

Summary of Herefordshire Council's 2023/24 Budget consultation events

1. Introduction to the consultation

As part of the budget setting exercise for 2023/24 a series of 12 consultation events were held between 25th November – 17th December with members of the public. Additional sessions were held with community groups through a Community Partnership event on the 23rd November and a Business event as part of their Quarterly Briefings with Herefordshire Council on the 13th December.

Another event is planned for the 9th January with Parish and Town Councils.

Approximately 428 people participated in the events.

Context

This budget consultation has been held amidst a year which has seen unprecedented increases in costs for both residents and businesses across Herefordshire. It has also had a significant impact on the Council's finance with large increases in costs for fuel, energy, adult social care, looked after children and environmental services.

To meet these pressures, Herefordshire and local authorities across the country are now facing budget deficits on a scale that has not been seen before. With no assistance coming from central government, this means that additional cost pressures from inflation and growth in demand for services are unfunded and savings measures must be identified to address the resulting shortfall.

To ensure that the Council remains in a financial position to progress their priorities of protecting and enhancing the environment, supporting the local economy and strengthening communities, they need to build financial resilience and make sure that they manage the Council's finances very carefully. Rising costs and increased local demand for services mean they are currently facing a budget shortfall of at least £21 million in 2023/24. This is such a serious shortfall that it can only be addressed by undertaking a complete review of the services the Council can and cannot continue to provide.

The consultation presented some high-level options that could contribute towards balancing the budget for 2023/24 and their likely impacts which included reducing and changing services, increasing charging for services and increasing council tax.

Overview of consultation approach

The consultation aimed to engage people in two main activities. Activity 1 asked people to indicate 'in principle' if they supported or did not support six key approaches suggested by Herefordshire Council. Activity 2 consisted of specific proposals related to services currently provided by Herefordshire Council and suggested changes to these which would either result in a

saving or an increase in income. Members of the public were also able to make any additional comments about all services offered by Herefordshire Council.

It should be noted that a decision was made by Herefordshire Council to significantly change the wording of Activity 2 mid-way through the consultation. As a result the researchers observed that this fundamentally changed how people interpreted the options presented. It is therefore necessary to present the results of the consultation in two parts as data gathered once the changes were made are not directly comparable with the earlier data due to the meaning of the options changing.

Consultation engagement

The number of people approaching the stands was recorded using a clicker. Approximately 428 people were engaged through the events. A list of consultation events with the corresponding number of people spoken to is included in Appendix A.

Engagement consisted of the following:

- Just a conversation with the researchers or the Council representative present
- People leaving a comment in the comment box (comments were either specific and required a response or more general). A full list of the comments can be seen at Appendix B
- Completing Activity 1 only (most people indicated a preference for each statement but some chose only to put tokens in one or two of the boxes)
- Completing Activity 2 only – mostly people completed the whole exercise
- Completing Activity 1 and 2

It is important to note that due to the different types of engagement there are different total figures for the amount of people engaging, the amount of people participating in Activity 1 and the amount of people participating in Activity 2.

Overall, there was lots of positive engagement, with members of the public sympathising with the difficult decisions that needed to be made and an appreciation of being asked their opinion.

Challenges encountered were:

- The online survey was not live during most of the consultation events, so people who did engage but wanted to spend more time at home considering the options may not have been able to.
- The time of year – December. People were either too busy focusing on Christmas shopping or it was just too cold to stop and talk for too long.
- The change in wording for the service proposals.

Content of consultation session

Activity 1

Participants were asked to vote in each of the six token boxes. Each box included one of the following headings:

- Helping communities to help themselves
- Raising money in ways which mean that people who can afford it pay more towards services
- Continuing the 100% discount for people most in need
- Selling council owned land or buildings to raise one-off money
- Making more services available online
- Paying a voluntary contribution in addition to your council tax to protect specific services.

People were asked to indicate whether they supported each approach by inserting a blue token in the box or a red token if they didn't support it.

Activity 2

A list of proposed changes was presented on a flip chart with participants being asked to tick if they supported or did not support that proposed change. The first version of Activity 2 included a description of the service area together with the potential cost saving as a result of the change. The second version of Activity 2 was less detailed and did not include any financial information. In each version people were asked to indicate if they supported or didn't support the proposal by ticking the relevant column. It should be noted that the first version of Activity 2 was better received by the public – people liked seeing the financial information and understanding the impact of the change with the overall savings that need to be made. The way that the first version was presented made people feel that information was being openly shared and this also made them feel empathetic towards the council. Overall, there was a recognition that the Council had very tough choices to make. However, once the new wording for Activity 2 was used feedback received was less positive. There was confusion about the meaning of 'transform' which made people feel that they were not being entirely transparent about the future of services. Section 2 discusses further the options presented in Activity 2.

