herefordshire Council, such as refuse collection, street cleaning, planning, education, social services and road maintenance.

In considering the next questions, please think about the range of services Herefordshire Council provides to the community as a whole, as well as services your household uses. It does not matter if you are not aware of all of the services Herefordshire Council provides to the community. We would like your general opinion.

Q17 Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Herefordshire Council runs things?

15 (6%) Very satisfied

92 (35%) Fairly satisfied

39 (15%) Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied

60 (23%) Fairly dissatisfied

54 (20%) Very dissatisfied

4 (2%) Don't know

Q18 To what extent do you agree or disagree that Herefordshire Council provides value for money?

- 5 (2%) Strongly agree
- 55 (21%) Tend to agree
- 61 (23%) Neither agree nor disagree
- 67 (25%) Tend to disagree
- 67 (25%) Strongly disagree
- 9 (3%) Don't know

Q19 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about Herefordshire Council?

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
The council keeps me informed about the services it provides	18 (7%)	91 (35%)	63 (24%)	55 (21%)	32 (12%)	2 (1%)
The council keeps me informed about any proposals for change	16 (6%)	87 (33%)	53 (20%)	60 (23%)	41 (16%)	3 (1%)
I can influence decisions affecting my local area	7 (3%)	44 (17%)	41 (16%)	73 (28%)	90 (35%)	5 (2%)

Q20 To what extent do you think Herefordshire Council acts on the concerns of local residents?

- 11 (4%) A great deal
- 64 (24%) A fair amount
- 103 (39%) Not very much
- 66 (25%) Not at all
- 19 (7%) Don't know

## About you

If you are responding as an individual please answer the following questions about yourself. This information helps us to understand the profile of respondents and whether views vary amongst different groups of people across the county. It will only be used for the purpose of statistical monitoring, treated as confidential and not used to identify you.

You do not have to answer these questions. If you do not wish to complete them please indicate this below:

45 (100%) I do not wish to complete this section

Which Council Tax band are you in? (if you are not sure a rough guess is fine)

8 (4%) A

29 (13%) B

18 (8%) C

61 (28%) D

28 (13%) E

19 (9%) F

27 (12%) G

0 (0%) H

21 (10%) Don't know

9 (4%) Prefer not to say

Your gender

103 (47%) Male

104 (48%) Female

0 (0%) Other

11 (5%) Prefer not to say

What is your age band?

0 (0%) 0-15 years

1 (0%) 16-24 years

51 (23%) 25-44 years

86 (39%) 45-64 years

53 (24%) 65-74 years

13 (6%) 75+ years

14 (6%) Prefer not to say

Do you have a disability, long-term illness or health problem (12 months or more) which limits daily activities or the work you can do?

25 (12%) Yes

179 (83%) No

11 (5%) Prefer not to say



How would you describe your ethnic group?

199 (90%) White British/English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish

6 (3%) Other White (please specify below)

0 (0%) Any other ethnic group (please specify below)

15 (7%) Prefer not to say

5 comments

Please tell us the first part of your

postcode: 192 comments

## Questionnaire for businesses / organisations

Herefordshire Council is responsible for a range of services in your local area, such as refuse collection, education, social care services and road maintenance. The income paid by business rates currently makes up 23% of the council's budget for these services, so we're keen to get your views on how we can make the best use of our budget and give your organisation value for money.

Are you?

29 (88%) A local business

4 (12%) A voluntary or community sector organisation

0 (0%) A parish or town council

0 (0%) Other

If 'other' please specify and tell us its name.

0 comments

In considering our questions, please think about the range of services Herefordshire Council provides to the community as a whole, as well as the services your organisation uses. It does not matter if you are not aware of all of the services Herefordshire Council provides to the community. We would like your general opinion.

## Your experience of our services

Q1. How satisfied are you with the council services your organisation has used in the last year?

