

Budget Consultation Results **(for the Council's 2021/22 Budget)**

1. Executive Summary

This consultation was open from the 1 October 2020 to the 8 November 2020 and the results will be considered by both Cabinet and Council when shaping and approving the final Budget for 2021/22.

Residents and organisations have been giving their views on the services where they feel the Council should be spending more or reducing spending, and whether they agree with the overall budget proposals. Respondents were also invited to make any general comments or suggestions regarding next year's budget.

There were a total of 905¹ completed responses to this year's Budget Consultation, which includes 896 residents and 9 representatives of organisations.

30% of respondents agreed with the proposed allocation of Buckinghamshire Council's annual budget for 2021/22 with 36% of respondents disagreeing with the proposal. 35% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal.

The top 10 services where respondents felt spending should increase are; road maintenance (61%), waste management (44%), pavement maintenance (44%), community safety (33%), protecting the environment (32%), maintaining parks & open spaces (25%), services and support for children and young people (20%), street cleaning services (20%), services and support for vulnerable adults and older people (20%) and educational services (20%).

This was a self-selecting, online consultation that was open to all stakeholders. A range of promotional activity was undertaken to raise awareness of the survey and to encourage participation, this included:

- **Press releases** – two press releases were distributed, one at the launch of the consultation and one towards the end, both sent to nearly 600 recipients. The press releases were sent to local media, editors of town and parish publications, members, town and parish councils and CMT.
- **Internal Communications** - articles were included in both the Member newsletter on three occasions and in the 'Together' update sent to all Council staff.
- **Paid-for social media advertising** – three paid for campaigns to Facebook which generated over 700 clicks and a reach of over 19,000 ².
- **Organic social media posts**³ – a variety of posts on both Facebook (reaching 54,000) and Twitter (potentially reaching over 475,000). There were also two posts to Nextdoor but the reach of these is unknown.
- **Engagement with Community Boards** – a briefing note was sent to all boards to cascade out to local contacts, including Town and Parish Councils.

¹ This includes all respondents that partly answered the survey or completed the entire questionnaire.

² "Reach" refers to the number of individual social media accounts a post has been seen by. For example, if it shows up on one person's Facebook feed twice, that is counted as one reach, however if it shows up on the same person's Twitter feed and then their Facebook feed, that counts as two reaches.

³ "Organic" refers to reach we did not pay for, posted from the BC social channels.

2. Results

2.1 The Council's plan for allocation of the annual budget

Respondents were presented with information regarding the Council's plan for allocating the 2021/22 budget.

This included information explaining that it is a legal requirement that the Council limits its spending to the income that it receives each year. It also explained that to ensure that the Council is able to provide statutory services, as well as other services that are most important to people, it is proposing to focus spending on priority areas and reduce spending in other areas.

Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed allocation of Buckinghamshire Council's annual budget for 2021/22?

Respondents were presented with the proposed budget allocation for the Council and then asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the proposal on a five point scale.

30% of all respondents agreed with the proposal but there were relatively high levels of disagreement at 36%. There was a significant proportion of respondents (35%) who neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposed allocation of budget (Figure 1).

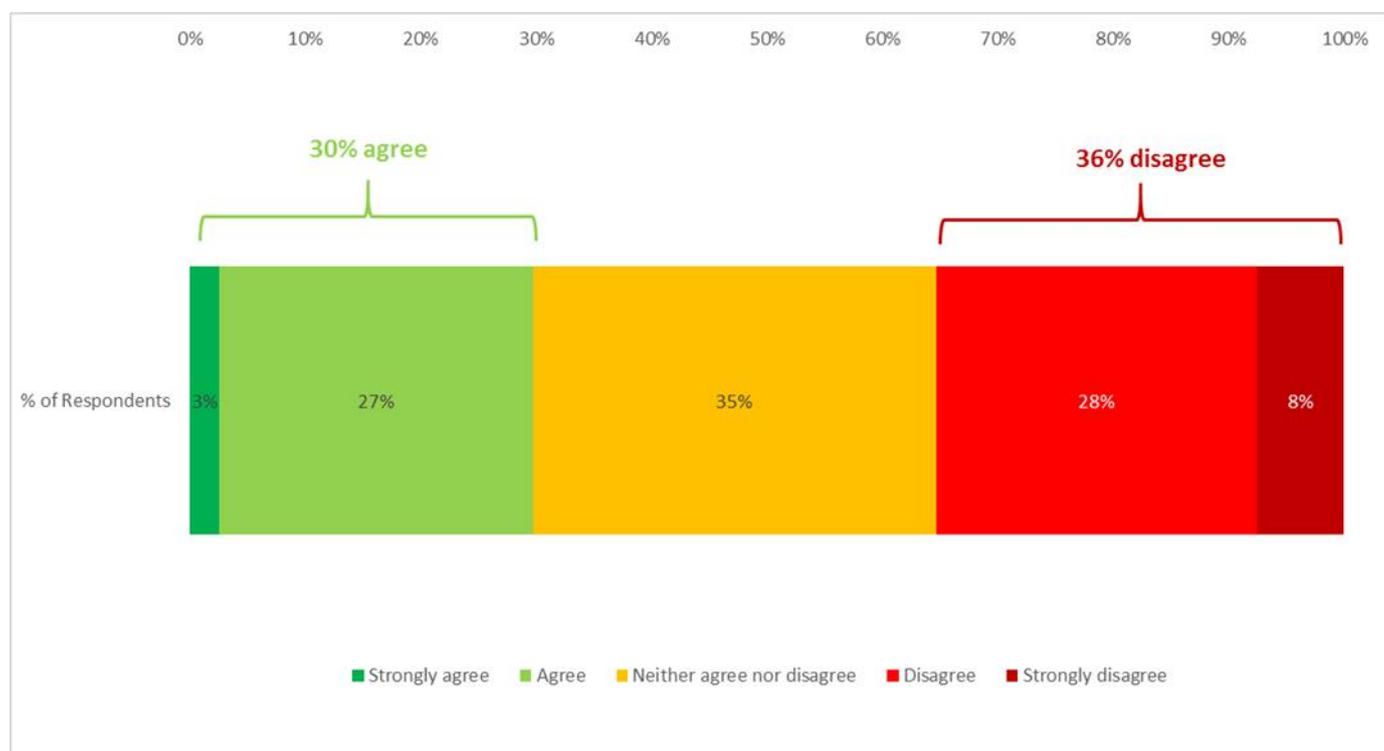


Figure 1: Proportion of respondents who agreed and disagreed with the proposed budget allocation. Based on 905 respondents. Due to the rounding up of figures, percentages may not equal 100.

Differences in opinion for different groups of residents were then analysed to understand whether they were statistically significant (at a 95% confidence level).

- Councillors/MPs were more likely than other respondents to express an opinion (agree/disagree) on the proposed budget, with none of this group choosing "neither agree nor disagree.
- Older people aged 65+ were less likely to disagree (21%) with the proposed budget allocation than those under 65 (41%)
- Respondents from BAME backgrounds were more likely to disagree (53% compare with 32% from white ethnic groups)
- Those with disability were less likely to agree (20% compared with 33% without a disability)
- Respondents with children under 18 were less likely to agree with the Council's proposed budget (23% compared with 31% of those without children under 18)

2.2 Comments about the proposed spending plans

Q2. Do you have any comments about the proposed spending plans?

Out of the 905 respondents to the survey, 563 made specific comments. Each comment was categorised to understand common themes. Please note a respondent may have mentioned more than one theme – for example a respondent who commented on roads, education and waste and recycling would appear in all three categories.