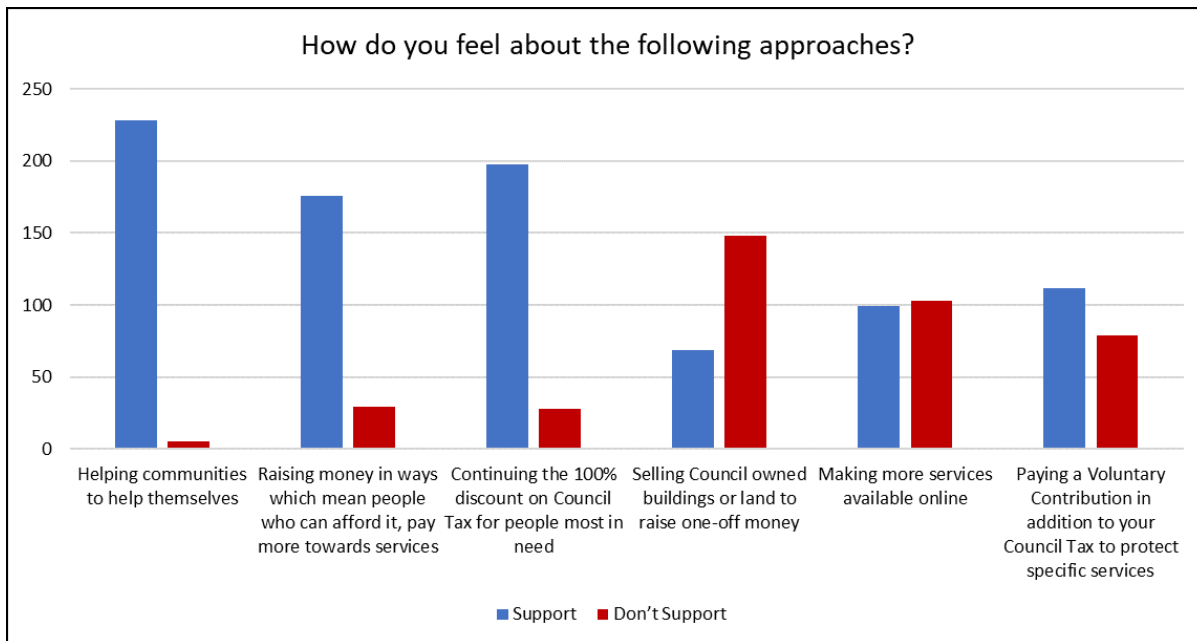
2. Consultation event results

Throughout this report we refer to comments made by, for example, 'a few' or 'many' participants. This reflects comments that were made during participant engagement. As with other qualitative research it is not possible to specifically quantify the participants making these comments but points referred to in the report reflect areas where there were outlying opinions or strong consensus or divergence of opinion.

2.1 Activity 1: Suggested approaches to save money or generate income

The table and graph below illustrate the result of the token voting.

	Support	Don't Support
Helping communities to help themselves	228	5
Raising money in ways which mean people who can afford it, pay more towards services	176	29
Continuing the 100% discount on Council Tax for people most in need	198	28
Selling Council owned buildings or land to raise one-off money	69	148
Making more services available online	99	103
Paying a Voluntary Contribution in addition to your Council Tax to protect specific services	112	79



There was clear support for the following three approaches:

- Helping communities to help themselves
- Continuing the 100% discount on Council Tax for people most in need
- Raising money in ways which mean people who can afford it, pay more towards services

There was overwhelming support for **helping communities to help themselves**, although there was varying understanding of what this actually means. It was also noted that this approach requires investment and collaboration with the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sector. It should be noted that some people recognised the contribution that Talk Community is already doing in this area.

100% relief for council tax - there were a couple of points worth noting in relation to this. It was felt that this should be available more widely and that there are many people who aren't aware that it is available. It should also be noted that 'don't support' responses were given for different reasons. For example, some people didn't support this because they felt that everyone should pay council tax, whilst others said they didn't support it because they felt that no-one should pay council tax. The latter view is likely to be a reflection of the fact that the 'need' is greater than ever before and that linked to this the level of council tax is higher than ever before and for many not affordable. For example, it was often mentioned as the biggest outgoing for households.

Raising money in ways which mean people who can afford it, **pay more towards services**. This was difficult for people to understand, however there was still support, although there was some underlying concern about widening the gap between those who can and can't afford to pay more. People also questioned which services this may relate to.

There was slightly more support for the option of paying a **voluntary contribution on top of Council Tax to protect services**, than opposition. However, people require clarification of which services or projects would receive funds following a contribution. There were those who supported it but felt they would not be able to contribute themselves but felt if others could, it should be an option. Those who opposed it mainly felt that they paid enough Council Tax already.

Making more services available online, again there were very mixed views about this option. There was a general view that online should be an option for those who can use it, but there has to be options for those not online. Older people and people living with disabilities were often mentioned as those that would be disadvantaged by online only access.

There was a majority opposition for **selling Council owned buildings or land** to raise one-off money. There were general views that this was only a short-term win, 'once buildings/land is gone, its gone'. People also felt that they needed to know which buildings or land were being proposed before being able to comment. Buildings of historical/cultural value were often referenced as those that people wanted to remain in the ownership of the Council. Interestingly the session held at the 6th form demonstrated that this was a particularly un-popular suggestion with younger people.