	Not used	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Building control	18 (58%)	5 (16%)	2 (6%)	3 (10%)	2 (6%)	1 (3%)
Business support resources	8 (26%)	7 (23%)	8 (26%)	3 (10%)	3 (10%)	2 (6%)
Commercial waste	9 (30%)	6 (20%)	7 (23%)	4 (13%)	3 (10%)	1 (3%)
Contracts and tenders	21 (68%)	2 (6%)	2 (6%)	0 (0%)	4 (13%)	2 (6%)
Customer services	9 (30%)	5 (17%)	6 (20%)	4 (13%)	4 (13%)	2 (7%)
Emergency Planning Unit	25 (86%)	2 (7%)	0 (0%)	2 (7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Environmental health and protection, pest control	13 (42%)	4 (13%)	3 (10%)	8 (26%)	1 (3%)	2 (6%)
Health and safety	18 (60%)	5 (17%)	3 (10%)	4 (13%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Learning difficulties employment support	23 (77%)	1 (3%)	1 (3%)	5 (17%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Licensing and street trading	18 (60%)	2 (7%)	4 (13%)	4 (13%)	0 (0%)	2 (7%)
Sustainable transport	20 (67%)	0 (0%)	2 (7%)	1 (3%)	6 (20%)	1 (3%)
Parking	11 (35%)	0 (0%)	4 (13%)	2 (6%)	5 (16%)	9 (29%)
Planning	13 (43%)	2 (7%)	3 (10%)	1 (3%)	2 (7%)	9 (30%)
Trading standards	18 (60%)	3 (10%)	1 (3%)	5 (17%)	2 (7%)	1 (3%)
Workforce development	22 (73%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	5 (17%)	3 (10%)	0 (0%)
Maintenance of roads, footpaths and cycle paths	2 (6%)	0 (0%)	6 (18%)	4 (12%)	7 (21%)	14 (42%)
Street cleansing and lighting	3 (10%)	3 (10%)	11 (35%)	5 (16%)	4 (13%)	5 (16%)

# The Council Transformation and Savings Programme

All councils continue to experience constraints on spending, alongside increasing demand for some of their services. To balance the books, councils must continue to review what they do and how they do it.

Additionally, there is currently uncertainty over the amount of funding we will have in future and levels of funding from the government have yet to be confirmed, and the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has made it hard to be sure how much funding we will receive.

However, Herefordshire Council has a successful track record of delivering savings and has already delivered substantial savings of £90 million. Through early planning and carrying out a range of efficiency measures, the council has protected frontline services and minimised the impact of spending reductions.

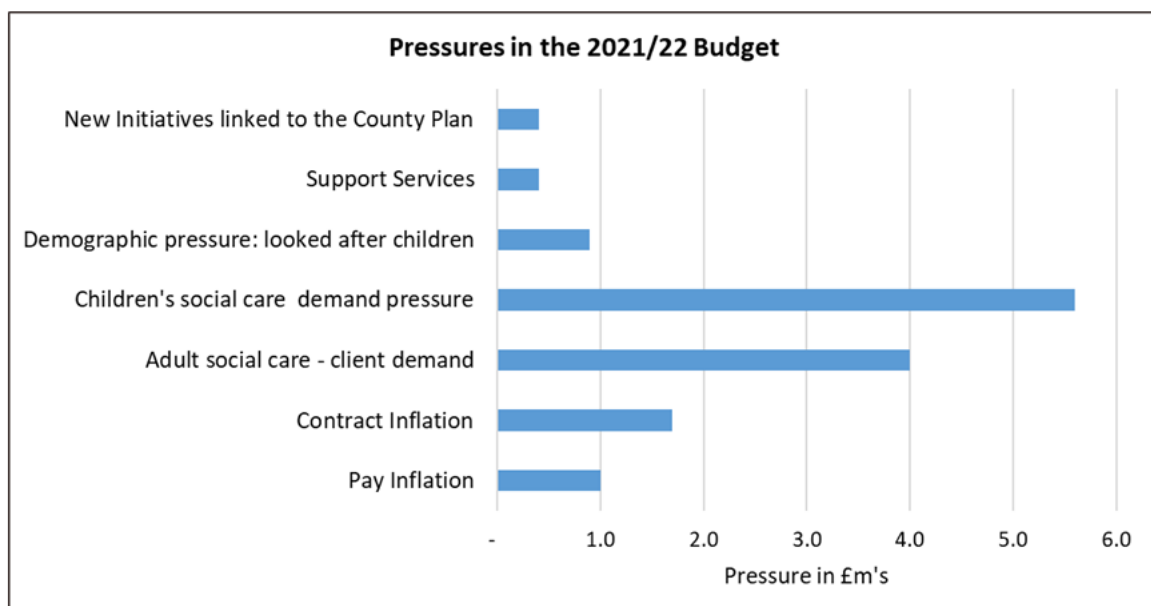
To reduce the continually increasing gap between our available resources and our expenditure, we will need to make further reductions in spending. Whilst the value and timing of such cost reductions is predicated on the level of financial support provided by central government and the impact of Covid-19 on the council's finances and demand for our services, the council is looking to make preparations for areas where cost reductions may need to be made. Current indications are that savings of up to £16m are required in 2021/22.