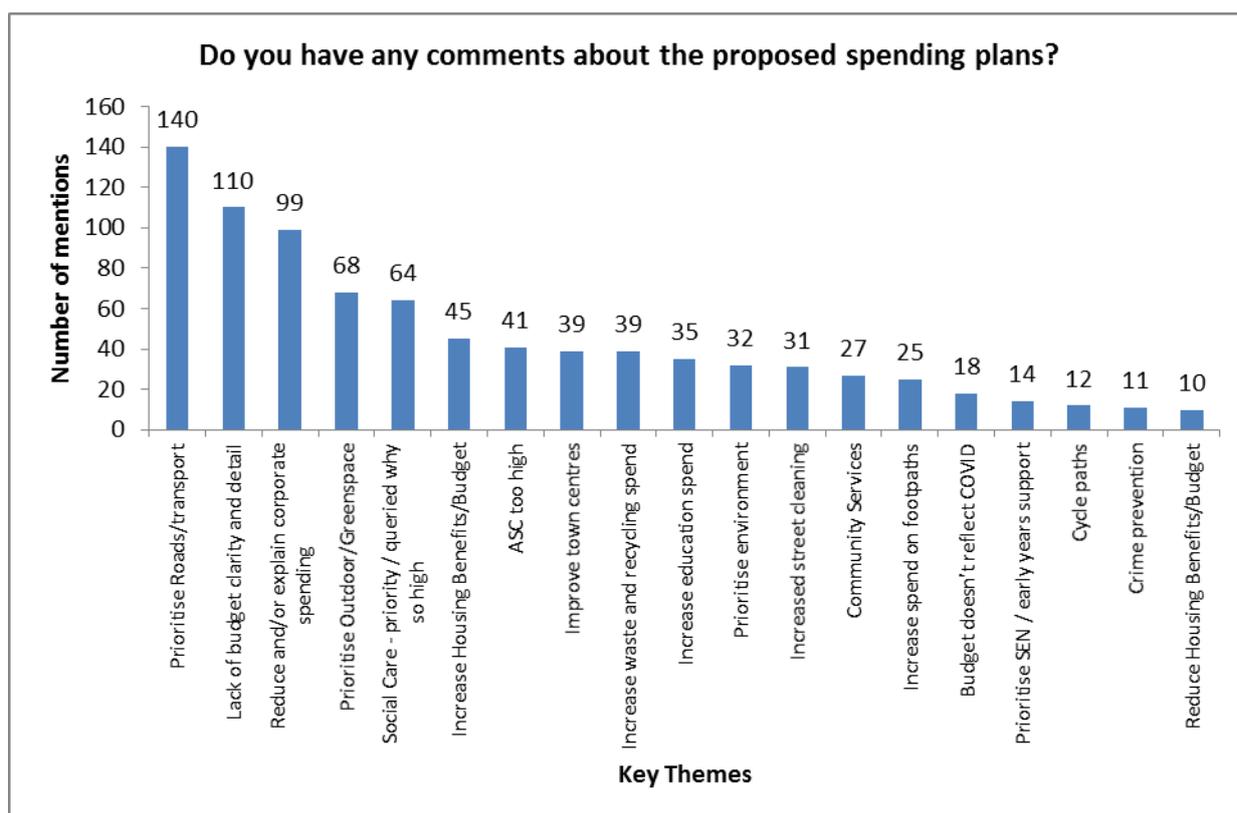


Figure 2: Count of comments by category. Based on 563 respondents who made an additional comment.

The key themes from these comments are detailed below:

Prioritise Roads/Transport

There were 140 comments which referenced roads and transport, with key concerns regarding prevalence of pot holes and insufficient or poor repair of pot holes, and the suggestion for an increased budget for this programme.

The roads require a much improved program of repairs. Some of the highways are now in such a poor state that they pose a safety risk, particularly to motorcyclists

The budget money in the future for road repairs isn't big enough. The current approach of patching pot holes that reappear after a month is inefficient. Please allocate more money to repairing the roads properly in order to save

Lack of budget clarity and detail

There were 110 comments which referred to the clarity of the survey and the requirement for a more detailed budget breakdown.

It is difficult to make clear assessment based only on pie chart and overall figures. Why are your ICT costs so high? Is there new infrastructure being built? Adult social care - is money well spent? Are all contracts scrutinised? A bit vague but welcome opportunity to at least comment

There is not enough detail given to make any informed judgement. For example - what does "Adults Social Care" actually include?

Reduce and/or explain corporate spending

There were 99 comments regarding the corporate spending figures stated in the survey. Concerns were raised over the size of these amounts and where the investment could be better used.

Need to concentrate or providing core services to vulnerable members of our community and environment/crime/waste/recycling. Less needs to be spent on back office functions and corporate services.

ICT needs further explanation at over £11 million as does "other corporate services" these are quite large amounts which there seems to be no detailed explanation

Prioritise Outdoor/Greenspace

There were 68 comments regarding Outdoor/Greenspace with respondents keen to see increased spending in this area.

Green/open spaces have been a lifeline for so many people during the pandemic and their improvement and maintenance should have a much higher priority.

Social Care - priority / queried why so high

There were 64 comments concerning the amount spent within Adult & Children's Social Care, most agreeing that this is the priority.

I think it is right for adult social care to have the largest amount particularly at this time.

Adult social care and children's services have to be the priority.

Increase Housing Benefits/Budget

There were 45 comments suggesting the housing budget needs to be increased.

*Why is so little being allocated to providing social housing in the county?
It is not nearly enough considering the homelessness and lack of housing provision that is such a long term issue for people here.*

Areas such as Housing and Housing Benefits need more attention over areas like ICT and the unspecified "other corporate services".

Adult Social Care too high

There were 41 comments concerning the amount spent within Adult Social Care, with most stating that it seemed high.

That seems a huge amount to be spent on Adult Social Care. Don't get me wrong, I know there's a huge need. But it seems wrong, somehow, that it so far outweighs other priorities, particularly children's care and education. I speak as an older resident.

Adults Social Care budget seems very top heavy. Can the Council assure tax payers that all this money will be sensibly spent, as circumstances at present have highlighted this area and not always in a good light.

Improve town centres

There were 39 comments in regard to improving town centres and the money spent in this area.

Improving town centres (street cleaning and maintaining open/green spaces) should be higher in the budget, as they have been decimated in recent years due to online shopping and services, and further so, because of the pandemic. Town centres and 'high streets' are the life blood of our communities.

Improving Town centres. WDC put a huge amount of cash into the New BC. The small spend on Town centres isn't reasonable - Wycombe needs a Garden Town project like Aylesbury.

Waste and recycling spend

There were 39 comments raising concerns around the money spent, quality of service and level of fly tipping.

You should break down the waste contract's 22.7million so as we can see what is being spent on bin collections. This is a new contract and so far the service has been dire, it needs monitoring very closely to be value for money.

2.3 Service Priorities

Q3. Thinking about how we can balance our budget, please indicate for each of the following services, whether you think we should spend more, less or about the same.

When presented with a list of services, respondents were asked to select whether they felt the Council should spend more, less or the same on each service or area of spending. The option of 'I'm not sure' was also available as an answer. The number of respondents for each question varied as some respondents did not give an answer for some services. There were 7 respondents who skipped this section entirely.

According to Figure 3 shown below, the service areas which were selected by the highest proportion of respondents for increased spending are:

- Road Maintenance
- Pavement Maintenance
- Waste Management
- Protecting the Environment
- Community Safety

The service areas which were selected by the highest proportion of respondents for reduced spending are:

- Taxi Licensing
- Public Health
- Car Parking
- Registrar Services
- Home to School Transport