There were also many comments about the **current cost of living crisis** which people felt was pushing more and more people into economic hardship, including those who have previously been financially secure.

2.2 Activity 2: Specific proposals for change to specific services

As outlined above, initially wording was provided with relevant cost savings about specific changes to services, these were printed and used to consult with members of the public in the following areas:

- Kington
- Bromyard Village Hall
- Leominster
- Ledbury
- Bromyard Market Square

Following these events, the wording around each of the services was changed. As discussed above whereas previously the wording had suggested that the service area would be stopped or reduced the changes to wording stated that the services would be 'transformed'. Generally, people interpreted 'transform' as being an improvement or enhancement to the service. The meaning of the proposal therefore was fundamentally altered, and this strongly influenced the way members of the public voted, often commenting that they would support a transformation of a service specially if it improved/increased the service.

The new wording was used in:

- Hereford High Town
- Hereford Sixth Form College with young people
- Ross on Wye
- South Wye with pensioners
- Whitecross School with families

The two versions of activity 2 are presented below:

Presented in first half of the consultation			Presented in the second half of the consultation
Stop/ Reduce/ Increase	Suggested Savings Options	Estimated saving & % of budget gap	Options
Stop	Closure of domestic abuse services These would be services financially supported by Herefordshire Council.	Approx. £260k 1.18%	Transform the delivery of domestic abuse services
Stop	Closure of accommodation services These services provide temporary accommodation for rough sleepers. This would mean less support available and more reliance on other agencies.	Approx. £530k 2.41%	Transform accommodation provision for homeless people
Stop	Closure in Hoople learning disability residential care This may result in a requirement for alternative high cost placements.	Approx. £180k 0.82%	Review investment in learning disability residential care
Stop	Closure of remaining carers' service provided by Herefordshire Council Other providers would continue to provide services.	Approx. £160k 0.73%	Reduce the level of funding for carers' services
Stop	Removal of budget for child and adult weight management services Those requiring support would have to access the limited service available from the NHS.	Approx. £50k 0.23%	Review funding to provide weight management support for children and adults
Stop	Ending online Mental Health support for adults from 1/4/23 This would reduce access to online mental health resources across the county. There is support available through NHS services albeit limited.	Approx. £12k 0.05%	Review online mental health support following the end of a pilot
Stop	Stop 4-6 month oral health check pilot project effective from 01/04/2023 The risk is there may be deterioration in oral health and increase in tooth decay in children. However, NHS dentistry service would carry on as normal.	Approx. £64k 0.29%	Remove oral health checks for children aged 4-6 months
Reduce	Reduce Early Help Service Early Help services are delivered to children, parents and whole families to improve outcomes for children as soon as problems start to emerge or to prevent future problems arising. It will be down to other services to spot risks.	£700k 3.18%	Reduce Early Help service for children, parents and families
Reduce	Reduction of services delivered by Balfour Beatty Living Places (BBLP) within Annual Plan The council's public realm contract for providing services includes highways, public rights of way, parks and open spaces, street cleaning and street lighting. BBLP fulfil this contract. A review of the services provided to determine savings would result in a reduction in the services delivered to the Council.	Approx. £1m 4.55%	Reduce frequency of cleansing, grass cutting and levels of highway maintenance.

Presented in first half of the consultation			Presented in the second half of the consultation
Stop/ Reduce/ Increase	Suggested Savings Options	Estimated saving & % of budget gap	Options
Reduce	<p>Reduction in housing related support for vulnerable homeless people and care experienced young people 16-25</p> <p>Services to support vulnerable young people who may be homeless or threatened with homelessness. This would result in more reliance on other agencies to support these individuals.</p>	To be determined	Reduce the level of housing-related support for vulnerable young people and adults
Reduce	<p>Reduction in allocation of funding for NHS Health Checks</p> <p>The NHS Health Check is a simple check of heart health aimed at adults in England aged 40 to 74. It checks vascular or circulatory health and works out the risk of developing some of the most disabling – but preventable – illnesses. This may result in preventable illnesses may go undetected and untreated.</p>	£50k 0.23%	Reduce the allocation of funding for NHS Health Checks for adults aged 40-74
Increase	<p>Increase Parking Charges</p> <p>A 5% increase would generate additional income of approximately £200k per annum. This would mean increased charges to residents but additional revenue for the Council would support delivery of services.</p>	Approx. £200k (5% increase) 0.91%	Review and increase parking charges in the City Centre and Market towns (with increased income spent on highway maintenance
Increase	<p>Introduce Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) Enforcement Trial</p> <p>Introduction of FPN for litter offences. This would mean reduced littering, cleaner streets.</p>	Approx. £50k 0.23%	Introduce fines for littering and dog fouling in the City Centre and Market towns
Increase	<p>Review of Building Control/Chargeable Services</p> <p>A review of current charges and services to identify opportunities to increase income. This would mean increased charges to residents but additional revenue for the Council would support delivery of services.</p>	To be determined	Review fees and charges, such as Building Control inspections, cremations, Wedding / civil ceremonies
Increase	<p>Accelerate disposal of assets</p> <p>A review of council assets to determine which properties can be sold. This review would focus on buildings with high maintenance and energy costs. Council services to vacate exist buildings. Council spaces to be shared across increased number of staff and services.</p>	To be determined	Accelerate disposal of assets including some council buildings

Due to the change in meaning the results of the consultation should be considered in 2 parts.