Savings of this level would involve continued changes to our role and the services we provide and we will continue to review our priorities, as shown in the County Plan summary, to make sure our more limited resources are focused on our 'core' activities.

## The next year

Meeting our proposed plan of continued savings would require finding potential savings of up to £16 million in 2021/22.

The main source of these financial pressures, driven by coronavirus and coronavirus legacy issues, are shown in the diagram below:



Q2. Looking at the information in the consultation document, how do you feel about the proposed amount of savings by directorate? summary of what directorates do.

	Far too little	Slightly too little	About right	Slightly too much	Far too much	Don't know
Adults and Communities Up to £5m or 5.2% of directorate budget	2 (6%)	4 (13%)	14 (45%)	4 (13%)	5 (16%)	2 (6%)
Children and Families Up to £2.9m or 7.9% of directorate budget	2 (6%)	6 (19%)	11 (35%)	4 (13%)	7 (23%)	1 (3%)
Economy and Place Up to £6.71m or 13.5% of directorate budget	5 (16%)	5 (16%)	11 (35%)	4 (13%)	5 (16%)	1 (3%)
Corporate Centre Up to £1.49m or 7.9% of budget	3 (10%)	9 (30%)	9 (30%)	3 (10%)	3 (10%)	3 (10%)

Q3. If you have any comments on the proposed savings by directorate please let us know:

10 comments

## The next 5 to 10 years

Q4. In the next 5 to 10 years, the council will continue to find ways to make services more affordable to run. How strongly do you agree or disagree with using the following approaches?

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree or disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Targeting resources on the most vulnerable and people most in need	15 (45%)	12 (36%)	2 (6%)	0 (0%)	4 (12%)	0 (0%)
Reducing the quality of some services provided	0 (0%)	5 (16%)	7 (22%)	12 (38%)	8 (25%)	0 (0%)
Increasing fees and charges for some services	3 (9%)	16 (48%)	7 (21%)	2 (6%)	3 (9%)	2 (6%)
Making more services available online	10 (32%)	16 (52%)	2 (6%)	2 (6%)	0 (0%)	1 (3%)
Using digital technology more widely to support the delivery of services	14 (44%)	12 (38%)	2 (6%)	3 (9%)	0 (0%)	1 (3%)
Making more efficient use of council assets such as land and buildings	23 (70%)	8 (24%)	1 (3%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Scaling back to stop providing some services	2 (6%)	7 (22%)	9 (28%)	8 (25%)	5 (16%)	1 (3%)
Stopping provision of some discretionary services to protect services to older people and the vulnerable	6 (18%)	10 (30%)	4 (12%)	6 (18%)	7 (21%)	0 (0%)
Changing working practices to make better use of technology and more efficient ways of working	19 (58%)	10 (30%)	3 (9%)	0 (0%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)
Working in partnership and sharing services with other councils and public sector agencies	11 (34%)	12 (38%)	5 (16%)	2 (6%)	1 (3%)	1 (3%)
Transferring services to other organisations like commercial companies	4 (13%)	9 (28%)	4 (13%)	6 (19%)	9 (28%)	0 (0%)
Transferring services to other organisations like community groups, social enterprises, and town and parish councils	9 (28%)	11 (34%)	3 (9%)	6 (19%)	3 (9%)	0 (0%)
Encouraging more people to volunteer their time to become involved in the delivery of services	11 (33%)	14 (42%)	4 (12%)	3 (9%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)

Q5. Which of the following County Plan commitments would you say are the three highest priorities for investment over the next 4 years? (Please select only three). Please ignore the % for this question, it is analysed differently in the final report.