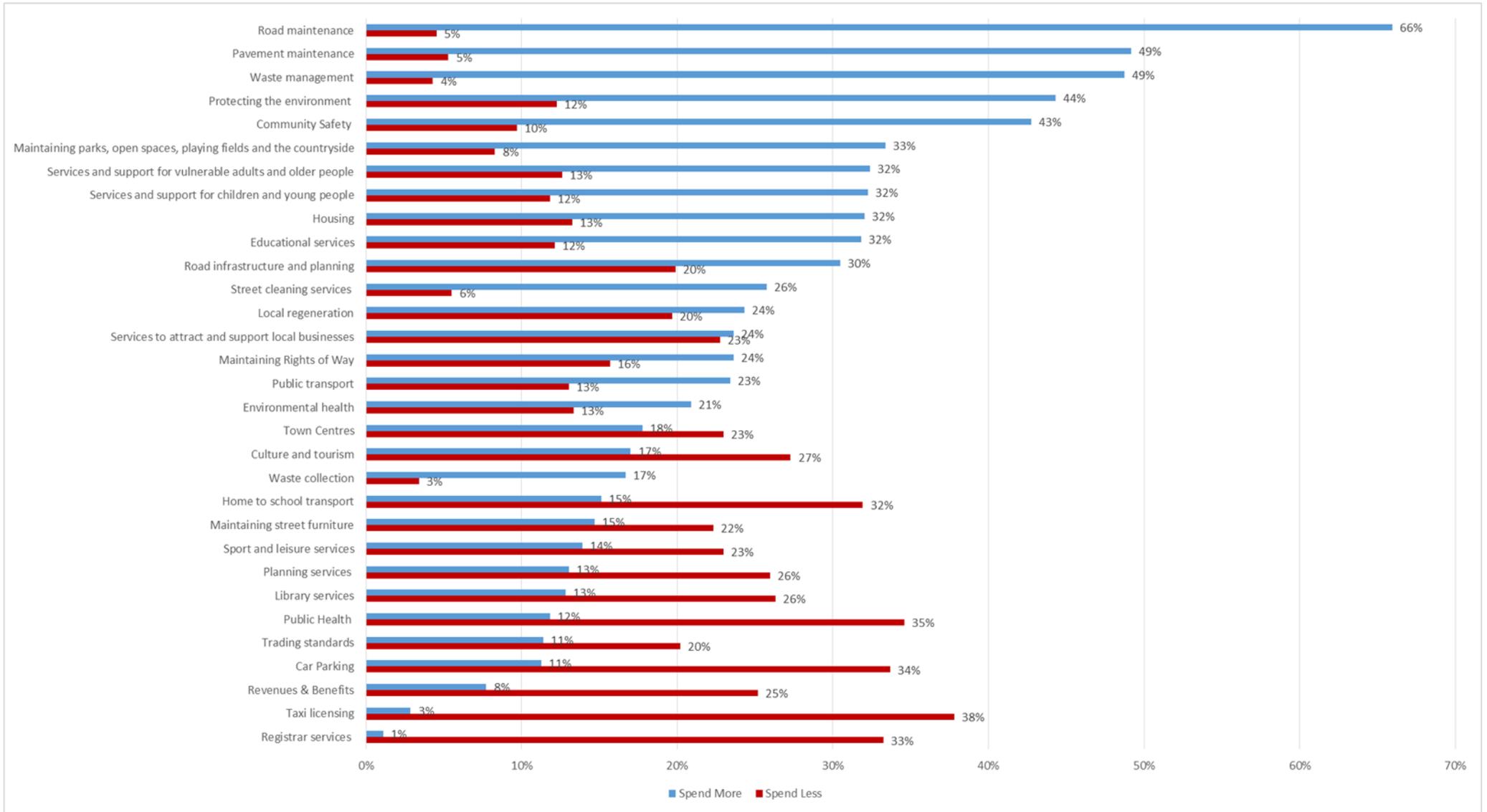


Figure 3: Proportion of the 905 residents and organisations responding to 'spend more', 'spend the same' or 'spend less' by service

There were some statistically significant differences between the opinions of different respondent groups.

- **Protecting the Environment** was the highest priority for **younger people** (under 35) with 62% stating that more should be spent in this area, compared with 42% of 53+ respondents.
- Other notable differences between under and over 35s were that significantly more younger people thought that more should be spent on Housing (53% vs. 30% of 35+), Local Businesses (47% vs. 21% of 35+), Town Centres (44% vs. 18%), Adult Services (42% vs. 32%), Educational Services (41% vs. 31%), Sport and Leisure (32% vs. 13%), Home to School Transport (27% vs. 14%), Revenues and Benefits (23% vs. 6%) and Planning Services (21% vs. 12%).
- **Older people** (65+) placed less importance on Community Safety, Local Regeneration, Maintaining Parks and Street Furniture.
- In general, spending priorities for respondents from **BAME ethnic groups** were of similar rankings to white ethnic groups. However there were some areas with significant differences, with some of the notable differences including for Local Regeneration (50% BAME vs. 23% white), Services for Children and Young People (62% BAME vs. 32% white), Community Safety (62% BAME vs. 43% white). However, it is worth noting the relatively low number of respondents from a BAME background (34).
- Respondents with **children under 18** placed higher priority on Children's Services (42% vs. 30% without), Maintaining Parks (41% compared with 31%), Home to School Transport (25% vs. 12% without), Sports and Leisure services (25% vs. 10%), Local Regeneration (30% vs. 22% without).
- Respondents **with a disability** placed higher priority on Environmental Health (28% compared with 20% of those without a disability). Local Regeneration was of lesser importance, with 18% of those with a disability saying more should be spent on this compared with 26% of those without a disability.
- There were some differences in opinion by **gender**, a higher proportion of female respondents thought more should be spent on Services for Children and Young People (40% vs. 25% male), Services for Vulnerable Adults and Older People (41% female vs. 24% male).
- There was also a difference between opinions of males and females regarding where less money should be spent. For Community Safety, more males (12%) than females (7%) thought less money should be spent on this, whilst for Library Services, more males (33%) than females (21%) thought that less should be spent.
- Due to the relatively low number of responses, and large number of **Community Board Areas**, it was not possible to find significant differences between individual Board Areas. However, a closer look at the data showed that there were some notable differences between High Wycombe and other areas. Local Regeneration (42% vs. 23%) and Town Centres (43% vs. 16%) were areas where residents in the High Wycombe Community Board Area thought that more should be spent than those in other regions.
- A higher proportion of **Buckinghamshire Council employees** (52%) thought that more should be spent on Children's Services than those respondents not employed by the council (30%).

Services net position on spending

The graph below shows the ‘net’ position for each service, by looking at the proportion of people who prioritised spending and then minusing the proportion who selected that spending should be reduced.

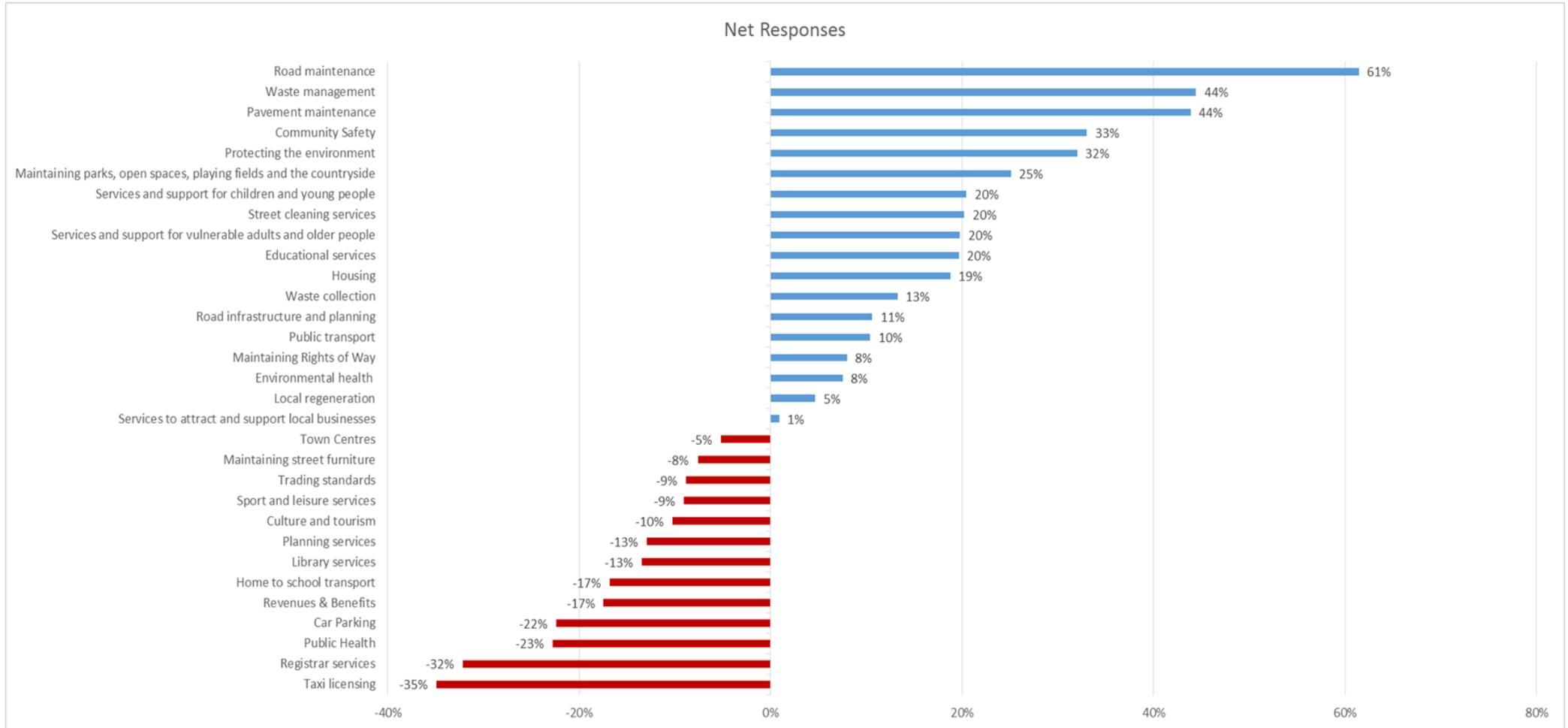


Figure 4: Net proportion of the 905 residents and organisations responding to the “Prioritise spending” and “Spend less” questions. Services in order of net priority high to low

Appendix 4

Road maintenance has the highest net priority at 61%. This means that significantly more respondents overall chose to prioritise spending in this area than to reduce it.