2.2.1 Results from the first half of the consultation

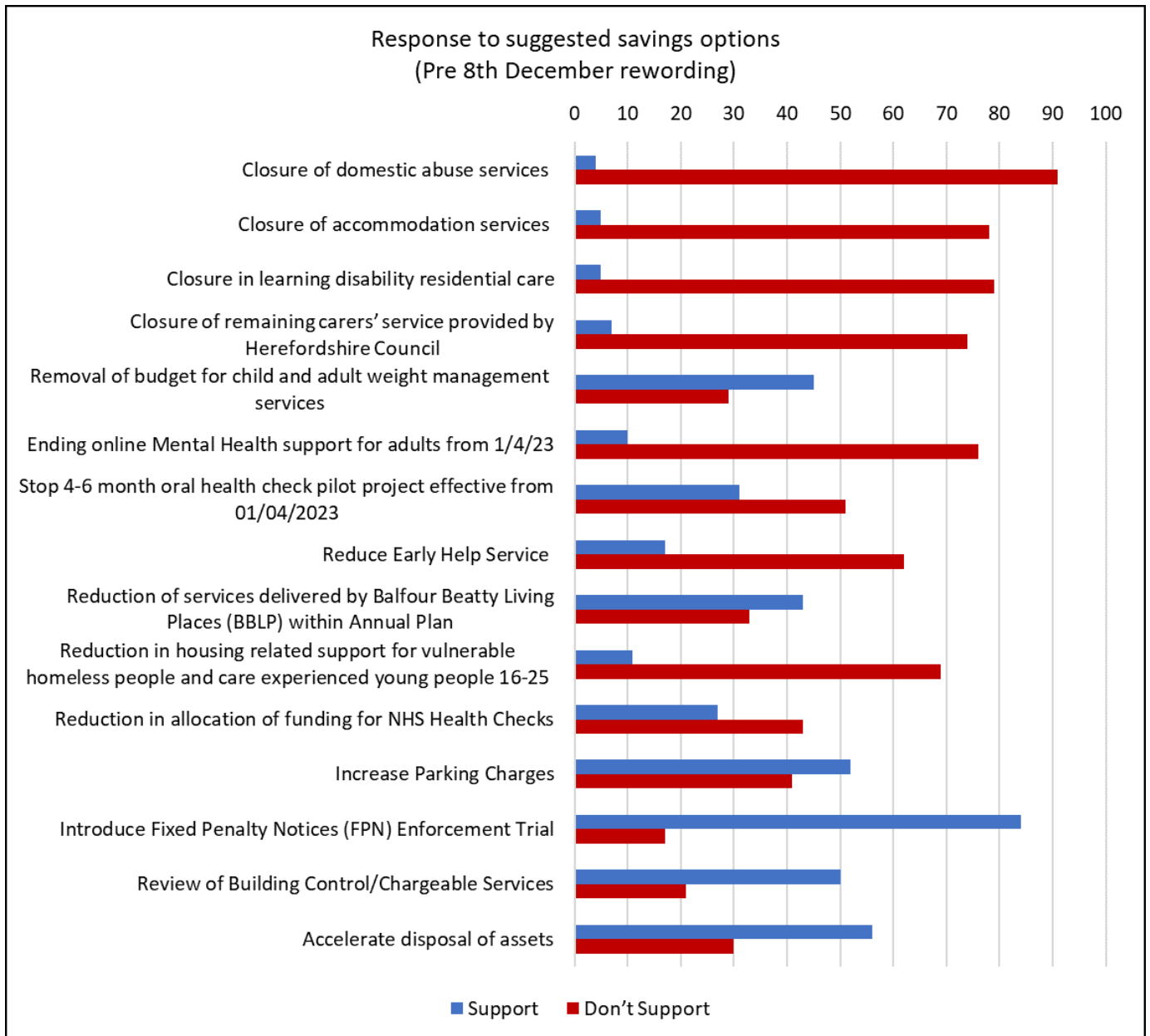
This gave some very clear messages particularly about those that residents did not want to stop.

Stop/ Reduce/ Increase	Suggested Savings Options	Support	Don't Support
Stop	Closure of domestic abuse services	4	91
Stop	Closure of accommodation services	5	78
Stop	Closure in learning disability residential care	5	79
Stop	Closure of remaining carers' service provided by Herefordshire Council	7	74
Stop	Removal of budget for child and adult weight management services	45	29
Stop	Ending online Mental Health support for adults from 1/4/23	10	76
Stop	Stop 4-6 month oral health check pilot project effective from 01/04/2023	31	51
Reduce	Reduce Early Help Service	17	62
Reduce	Reduction of services delivered by Balfour Beatty Living Places (BBLP) within Annual Plan	43	33
Reduce	Reduction in housing related support for vulnerable homeless people and care experienced young people 16-25	11	69
Reduce	Reduction in allocation of funding for NHS Health Checks	27	43
Increase	Increase Parking Charges	52	41
Increase	Introduce Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) Enforcement Trial	84	17
Increase	Review of Building Control/Chargeable Services	50	21
Increase	Accelerate disposal of assets	56	30

This really made participants stop and think very carefully, specifically as to whether:

- Herefordshire Council should be funding this service as opposed to another public service such as the NHS
- If this service was really valued
- If they were personally prepared to pay more for certain services

For this first version of the wording, participants showed lots more empathy and understanding of the difficult situation the Council is in. This was less obvious once the wording had been changed.