	Highest priority	Second priority	Third priority
Minimise waste and increase reuse, repair and recycling	4 (44%)	1 (11%)	4 (44%)
Improve and extend active travel options throughout the county	5 (63%)	1 (13%)	2 (25%)
Build understanding and support for sustainable living	2 (33%)	3 (50%)	1 (17%)
Invest in low carbon projects	3 (50%)	1 (17%)	2 (33%)
Identify climate change action in all aspects of council operation	4 (67%)	1 (17%)	1 (17%)
Seek strong stewardship of the county's natural resources	2 (40%)	3 (60%)	0 (0%)
Protect and enhance the county's biodiversity, value nature and uphold environmental standards	3 (60%)	2 (40%)	0 (0%)
Ensure all children are healthy, safe and inspired to achieve	4 (40%)	4 (40%)	2 (20%)
Ensure that children in care, and moving on from care, are well supported and make good life choices	4 (67%)	0 (0%)	2 (33%)
Build publicly owned sustainable and affordable houses and bring empty properties back into use	5 (38%)	4 (31%)	4 (31%)
Protect and improve the lives of vulnerable people	5 (71%)	2 (29%)	0 (0%)
Use technology to support home care and extend independent living	1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)
Support communities to help each other through a network of community hubs	1 (25%)	3 (75%)	0 (0%)
Develop environmentally sound infrastructure that attracts investment	2 (29%)	3 (43%)	2 (29%)
Use council land to create economic opportunities and bring higher paid jobs to the county	2 (22%)	3 (33%)	4 (44%)
Invest in education and the skills needed by employers	3 (43%)	2 (29%)	2 (29%)
Enhance digital connectivity for communities and business	1 (17%)	2 (33%)	3 (50%)
Protect and promote our heritage, culture and natural beauty to enhance quality of life and support tourism	4 (44%)	2 (22%)	3 (33%)
Spend public money in the local economy wherever possible	3 (25%)	5 (42%)	4 (33%)

Q6. Please use this space to make any other comments or suggestions about how the council invests and saves money:

10 comments

## What do you think of your local area and the council?

Throughout this survey we ask you to think about 'your local area'. When answering, please consider your local area to be the area within 15 to 20 minutes walking distance from where your organisation is based.

Q7. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Herefordshire Council runs things?

- 2 (6%) Very satisfied
- 13 (39%) Fairly satisfied
- 3 (9%) Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- 8 (24%) Fairly dissatisfied
- 7 (21%) Very dissatisfied
- 0 (0%) Don't know

Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree that Herefordshire Council provides services that are value for money?

- 1 (3%) Strongly agree
- 11 (33%) Tend to agree
- 7 (21%) Neither agree nor disagree
- 7 (21%) Tend to disagree
- 7 (21%) Strongly disagree
- 0 (0%) Don't know

Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about Herefordshire Council?

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree
The council keeps my organisation informed about the services it provides	4 (12%)	7 (21%)	9 (27%)	10 (30%)	3 (9%)
The council keeps my organisation informed about any proposals for change	1 (3%)	10 (30%)	7 (21%)	12 (36%)	3 (9%)
My organisation can influence decisions affecting my local area	1 (3%)	6 (18%)	3 (9%)	14 (42%)	9 (27%)



Q10. To what extent do you think Herefordshire Council acts on the concerns of local organisations?

1 (3%) A great deal

8 (24%) A fair amount

13 (39%) Not very much

7 (21%) Not at all

4 (12%) Don't know

Please tell us the first part of the postcode of your organisation (if your organisation has several sites in the county please give the postcode of the site at which you are based)

28 comments

**Thank you**