Other areas which have a high net priority include, Waste management (44%), Pavement Maintenance (44%), Community Safety (33%) and Protecting the Environment (32%).

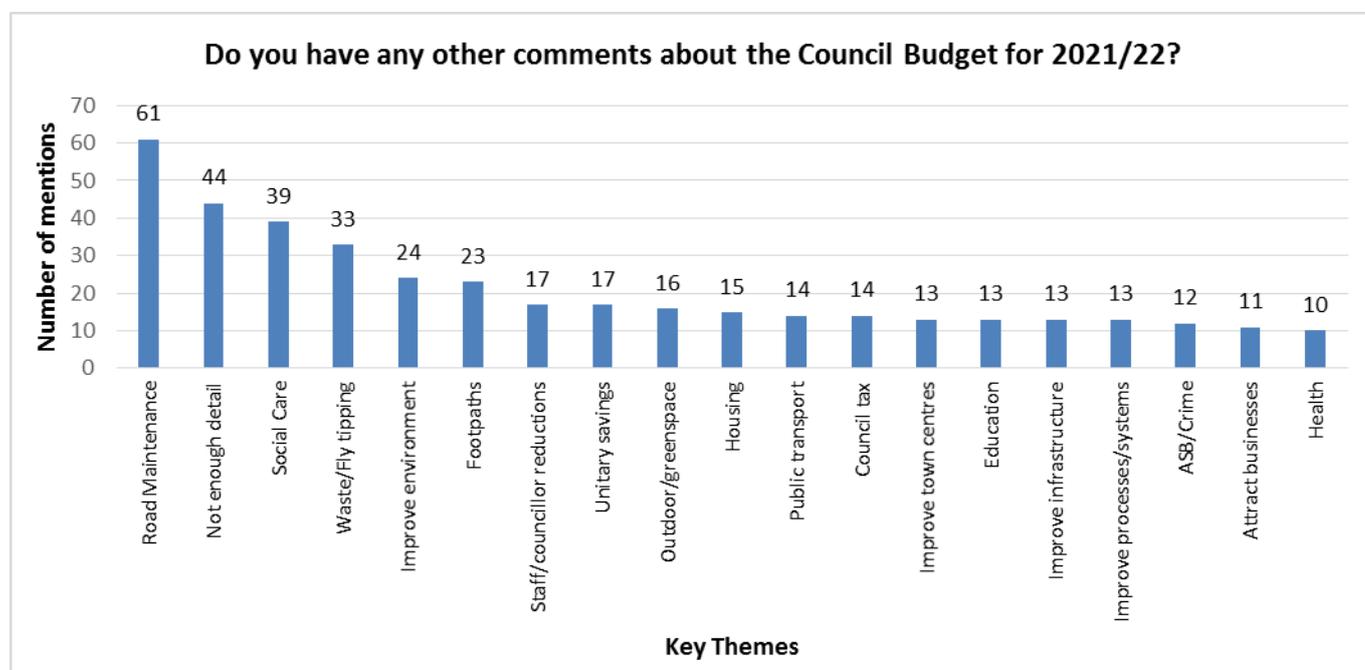
Taxi Licensing has the lowest net priority at minus 35%. This means that significantly more respondents overall chose to reduce spending in this area than prioritise it.

Other areas which have a low net priority include, Registrar Services (-32%), Public Health (-23%), Car Parking (-22%) and Revenues & Benefits (-17%)

2.4 Comments about the Council budget

Q4. Do you have any other comments about the Council Budget for 2021/22?

Out of the 905 respondents to the survey, 328 made specific comments. Each comment was categorised to understand common themes. Please note a respondent may have mentioned more than one theme – for example a respondent who commented on roads, education and waste and recycling would appear in all three categories.



Road Maintenance

There were 61 comments expressing that the state of the roads need to be improved.

I think overall you do a reasonable job and it must be hard to balance the budget with competing needs of equal importance and reduced incomes

Do think our roads are significantly worse than some areas though - just back from Kent holiday and they were noticeably better

Please spend more on road repairs and better quality repairs I have been told the pot holes in Chalfont St. Peter are not fixed because they are not considered bad enough! Yet we have to drive around them very dangerous now dark evenings are here - very poor roads

Not enough detail

There were 44 comments asking for a more detailed breakdown of the budget to allow better scrutiny.

Can you please provide a link to more detailed spending proposals so that we can make an informed decision of what you plan to spend?

Impossible to dive deeper, but the overheads to deliver the services in this budget need to have an open public review.

Social Care

There were 39 comments concerning social care, residents agree that this is a priority but there is concern over the amounts being spent particularly in Adult Social Care.

Social care is undoubtedly and rightly top priority

Different priorities in pandemic times - need to ensure adult social care is responsive.

Waste/Fly tipping

There were 33 comments concerning waste and fly tipping, many associating this to the charging system now in place.

Has fly tipping increased since you started charging for recycling household items?

Fly tipping prosecutions must increase in line with the increase in fly tipping!

Improve environment

There were 24 comments asking the Council to ensure it works to improve the environment and reduce its carbon footprint.

Within each budget area there should be a strong focus on initiatives to reduce our carbon footprint as the council has already agreed to do. I think your budget should have specific element for reducing Buckinghamshire's carbon output

Now is the chance to make green transport the primary transport option. Don't overlook the opportunity you have now to make a difference.

Footpaths

There were 23 comments from residents wanting improvements and repairs to the footpaths.

I would like to see more done to make it easy for people to walk, such as better maintenance of pavements including cutting back overgrown trees/bushes, and development of walking areas. Pavements are often a trip hazard and just too uneven for old people or the infirm or those using buggies or wheelchairs

The roads and pavements from what I understand get patch jobs at times but these need to be fixed properly.

Staff/councillor reductions

There were 17 comments suggesting a reduction in the number of staff and elected members.

I would hope that savings will continue to be made now that there is just one council and not several, as before. Savings must be made as a result of effective negotiation with suppliers and costs should be reduced by reducing staffing levels where they have previously overlapped.

Reduce the number of Buckinghamshire Council Cllrs.

Unitary savings

There were 17 comments around the formation of Buckinghamshire Council and the savings that were mentioned in the build-up.

It would be interesting to know exactly how much money had been saved by forming the unitary authority and where the savings were made.

Would be interesting to see how the budget has changed and what has been saved as a result of the unitary move. This surely should have brought savings to the council, with reduction in duplicated services/roles/admin, as well as stock take of resources and equipment.

Outdoor/greenspace

There were 16 comments mentioning outdoor space and the importance of protecting it especially considering how it aided mental health during lockdown.

More money should be invested in public open spaces/areas such as improved sports facilities and things like skate parks and pump tracks to name a few we lack. This will help improve people's mental and physical wellbeing

It is vital to protect green spaces and the Green Belt. We all need to have green spaces near our homes, especially during this time of Covid restrictions.

Housing

There were 16 comments on the subject of housing, the majority want investment to improve the available provision.

I can't stress enough that more money should be pumped into housing benefits and housing in general.

Your housing development is of substandard quality, room sizes, lack of nature consideration (e.g. nest bricks etc.), and without infrastructure, so you are storing up trouble for future generations to deal with

3. Respondent profile

3.1 Residents

The profile of those residents who responded to the survey was compared to the Buckinghamshire demographic profile to understand whether the survey sample contains an over or under representation of certain demographic groups.