Participants did not support the following proposals:

- Closure of domestic abuse services
- Closure of accommodation services
- Closure in learning disability residential care
- Closure of remaining carers' service provided by Herefordshire Council
- Ending online Mental Health support for adults from 1/4/23
- Reduce Early Help Service
- Reduction in housing related support for vulnerable homeless people and care experienced young people 16-25

Participants showed support for the following proposals:

- Introduce Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) Enforcement Trial

There were mixed views but ultimately more support for the following:

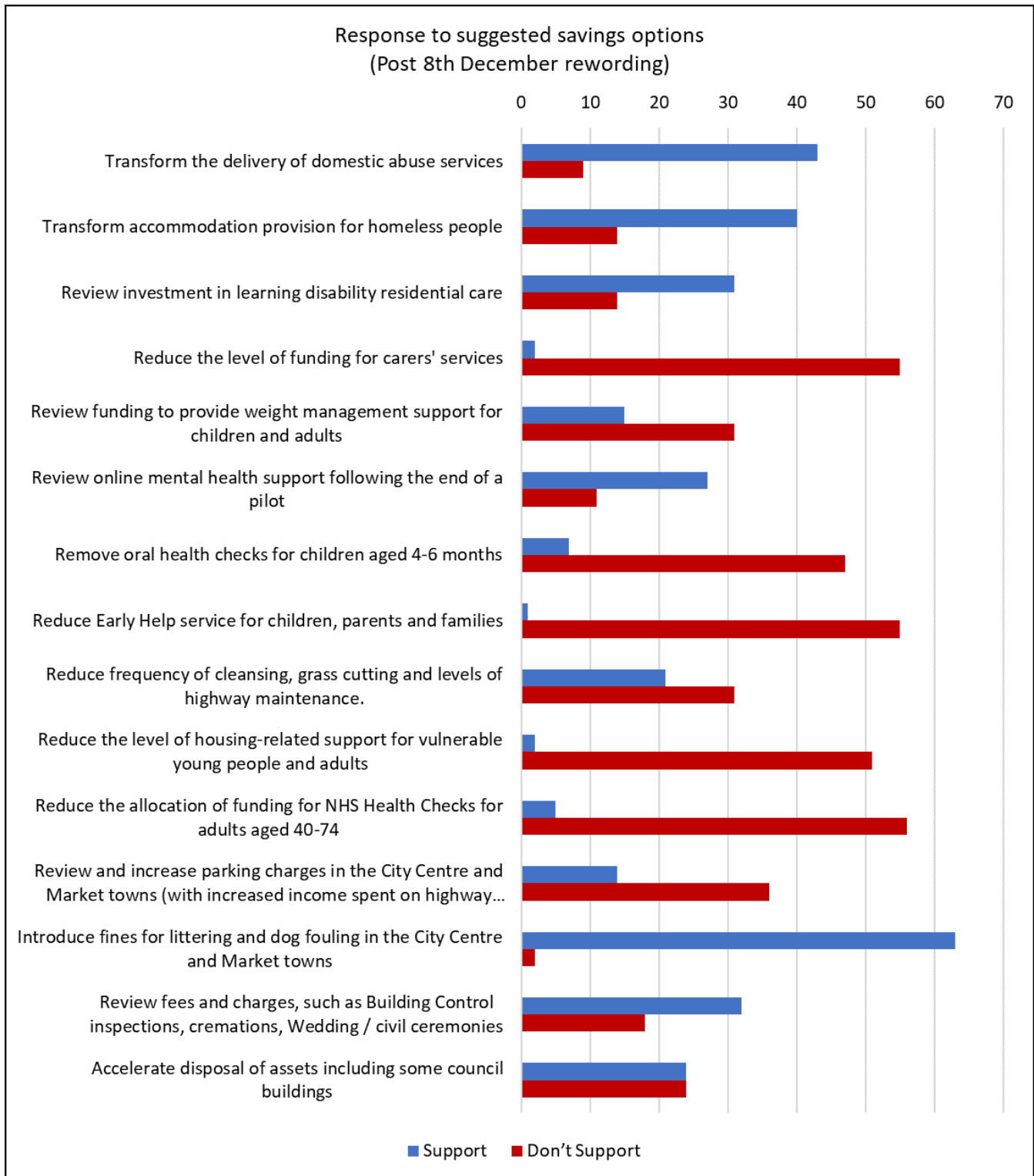
- Increase Parking Charges
- Review of Building Control/Chargeable Services
- Accelerate disposal of assets
- Reduction of services delivered by Balfour Beatty Living Places (BBLP) within Annual Plan
- Removal of budget for child and adult weight management services