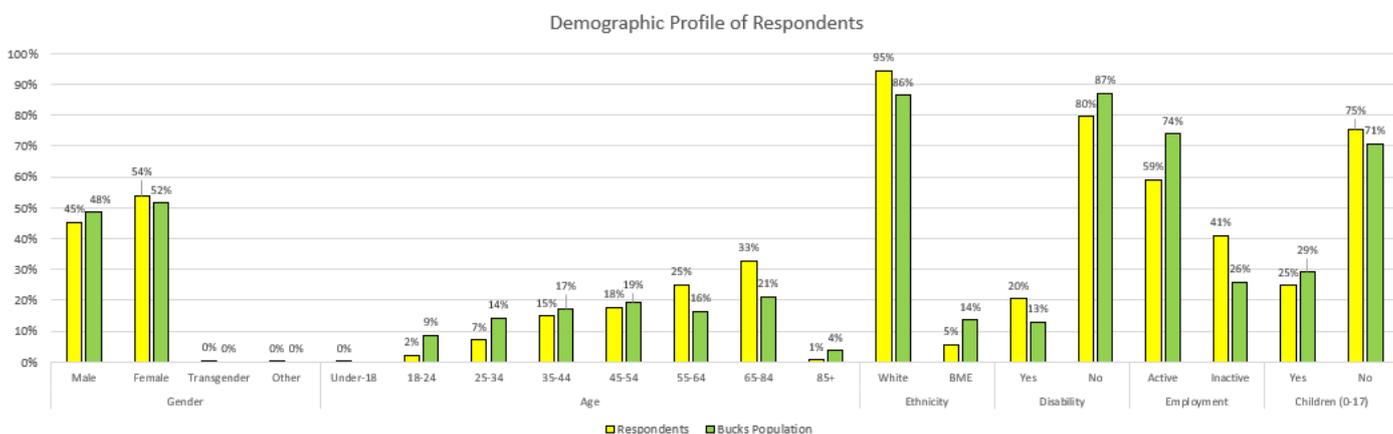


Figure 6: Demographics of respondents. Based on the following responses Gender (824), Age (842), Children aged 0-17 (871), Ethnicity (784), Disability (818), Present Job Category (842)

Sources: Census 2011 (Ethnicity, Disability, Children 0-17, Employment), ONS MYE 2020 (Gender and Age)

A higher proportion of respondents (58%) were in the 55+ age groups compared with the Buckinghamshire population, where there are 41% in these age bands.

White ethnic groups (95%) were over-represented compared with the Buckinghamshire population (86%). Those in employment (57%) were under-represented compared with the Buckinghamshire average (74%).

There is a higher proportion of respondents with a disability (20%) compared with the Buckinghamshire population (13%)

Resident’s postcodes were also linked to an ACORN category for their local area. This is a classification of people according to a range of demographics (which help us understand their level of deprivation) based on the area that they live in (source: CACI 2018).

There are 5 categories that have been used in this analysis. Affluent Acorn Groups were over-represented, with 60% from the “Affluent Achievers” category, compared with 47% in Buckinghamshire.

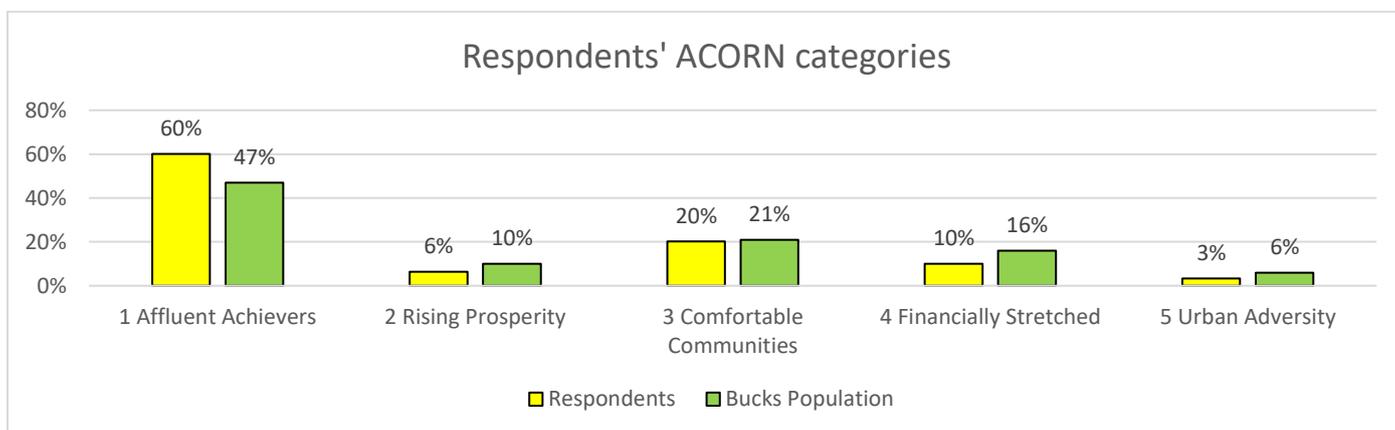


Figure 7: Respondents’ ACORN categories. Based on 681 respondents with a valid postcode that could be matched to ACORN.

3.2 Organisations

Of the 905 completed consultation responses, 9 were from representatives from an organisation or business. Due to the low response rate we do not have enough responses to understand the views of this group as a whole, however, of those organisations who provided a response to the free text questions, we have provided some verbatim comments below to give an insight into the views expressed.

Do you have any comments about the proposed spending plans?

"...If ways can be found to improve our green environment, then more should be spent on this including maintaining rights of way and pavements."

"We are a business in HW and never receive any assistance from the Local Council..."

"To allocate the budget for 2021/22 in the same way as for 2020/21 gives no consideration for the situation going forward due to the pandemic. Things have changed and so should the budget. However, without providing more detail about specific areas of expenditure, it ridiculous to ask for opinions as the figures have no basis upon which to comment."

"...I think that an increase in spending on housing and spending less on improving town centres because people are out in them less as more shopping goes online and people either can't go out as much during the pandemic or don't want to."

"The consultation doesn't offer a breakdown of what is actually being spent on the item..."

"We are desperate for cycling infrastructure, surely £1m could be put aside for this?"

"...Support local"

"You forgot footpaths. Shrubs & overgrowth along footpaths"

Do you have any other comments about the Council Budget for 2021/22?

"...the current state of our footpaths are not fit for purpose. There are overgrown hedges & bramble along most footpaths. If this was sorted most elderly people would go out which would minimise isolation & mobility issues."

"There is nothing for cycling infrastructure. Bucks has much less infrastructure than other areas of the country..."

"We pay a disproportionate amount of tax to fund and subsidise other councils elsewhere in UK. Our roads are busier because we have more commerce and generate more tax and therefore our roads need more maintenance therefore we should receive higher contributions from Central Government to support this rather than watch them wasting our tax on High Speed Trains."

"Local Business lose out and have to also pay the Wycombe Bid fund each year and again we do not gain through this."

4. Appendix

Q3. Thinking about how we can balance our budget, please indicate for each of the following services, whether you think we should spend more, less or about the same.

This table of services and the detail provides more context for the graphs which are included in question 3.

Service short name	Service additional details
Car Parking	Including car parks and street parking
Community Safety	Including working with other organisations to tackle anti-social behaviour, violence and hate crime
Culture and tourism	Including museums, country parks and archaeology
Educational services	Including childcare, pre-school and school admissions
Environmental health	Including food hygiene inspections and air quality monitoring
Home to school transport	N/A
Housing	Including finding a home, tenancy issues and homelessness issues
Library services	N/A
Local regeneration	N/A
Maintaining parks, open spaces, playing fields and the countryside	N/A
Maintaining Rights of Way	N/A
Maintaining street furniture	Including signs and benches
Pavement maintenance	Including footpaths
Planning services	Including advice, enforcement, development plans, planning applications and building control
Protecting the environment	Including development of green spaces and renewable energy
Public Health	Including smoking cessation and drug/alcohol services
Public transport	N/A
Registrar services	Including civil weddings, register offices and births & deaths
Revenues & Benefits	Including Council Tax and Housing Benefit
Road infrastructure and planning	N/A
Road maintenance	N/A
Services and support for children and young people	N/A
Services and support for vulnerable adults and older people	N/A
Services to attract and support local businesses	N/A
Sport and leisure services	N/A
Street cleaning services	Including servicing public litter bins and dog bins
Taxi licensing	N/A
Town Centres	N/A
Trading standards	Including advice for businesses, product recalls and fraud / scams
Waste collection	N/A
Waste management	Including fly-tipping prosecutions and recycling

4.1 Appendix – full set of categories from comments**Q2. Do you have any comments about the proposed spending plans?**

Note that there can be multiple categories per comment for the same respondents.

Category	Responses	Percentage
Prioritise roads/transport	140	14.8%
Lack of budget clarity and detail	110	11.7%
Reduce and/or explain corporate spending	99	10.5%
Prioritise outdoor/greenspace	68	7.2%
Social Care - priority / queried why so high	64	6.8%
Increase Housing Benefits/Budget	45	4.8%
ASC too high	41	4.3%
Improve town centres	39	4.1%
Increase waste and recycling spend	39	4.1%
Increase education spend	35	3.7%
Prioritise environment	32	3.4%
Increased street cleaning	31	3.3%
Community Services	27	2.9%
Increase spend on footpaths	25	2.7%
Budget doesn't reflect COVID	18	1.9%
Prioritise SEN / early years support	14	1.5%
Cycle paths	12	1.3%
Crime prevention	11	1.2%
Reduce housing benefits/budget	10	1.1%
Reduce staff	9	1.0%
Improve drainage	9	1.0%
Attract/support business	9	1.0%
Reduce exec pay/councillors	9	1.0%
Car park charges/enforcement	8	0.8%
Unitary	8	0.8%
Reduce town centre spend in light of Lockdown	7	0.7%
Improve car park infrastructure	6	0.6%
Keep spend the same as last year / Display last year's budget	6	0.6%
Homelessness	5	0.5%
Increase PH services	4	0.4%
Childcare provision	2	0.2%
High speed broadband	1	0.1%

Q4. Do you have any other comments about the Council Budget for 2021/22?

Note that there can be multiple categories per comment for the same respondents.

Category	Responses	Percentage
Road maintenance	61	11.4%
Not enough detail	44	8.2%
Social Care	39	7.3%
Waste/Fly tipping	33	6.2%
Improve environment	24	4.5%
Footpaths	23	4.3%
Staff/councillor reductions	17	3.2%
Unitary savings	17	3.2%
Outdoor/greenspace	16	3.0%
Housing	15	2.8%
Public transport	14	2.6%
Council tax	14	2.6%
Improve town centres	13	2.4%
Education	13	2.4%
Improve infrastructure	13	2.4%
Improve processes/systems	13	2.4%
ASB/Crime	12	2.2%
Attract businesses	11	2.1%
Health	10	1.9%
Staff pay	9	1.7%
Young people	9	1.7%
Reduce parking charges	9	1.7%
Cycle paths	9	1.7%
HS2	9	1.7%
Improve quality of repairs	9	1.7%
More equitably distributed funds	9	1.7%
Maintain services through competitive contracts	8	1.5%
COVID	8	1.5%
Reduce traffic speed	7	1.3%
Build sense of community	7	1.3%
Devolved decision making to parishes	6	1.1%
Homelessness	6	1.1%
Estate regeneration	5	0.9%
Reduce consultant spend	5	0.9%
Reduce bureaucracy	4	0.7%
Use community service/volunteers to better improve Bucks	4	0.7%
Leisure facilities	3	0.6%
Improve revenue streams	3	0.6%
Brexit	2	0.4%
Broadband	1	0.2%
Reduce investment in commercial property	1	0.2%

4.2 Appendix - Differences for Demographic Groups

Responses have been analysed for different groups of people. Results have been compared within each demographic category (i.e. gender: male, female) to show where results are statistically different from each other (to a 95% level of confidence)².

4.2.1 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed allocation of Buckinghamshire Council's annual budget for 2021/22?

- Councillors/MPs were more likely than other respondents to express an opinion (agree/disagree) on the proposed budget, with none of this group choosing "neither agree nor disagree compared with 35% from other respondent groups.
- Older people aged 65+ were less likely to disagree (21%) with the proposed budget allocation than those under 65 (41%)
- Respondents from a BAME background were more likely to disagree (53% compared with 32% from white ethnic groups)
- Those with a disability were less likely to agree (20% compared with 33% without a disability)
- Respondents with children under 18 were less likely to agree with the Council's proposed budget (23% compared with 31% of those without children under 18)

4.2.2 Areas to spend more/less/same**Car Parking such as car parks, street parking**

- No significant differences found between demographic groups.

Community Safety such as working with other organisations to tackle anti-social behaviour, violence and hate crime

- Significantly fewer females (7%) than males (12%) thought that less money should be spent on Community Safety
- Community Safety was a bigger issue for respondents from a BAME background than for white ethnic groups, with 62% saying that more should be spent on this compared with 42% of white respondents
- Fewer respondents from older age groups (65+) thought that more should be spent on Community Safety (39%) than those under 65 (47%)

Culture and tourism such as museums, country parks and archaeology

- Double the proportion of under 45s (28%) thought that more money should be spent on Culture and Tourism compared with those age 45+ (14%)

² Note that this is a self-selecting survey and although it is standard practice to statistically test results, the theoretical application of significance testing is based in random sampling approaches (rather than self-selecting surveys). Statistical differences are also noted when there are at least 28 in the demographic group.

Educational services such as childcare, pre-school, school admissions

- A higher proportion of younger respondents (under 45) thought that more should be spent on Educational Services (44%) than those aged 45+ (28%)

Environmental health services such as food hygiene inspections and air quality monitoring

- People with a disability were more likely to say that more should be spent on Environmental Health (28%) than those without a disability (20%)
- Environmental Health was a bigger issue for respondents from a BAME background than for White ethnic groups, with 38% saying that more should be spent on this compared with 20% of white ethnicity.

Home to school transport

- Respondents with children under 18 were more likely to think that more should be spent on Home to School Transport (25% compared with 12% without children under 18)
- A higher proportion of younger people aged under 35 (27%) compared with those aged 35+ (14%) thought that more money should be allocated to Home to School Transport.

Housing such as finding a home, tenancy issues, homelessness issues

- A higher proportion of younger people aged under 35 (53%) compared with those aged 35+ (30%) thought that more money should be allocated to Housing.
- More female respondents (36%) than males (28%) thought that more should be spent on housing.

Library services

- More males (33%) than females (21%) thought that less should be spent on Library Services

Local regeneration

- The proportion of respondents from a BAME background who thought that more should be spent on regeneration (50%) was more than double the proportion of white respondents (23%)
- Fewer respondents with a disability (18%) thought that more should be spent on local regeneration than those without a disability (26%)
- Respondents with children under 18 were more likely to think that more should be spent on Local Regeneration (30% compared with 22% without children under 18)
- 42% of respondents from the High Wycombe Community Board area thought that more should be spent on Local Regeneration compared with 23% from other areas.
- Local regeneration was an area of more importance to respondents from respondents from a BAME background - 50% thought more money should be spent on this than white ethnic groups (23%)

- Local Regeneration was of lesser importance to those aged 65+ than those under 65. Only 14% of 65+ respondents thought more should be spent in this area compared with 30% of under 65s.
- 42% of respondents from the High Wycombe Community Board area thought that more should be spent on Local Regeneration compared with 23% from other areas.

Maintaining parks, open spaces, playing fields and the countryside

- Respondents with children under 18 were more likely to think that more should be spent on Maintaining Parks (41% compared with 31% without children under 18)
- Respondents who are employed by Bucks Council were less likely to say that more money should be spent on maintaining parks (19%) than those not employed by the council (41%)
- A higher proportion of under 65s (37%) thought that more should be spent on maintaining parks than those aged 65+ (25%)

Maintaining Rights of Way

- Significantly fewer people aged 35 and over (22%) thought that more money should be spent on Maintaining Rights of Way than people aged under 35 (32%)

Maintaining street furniture including signs, benches

- More male (18%) than female (10%) respondents thought that more should be spent on Maintaining Street Furniture.
- A higher proportion of respondents who were employed full time (18%) thought that more should be spent on Maintaining Street Furniture than retired respondents (11%).
- Significantly more people from a BAME background (29%) thought that more money should be spent on Maintaining Street Furniture than people from a White background (13%).
- Significantly more people aged 65 and over (28%) thought that less money should be spent on Maintaining Street Furniture than people aged under 65 (19%).

Pavement maintenance including footpaths

- A higher proportion of male (7%) than female (4%) respondents thought that less should be spent on Pavement Maintenance.

Planning services such as advice, enforcement, development plans, planning applications, building control

- Significantly more people aged under 35 (21%) thought that more money should be spent on Planning Services than people aged 35 and over (12%).

Protecting the environment such as development of green spaces, renewable energy

- Significantly fewer people aged 35 and over (42%) thought that more money should be spent on Protecting the Environment than people aged under 35 (62%).

Public Health services such as smoking cessation, drug/alcohol services

- Significantly fewer people aged 35 and over (11%) thought that more money should be spent on Public Health than people aged under 35 (19%).
- Significantly fewer people living within the High Wycombe community board area (22%) thought that less money should be spent on Public Health than people living within all other community board areas combined (35%).
- A higher proportion of respondents with a disability (19%) thought that more should be spent on Public Health than those without a disability (10%).

Public transport

- Significantly more people from a BAME background (47%) thought that more money should be spent on Public Transport (47%) than people from a White background (22%).
- Significantly more people aged under 45 (29%) thought that more money should be spent on Public Transport than people aged 45 and over (22%).