2.2.2 Results from the second half of the consultation

In addition to the issue with the re-wording, the following was also highlighted:

- Review online mental health support following a pilot – many felt this was an obvious choice as you should always review services following a pilot.
- Review oral health checks for children aged 4-6 months is very different from the previous wording ‘Stop 4-6 month oral health check pilot project effective from 01/04/2023’. One participant pointed out that very few children aged 4-6 months have teeth therefore a check was not necessary. A misinterpretation in the presentation may have occurred as previously it had suggested these checks would be on all children every 4-6 months.

	Support	Don't Support
Transform		
Transform the delivery of domestic abuse services	43	9
Transform accommodation provision for homeless people	40	14
Review investment in learning disability residential care	31	14
Reduce the level of funding for carers' services	2	55
Review funding to provide weight management support for children and adults	15	31
Review online mental health support following the end of a pilot	27	11
Remove oral health checks for children aged 4-6 months	7	47
Reduce		
Reduce Early Help service for children, parents and families	1	55
Reduce frequency of cleansing, grass cutting and levels of highway maintenance.	21	31
Reduce the level of housing-related support for vulnerable young people and adults	2	51
Reduce the allocation of funding for NHS Health Checks for adults aged 40-74	5	56
Increase		
Review and increase parking charges in the City Centre and Market towns (with increased income spent on highway maintenance	14	36
Introduce fines for littering and dog fouling in the City Centre and Market towns	63	2
Review fees and charges, such as Building Control inspections, cremations, Wedding / civil ceremonies	32	18
Accelerate disposal of assets including some council buildings	24	24



Participants supported:

- Introduce Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) Enforcement Trial
- Transform the delivery of domestic abuse services
- Transform accommodation provision for homeless people
- Review investment in learning disability residential care
- Review fees and charges, such as Building Control inspections, cremations, Wedding / civil ceremonies

There was very clear opposition for:

- Reduce the allocation of funding for NHS Health Checks for adults aged 40-74
- Reduce Early Help service for children, parents and families
- Reduce the level of funding for carers' services
- Reduce the level of housing-related support for vulnerable young people and adults
- Remove oral health checks for children aged 4-6 months

There were mixed views but ultimately more opposition for the following:

- Review and increase parking charges in the City Centre and Market towns (with increased income spent on highway maintenance).
- Reduce frequency of cleansing, grass cutting and levels of highway maintenance.
- Review funding to provide weight management support for children and adults.

Comparing the 2 sets of results

A comparison of the results from the first half of the consultation prior to the word changes and the second half after the word changes highlights the following areas where the change of wording led to a difference of interpretation of the likely impact on the service:

- People strongly opposed 'stopping' domestic abuse services but strongly supported 'transforming' them.
- People strongly opposed 'stopping' accommodation services for rough sleepers but strongly supported 'transforming' them.
- People strongly opposed the 'closure' of learning disability residential care but strongly supported 'reviewing' the funding for this service.
- People opposed 'ending' the online mental health support for adults from 1/4/23 but showed more support for 'reviewing' the funding for the project.
- People strongly supported a reduction of the services of BBLP but didn't support a reduction of 'street cleansing' 'grass cutting' and highways maintenance' (however it should also be noted that a significant number also supported these options and that therefore it may be considered there was less of a clear steer in the second half of the consultation).

The following areas are where there was greater similarity of how people voted before and after the re-wording (please note these are mostly areas where the re-wording did not fundamentally change the meaning of the proposal):

- People strongly opposed the 'closure' of remaining carers service and also opposed 'reducing' the funding for this service.
- People opposed reducing the funding for the Early Help Service
- People opposed the reduction in support for housing related support for vulnerable homeless people and care experienced young people 16-25
- People opposed reducing the allocation of funding for NHS Health Checks for adults aged 40-74
- People opposed removing oral health checks for children aged 4-6 months and opposed removing checks every 4-6 months for children.

- Increase parking charges – there appeared to be fairly mixed views to this across the consultation
- There was support for introducing fines for dog fouling etc
- There was support for reviewing fees and charges
- There was marginal support for reviewing weight management services

2.3 Any other comments

A full list of comments received are in Appendix B, a summary of the key comments are below.

There was a perception that the council waste money on schemes such as the planters and cycle lanes in Hereford City and many people reported it feeling as though decisions were made remotely, without consulting residents.

There were suggestions that those higher paid employees at Herefordshire Council should be paid less, although many didn't actually know how much they were actually paid. Similar views were shared about Councillors expenses, however they did recognise that without these it would limit the people who were able to stand as a Councillor.

2.4 Consultation with Businesses

Consultation with businesses was undertaken as part of an online Herefordshire Council quarterly business briefing session. 12 Businesses participated in the discussions which were based around 2 key questions:

1. What are the positives / negatives of running a business in Herefordshire?
2. Within the context of the financial challenges, what are the key changes you would like to see in Herefordshire to support your business?