Registrar services such as civil weddings, register offices, births & deaths

- Significantly fewer people aged 55 and over (29%) thought that less money should be spent on Registrar Services than people aged under 55 (41%).

Revenues & Benefits such as Council Tax, Housing Benefit

- Significantly more people aged under 35 (23%) thought that more money should be spent on Revenues & Benefits than those aged 35 and over (6%).
- A higher proportion of full time employed respondents (31%) thought that less money should be spent on Revenues and Benefits compared with retired respondents (23%).
- A higher proportion of respondents with a disability (15%) thought that more should be spent on Revenues and Benefits than those without a disability (6%).
- A higher proportion of respondents with children under 18 (31%) thought that less money should be spent on Revenues and Benefits compared with those without children under 18 (23%).

Road infrastructure and planning

- Significantly more people aged under 55 (36%) thought that more money should be spent on Road Infrastructure than those aged 55 and over (27%).
- More male (34%) than female (28%) respondents thought that more should be spent on Road infrastructure.

Road maintenance

- Significantly more people aged 45 and over (68%) thought that more money should be spent on Road Maintenance than those aged under 45 (60%).

Services and support for children and young people

- A higher proportion of female (40%) than male respondents (25%) thought that more should be spent on services for Children and Young People
- Respondents with children under 18 (42%) were more likely to state that more money should be spent on Children's Services than those without children under 18 (30%).
- Significantly more people from a BAME background (62%) thought that more money should be spent on Children Services than people from a White background (32%).
- A higher proportion of Buckinghamshire Council employees (52%) thought that more should be spent on Children's Services than those respondents not employed by the council (30%).

Services and support for vulnerable adults and older people

- A higher proportion of female (41%) than male respondents (24%) thought that more should be spent on services for Vulnerable Adults and Older People.
- Significantly more people from a BAME background (50%) thought that more money should be spent on Adult Services than people from a White background (33%).
- Significantly fewer people aged 35 and over (32%) thought that more money should be spent on Adult Services than people aged under 35 (42%)

Services to attract and support local businesses

- Significantly more people from a BAME background (50%) thought that more money should be spent on Local businesses than people from a White background (22%).
- Significantly fewer people aged 35 and over (21%) thought that more money should be spent on Local businesses than people aged under 35 (47%)

Sport and leisure services

- A higher proportion of respondents with children under 18 (25%) thought that more should be spent on Sports and Leisure services than those without (10%).
- Significantly more people aged under 35 (32%) thought that more money should be spent on Sport and Leisure than those aged 35+ (13%).

Street cleaning services including servicing public litter bins, dog bins

- Significantly more male (30%) than female (21%) respondents thought that more money should be spent on Street cleaning services.
- Significantly more people from a BAME background (50%) thought that more money should be spent on Street cleaning services than people from a White background (24%).

Taxi licensing

- Significantly fewer people aged 55 and over (34%) thought that less money should be spent on Taxi Licensing than people aged under 55 (42%).

Town Centres

- Significantly more people from a BAME background (41%) thought that more money should be spent on Town centres than people from a White background (17%).
- Significantly fewer people aged 35 and over (15%) thought that more money should be spent on Town Centres than people aged under 35 (44%)
- Significantly more people from High Wycombe (43%) thought that more money should be spent on Town centres than people from the other Community Board areas (16%).

Trading standards such as advice for businesses, product recalls, fraud / scams

- Significantly more people from a BAME background (29%) thought that more money should be spent on Trading Standards than people from a White background (10%).

Waste collection

- Significantly more people from a BAME background (41%) thought that more money should be spent on Waste collection than people from a White background (14%).

Waste management such as fly-tipping prosecutions and recycling

- Significantly more people from a BAME background (68%) thought that more money should be spent on Waste management than people from a White background (48%).

4.3 Appendix – Questionnaire

Council Budget 2021-22 Consultation

Overview



**Buckinghamshire
Council**

Background

Each year the Council must prepare a budget and as part of the process seeks the views of residents and businesses regarding priority areas for the year ahead.

This year has been exceptional. We have incurred significant additional costs and seen income in many areas reduced in the face of the coronavirus pandemic. We have lost income in a range of areas, including parking revenue, planning applications, council tax and business rates and rental from property we own. We have incurred additional costs in providing extra support to our most vulnerable, the need to buy-in additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other one off costs linked to the pandemic.

We've had some support from government, but there is still a shortfall of some £7million in our budget, and given the rising infection rates locally and nationally, we expect the Council to be further impacted financially."

The fallout of the coronavirus pandemic is likely to affect the council and the delivery of its services for several years to come. The budget and budget priorities will reflect this.

Becoming a single unitary authority in April this year has enabled us to coordinate our response in a more focused manner - working through a single Cabinet and executive structure, leading to more effective results. As a direct result of the merger of the former local councils into a single unitary council, we have also started to make savings. Though it is likely to take several years before the full benefit of the reorganisation is realised

In considering recovery from the pandemic, we will look to focus on the priority areas outlined in our Corporate Plan:

- strengthening our communities
- improving our environment
- protecting the vulnerable
- increasing prosperity

Although the plan was developed before the pandemic, these priorities remain even more relevant today.

In preparing the budget, we also need to be aware of our statutory responsibilities: the services that we must continue to fund, such as Adult Social Care and Children's Social Care. We also need to consider more limited areas of discretionary spend that improve the quality of life for all Buckinghamshire residents.

We are committed to making savings where we can – this will include a vacancy freeze and reducing the use of agency staff, making efficiencies wherever we can. We will also continue to press government for full cost recovery and the ability to freely use ring fenced funds.

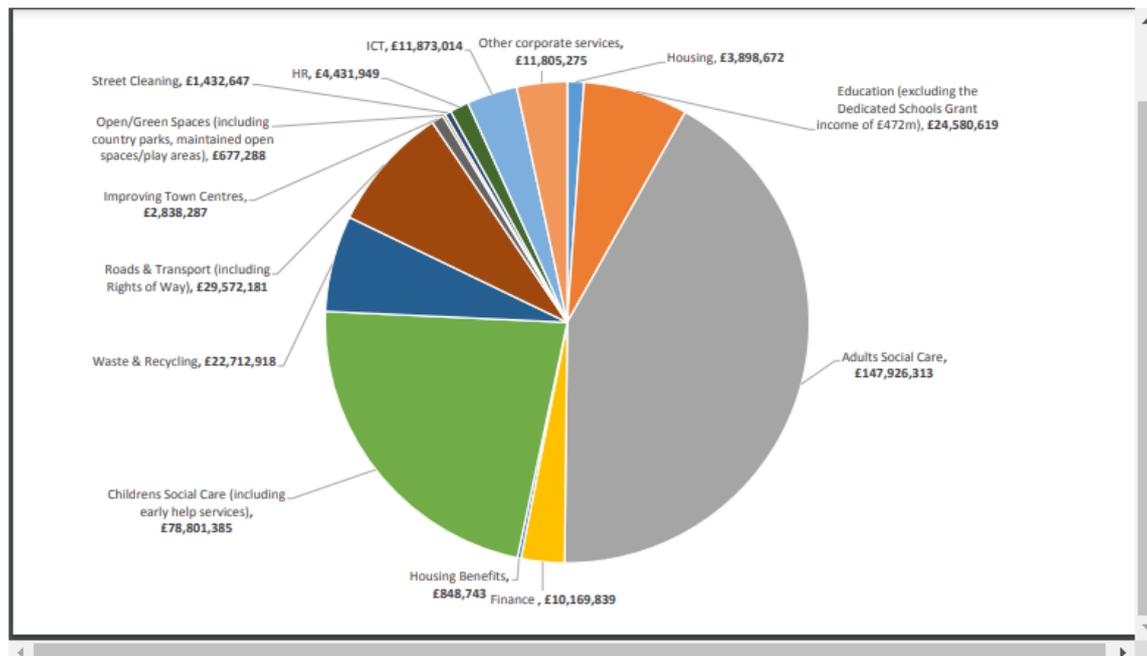
But there are many uncertainties. Will there be a second wave and a lockdown – that could impact on residents and businesses; will the government cut public spending – and support for local councils; will there be continued reduced income from services such as parking and property rental; what will happen if providers of essential services such as care homes fail; will we see inflation pressures as the cost of goods and services increase? All these factors make preparing the budget for 2021/22 extremely challenging.