Businesses identified the following positives of running a business in Herefordshire:

- The natural assets of the county / it is a beautiful place to live and work.
- The supportive nature of the business sector (particularly amongst small businesses) – strong local business networks that promote the 'buy local' message.
- Lots of well-established family run businesses.
- Strong focus on sustainable business within the county.
- The quality of the customer base is good.

Businesses identified the following negatives of running a business in Herefordshire:

- Issues in relation to access to public transport – impacts on visitors, service users and employees.
- Traffic congestion in Hereford city.
- Lack of access to services in comparison to the home counties.
- Access to good quality childcare (that covers the full working day) to support more women into work.
- Internet connectivity is still an issue in some areas of the county.
- The lack of collaborative working across ALL sectors.

The key changes identified by businesses were:

- Action / investment into resolving the traffic congestion in the city as a priority.
- Herefordshire Council to act as a facilitator / enabler to better collaboration between the public, private and voluntary and community sector to resolve some of the biggest challenges facing the county.
- Promotion of the spend local message starting with the commitment of all public agencies to procure locally wherever practical.
- Appointment of a someone that can champion businesses internally within the Council and act as a single-point of contact for businesses.
- The need for a more proactive approach by the Council to generate and stimulate businesses e.g.
 - How can we attract the big corporates to relocate their Head Offices to the county?
 - How can we support the retail sector through the use of pop-up shops / temporary licenses?
- How can the Council help to support and promote hybrid- working and showcase the potential of digital.
- Better promotion of businesses as case studies to showcase new ways of working / how businesses are overcoming challenges.
- Better support to help businesses keep up with the rate of digital change.

Key messages highlighted in relation to budget setting were:

- The need for stronger partnerships between the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sector (VCSE), private sector and public sector.
- Traffic congestion (particularly in Hereford City) and transport across the County needs improvement
- All sectors should be exploring how the natural assets of the county are maximised.
- Businesses should be enabled to be entrepreneurial – there needs to be less red tape and bureaucracy.

3. Conclusion

The budget consultation exercise gives some clear steer in terms of approaches that the Herefordshire public have a tendency to support or not support. The findings from Activity 2 are slightly ambiguous due to the change of wording – however there is still consensus that can be identified. The findings of Activity 1 are less ambiguous and more conclusive.

Perhaps, though, the most powerful message from the consultation is that overall the general public appreciate being asked their opinion. However, for this to be seen as an open and transparent process more not less information is needed and options should be presented using plain language without overly sanitising the likely outcome of changes to services. People also supported further consultation once decisions about which services are most likely to be affected in the 2023/24 budget have been made.

Appendix A - Engagement - A breakdown of the numbers participating in each location is provided below.

Session no.	Time/Date	Area	Number spoken with
1	Wednesday 23 rd November	Community Partnership event	14
2	Friday 25 th November	Kington Market	22
3	Thursday 1 st December 8am – 11am	Bromyard Public Hall	28
4	Friday 2 nd December 8am – 2pm	Leominster market	35
5	Saturday 3 rd December 10am – 2pm	Ledbury Market House	35
6	Sunday 4 th December 10am – 2pm	Bromyard Market Square	55
7	Thursday 8 th December 10am – 2pm	Hereford High Town (Xmas markets)	52
8	Friday 9 th December 11am – 1pm	Hereford 6 th Form	60
9	Saturday 10 th December 10am – 1pm	Ross – on – Wye Market square	40
10	Tuesday 13 th December 6-7pm	Online Zoom session as part of Herefordshire Council's Quarterly Business update with Herefordshire Businesses	12
11	Thursday 15 th December 10am – 2pm	Hereford High Town (Xmas market)	25
12	Friday 16 th December 11-1pm	South Wye Pensioners Xmas lunch	20
13	Saturday 17 th 10-2pm	Whitecross Family event	30
14	Monday 9 th January 7-8pm	Parish and Town Councils	TBC