In considering your response to the budget consultation survey take time to reflect on the wider needs of the whole of Buckinghamshire in addition to the specific priorities for yourself, your family, your immediate community, your business, or your organisation

Budget allocation

All Councils have a legal duty to limit their spending to the income they receive each year. So, our budget must balance. The vast majority of our budget each year needs to be spent on the services we are required by law to provide such as social care for adults and children. Below is a summary of the current spending breakdown for the year 2020/21.

We are proposing to allocate the 2021/22 budget in the same way.



- Adults Social Care £147,926,313
- Children's Social Care (including early help services) £18,801,385
- Roads & Transport (including Rights of Way) £29,572,181
- Education (excluding the Dedicated Schools Grant income of £472 million) £24,580,619
- Waste & Recycling £22,712,918
- ICT (Information Communication Technology) £11,873,014
- Other corporate services £11,805,275
- Finance £10,169,839
- Human Resources £4,431,949
- Housing £3,898,672
- Improving Town Centres £2,838,287
- Street Cleaning £1,432,647
- Housing Benefits £848,743
- Open/Green Spaces (Including country parks, maintained open spaces/play areas) £677,288

Give us your views

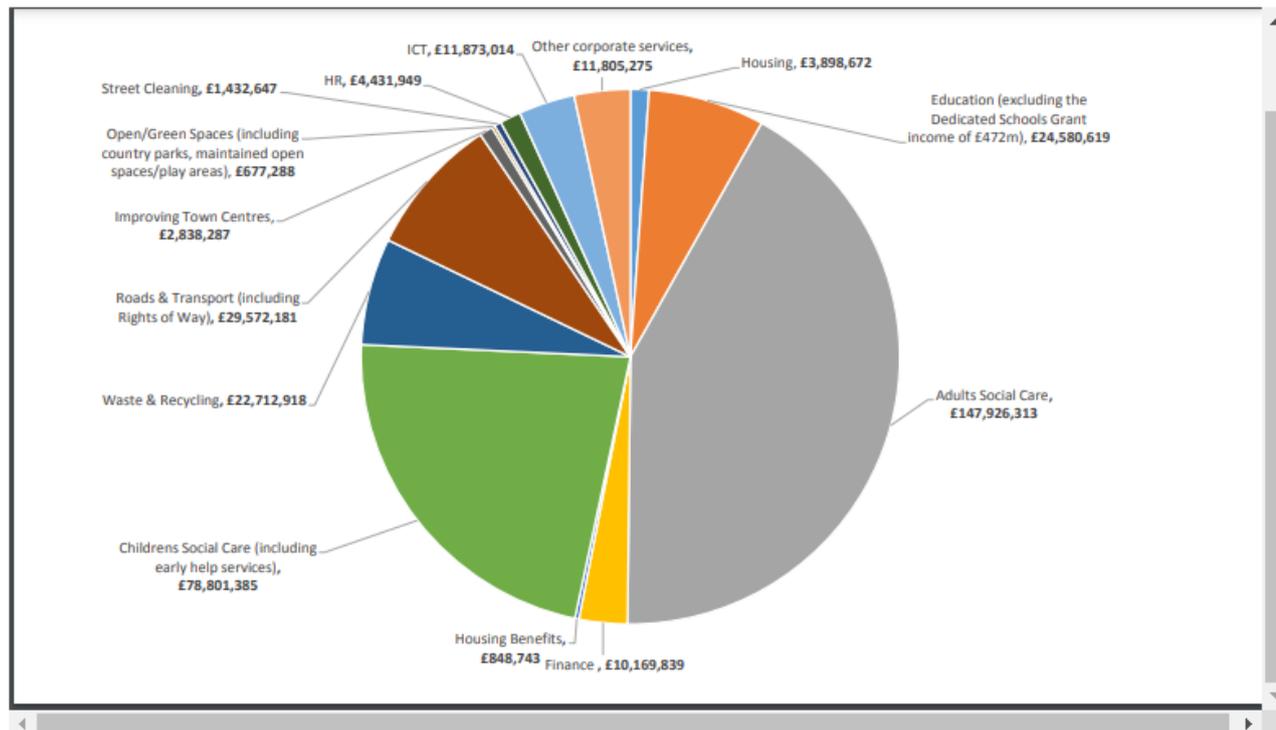
Please let us know what you think by completing our short online survey below. To request a printed version of the survey, please contact us on the email address above.

Privacy

The information you provide here will only be used for the purposes of this project, and will be stored securely in line with data protection laws. No personal information will be shared or published.

Budget allocation

We propose to allocate the budget for 2021/22 in the same way as we have done for 2020/21. This is shown below.



Adults Social Care £147,926,313

Children's Social Care (including early help services) £78,801,385

Roads & Transport (including Rights of Way) £29,572,181

Education (excluding the Dedicated Schools Grant income of £472 million) £24,580,619

Waste & Recycling £22,712,918

ICT (Information Communication Technology) £11,873,014

Other corporate services £11,805,275

Finance £10,169,839

Human Resources £4,431,949

Housing £3,898,672

Improving Town Centres £2,838,287

Street Cleaning £1,432,647

Housing Benefits £848,743

Open/Green Spaces (Including country parks, maintained open spaces/play areas) £677,288

1 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed allocation of Buckinghamshire Council's annual budget for 2021/22?

(Required)

Please select only one item

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

2 Do you have any comments about the proposed spending plans?

Comments

3 Thinking about how we can balance our budget, please indicate for each of the following services, whether you think we should spend more, less or about the same.

	More	Same	Less	I'm not sure
Car Parking such as car parks, street parking <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community Safety such as working with other organisations to tackle anti-social behaviour, violence and hate crime <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Culture and tourism such as museums, country parks and archaeology <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Educational services such as childcare, pre-school, school admissions <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Environmental health services such as food hygiene inspections and air quality monitoring <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Home to school transport <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Housing such as finding a home, tenancy issues, homelessness issues <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Library services <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local regeneration <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Maintaining parks, open spaces, playing fields and the countryside <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Maintaining Rights of Way <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Maintaining street furniture including signs, benches <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pavement maintenance including footpaths <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Planning services such as advice, enforcement, development plans, planning applications, building control <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Protecting the environment such as development of green spaces, renewable energy <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public Health services such as smoking cessation, drug/alcohol services <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public transport <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Registrar services such as civil weddings, register offices, births & deaths <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Revenues & Benefits such as Council Tax, Housing Benefit <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Road infrastructure and planning <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Road maintenance <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Services and support for children and young people <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Services and support for vulnerable adults and older people <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Services to attract and support local businesses <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sport and leisure services <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Street cleaning services including servicing public litter bins, dog bins <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Taxi licensing <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Town Centres <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Trading standards such as advice for businesses, product recalls, fraud / scams <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Waste collection <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Waste management such as fly-tipping prosecutions and recycling <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Additional comments

4 Do you have any other comments about the Council Budget for 2021/22?

Your interest in this consultation

5 In what capacity are you responding to this consultation?*(Required)**Please select only one item*

- Resident
- Representative of an organisation or business
- Councillor or MP
- Other (please specify)

Other

About you

Please fill in this section to complete the survey. This information is not compulsory but enables us to understand the views of different people.

The information you provide here will only be used for the purposes of this consultation, and will be stored securely in line with data protection laws. No personal information will be shared or published.

6 What age are you?*Please select only one item*

- Under-18
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-84
- 85+
- Prefer not to say

7 What is your gender?*Please select only one item*

- Male
- Female
- Transgender
- Other (please specify)
- Prefer not to say

Other

8 What is your ethnicity?

Please select only one item

- White
- Mixed
- Asian or Asian British
- Black or Black British
- Other (please specify)
- Prefer not to say

Other

9 Do you consider yourself to have a disability or long term health condition?

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

10 What is your full postcode?

This field will need to be completed with a full standard postcode format. If you don't know your full postcode or you don't wish to provide it, please leave it empty.

11 Are there any children aged 0-17 in your household?

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No

12 What is your employment status?*(Required)**Please select only one item*

- Employed full-time
- Employed part-time
- Self-employed full-time or part-time
- Unemployed
- Retired
- Carer
- Student
- Looking after the family or home
- Long-term illness or condition that prevents me from working
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please specify)

Other

Your employment

13 Are you employed by Buckinghamshire Council?*Please select only one item*

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Your organisation or business

14 Which category best describes the organisation you are representing?*Please select only one item*

- Private business
- Voluntary, charity or community organisation
- Public sector organisation
- Town or parish council
- Other (please specify)

Other