Appendix B - Comments

Location (if specified)	Comment
Bromyard	More transport e.g. no bus service to Worcester e.g. increased parking charges could be spent on improving public transport. This would impact on the carbon footprint
Bromyard	Sell empty council buildings in Bromyard (Opposite Whitegate)
Bromyard	Services especially BBLP should be brought back in house and managed better
Bromyard	Should compulsory purchase empty properties for homeless
Bromyard	Why has the inadequate development on Old Rd Bromyard been allowed to take place. No one I have talked to supported this building work that now has entered its 6th Year. This has been a nightmare for me and no doubt other residents. When I moved into (named house) Bromyard I thought no one in their right mind would attempt to develop the site. I was right!
Bromyard	Would support a skate park in the park - may be responsibility of Bromyard Town Council as opposed to Herefordshire Council
Bromyard Village Hall	A way to save money is to have an exhibition like this but not probate three staff. What a waste of money.
Bromyard Village Hall	Why does it take three staff to man an exhibition in the hall - complete waste of council money which could be put to better use.
Hereford	100% Council Tax discount - people don't know that they can apply and if they do - find it difficult to actually apply.
Hereford	Better maintenance of roads and buildings. Better managing of money. Improvements needed on pavements in Commercial Road
Hereford	Let grass grown on verges to allow for wildflowers
Hereford	More dropped curbs needed in Town Centre
Hereford	What is happening to the Shirehall? Specifically what is being done about the Crown Courts.
Ledbury	No youth services or services for young people in Ledbury
Leominster	Balfour Beatty don't deliver a good service. Roads are appalling - repairs don't last. Need to give the contract to someone else and check works. I have never seen them street clean in Leominster - all volunteers. They do not provide a service now.
Leominster	If you make parking charges apply in Broad Street, you will KILL LEOMINSTER. The fact that there is no obstacle to spending money is so important. Even if raining you can park close to shops, dash in, hand over maybe £5 or £10 in several shops and & dash away again so someone else can slot into your space. If you have to pay, you wait till you have a bigger shop and then you probably don't go to Leominster. Result DEAD shops. NO PARKING CHARGES.
Leominster	Why did a private members club, owned by the conservative party get Government funding and commence their project a week after the opening date for applications, and then, to add insult to injury, get allocated EXTRA parking, when numerous private property owners throughout Leominster have spent thousands of pounds on surveys etc. before making their applications only to discover that all the money has gone? Also Why was 1/2 a million pounds spent on totally un-necessary Wi-Fi out of this budget?
Ross	Better value for money. Only feel bin men and library are of value. Would like to attract tourism.
Ross	Massively important to keep the funding for charities, especially Veteran Support Centre - critical support for veterans.
Ross	More street cleaning - dog poo everywhere on the streets

Sixth form	Fines for littering - risk is they can be too petty. I.e. not if it is a one off accident. Would support learning disability services but less so than other services such as domestic abuse and homelessness. Think car parking charges should be decreased.
Sixth form	Referring to accelerate disposal of assets option - make it something for students, safe space, a place to stay while waiting for buses, or to go to report issues or problems with cat calling or other cases of sexual/general assault.
	Balfour Beatty are a waste of money
	Be more clear and communicate more of what current administration have achieved
	Business rate increase will devastate a hospitality industry facing unprecedented challenges and financial pressures. Central Government must devolve more funding. Local people cannot afford it.
	Campaign harder to Central Government for additional money
	Clean the underpass between Edgar Street and Victoria Street.
	Clear more drains
	Cut down on high salaries of Herefordshire Council staff e.g. Chief Executive and Directors
	Cycle lane on St Owen Street is a trip hazard
	Do we really want to be the only County in England without an athletics track. Athletics track = better health = less cost to the NHS.
	Don't waste money on things like benches, cycle paths that don't go anywhere
	Don't spend money on cycle-paths, don't spend money on doing posh buildings for themselves. People need services most cannot get/or afford to be online
	Get rid of traffic wardens. Provide commercial services in Shirehall e.g. Dance classes
	Hereford needs a new bypass and the roads in Leominster Town need new roads with tarmac
	I support improving domestic abuse services - if transform means improve then YES.
	Improve pavements - no trip hazards
	Introduce charges for cyclists to use roads. How can NHS be free? Reintroduce charges e.g. for food and x rays
	More in depth and much broader research into all areas of expenditure, examining connections e.g. Approx. 26% of county's population is 60+ - development of dementia and impact on Council Tax Revenue. Bromyard has the highest council tax in the county: I moved house to reduce that outgoing because I am on a pension. Council Tax is my biggest financial outlay. Take into full account that Herefordshire is a rural farming county with few A roads, countless B/C lanes and scattered dwellings. Farming practices is charging fields further away from fields, larger machinery on roads. Increased tourism, holiday cottage etc will increase road friction/accidents. Plus additional school journeys due to rural area. Understand your catchment area. 1 person to speak to on the phone and sort things much more rapidly and satisfactorily than online services.
	More safe cycle routes in and around city.
	Need a bypass in Hereford
	Old Market development has drawn shoppers out of town. More investment needed in Eign Street part of Hereford City Centre.
	Please, please stop building thee housing estates. Regenerate brownfield sites & invest in tourism instead.
	Potholes and pavements make moving around in mobility scooters very difficult.
	Recontract BBLP contract to get a better service
	The problem lies with the £20million in cuts to already stretched services. I feel as local people we shouldn't be forced into vicious cuts to vital services to pay for the economic collapse engineered by Tories who priorities backs bonuses

	The word review (services) suggest you're not doing that which any responsible council would be doing, all the time. 'Review' implies cut since that's the only option. Impossible to support or not support.
	Underpass under Whitecross is a disgrace. Cycle path is a waste of money. Trees on station approach - all damaged. Excess planters. More maintenance of streets and cleaning.
	Wasted money on St. Owen Street cycle path
	We need prevention not cures for issues
	With regard to Selling empty Council owned buildings - Yes to empty large buildings, No if it is housing.
	Would like to see benefit related community/ charity volunteering to help with street cleaning as a way to earn benefits.
	Young people's mental health needs more support. Therapy/counselling isn't always available or accessible