



Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee

Date: Monday, 1 March 2021

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: Virtual meeting, Webcast at <https://vimeo.com/514221752>

This is a **Second Supplementary Agenda** containing additional information about the business of the meeting that was not available when the agenda was published

Advice to the Public

The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020

Under the provisions of these regulations the location where a meeting is held can include reference to more than one place including electronic, digital or virtual locations such as internet locations, web addresses or conference call telephone numbers.

To attend this meeting it can be watched live as a webcast. The recording of the webcast will also be available for viewing after the meeting has concluded.

Membership of the Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee

Councillors - Russell (Chair), Ahmed Ali, Andrews, Clay, Davies, Lanchbury, B Priest, Rowles, A Simcock, Stanton, Wheeler and Wright

Second Supplementary Agenda

- 5o. **Budget 2021/22 Public Consultation Outcomes** 3 - 18
Report of the City Solicitor and Head of Communications attached

Further Information

For help, advice and information about this meeting please contact the Committee Officer:

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This supplementary agenda was issued on **Friday, 26 February 2021** by the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit, Manchester City Council, Level 3, Town Hall Extension (Lloyd Street Elevation), Manchester M60 2LA

Manchester City Council Report for Information

Report to: Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee - 1 March 2021
Budget Council – 5 March 2021

Subject: Budget consultation results 2021/22

Report of: The City Treasurer and Head of Strategic Communications

Summary

This report provides a summary of the results of phase two of the budget consultation on the savings options for the financial year 2021/22, as well as a summary of the responses received.

Recommendations

Members are asked to note the results of the consultation provided in the report.

Wards Affected: All

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city
The budget support all 8 corporate priorities including the zero-carbon target for the city.

Our Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	The Council's budget, including the monies generated by council tax, supports the delivery of the Our Manchester Strategy outcomes and all of Our Corporate Priorities.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy, please contact one of the contact officers above.

Online budget consultation (consultation now closed)

<https://www.manchester.gov.uk/budget>

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council consulted with residents on the proposed savings options for the 2021/2022 financial year for a four-week period from 20 January 2021 to 21 February 2021.
- 1.2 This report provides the full results of the consultation and a summary of coded free text responses and comments.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 In previous years, the annual budget consultation has sought to allow residents to feedback on the following areas at the same time:

- Proposed council tax increases
- Proposed Adult Social Care (ASC) precept
- Budget/savings options

- 2.2 Due to the timing of the 2021/22 Spending Review and Finance Settlement the budget consultation for 2021/22 was conducted in two phases:

Phase 1 - Council tax and ASC precept consultation (8 December 2020 – 24 December 2020)

Phase 2 - Budget consultation (20 January 2021 – 21 February 2021)

3.0 Phase 1- Council Tax and ASC Precept

- 3.1 The Government's Spending Review allowed councils to increase council tax by up to 1.99 per cent plus an additional 3 per cent precept to help meet ASC costs.
- 3.2 Phase 1 of the consultation asked residents for their comments on the potential increases – which together would be a 4.99 per cent increase and raise around £8.5m – to help protect services from further cuts and especially to support adult social care for those in need.
- 3.3 The results of phase 1 of the budget consultation have been analysed. The results were shared in early January 2021.

4.0 Phase 2 - Budget consultation (20 January 2021 – 21 February 2021)

- 4.1 Phase 2 of the budget consultation asked residents for their views on Council priorities and the proposed budget saving options via three questions and supplementary open text boxes for comment.
- 4.2 The full results of phase 2 of the budget consultation are detailed in this report.

5.0 Channels and engagement

- 5.1 Communications channels comprised an online questionnaire supported by web content and a social media campaign across a range of platforms using a mix of organic, boosted and paid-for targeted posts, supported by engaging digital content.
- 5.2 Paper copies of the questionnaire would usually have been made available in libraries, however, this was not possible for phase 2 of the budget consultation due to the COVID-19 national lockdown restrictions and subsequent library closures.
- 5.3 Activity was supported by proactive media releases and reactive media statements and inclusion in the Council's various e-bulletins and via internal staff channels.
- 5.4 Three standalone budget e-bulletins were issued during the consultation period. These performed highly reaching an average of 24,700 recipients each time and resulting in 58,339 combined opens and 3,468 click throughs to the budget consultation web pages.
- 5.5 A toolkit was also shared with Councillors, partners, community and voluntary sector groups to ensure reach within our local communities.
- 5.6 Responses have been gathered via an online questionnaire on the Council's website. 4,819 unique visitors were driven to the budget homepage. The budget content pages that outline the saving options in more detail were visited by 6,695 unique visitors. The majority of visitors were signposted to the consultation as a result of receiving a standalone Council budget e-bulletin and messages posted on the Council's Facebook page.
- 5.7 The consultation was promoted widely on Council social media channels including Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn signposting people to the online survey.
- 5.8 Across social media channels 11 budget messages were posted organically resulting in 63,060 impressions. Activity resulted in 674 click throughs to the consultation pages, 173 retweets/shares and 262 likes.
- 5.9 Paid digital posts were used to target specific target audiences. Three different campaign posts were set up and boosted resulting in 194,544 impressions, 575 reactions, 129 shares and 548 click throughs to the consultation.
- 5.10 A total of 878 people completed the consultation survey. In addition, two organisations submitted detailed letters, Stagecoach Manchester and The Parochial Church Council of Christ Church West Didsbury and St. Christopher Withington. The letters are summarised in section 8.0.

- 5.11 A further 347 people partially completed the survey, with some completing question one, but not continuing to answer the questions which required people to give us their views and comments in a free text box and not submitting their response. Participation is generally higher when consultation surveys comprise multiple choice/tick box questions. Those that comprise free text boxes require more thought and consideration and generally see higher levels of drop off and partial completion but do result in a greater quality of result.

6.0 Consultation questionnaire

- 6.1 The consultation questionnaire comprised two closed questions to understand levels of agreement/disagreement each with supplementary open text boxes for comment and a third open text question to gather general views on the proposed budget saving options.
- 6.2 **Q1.** When we asked Manchester people what matters most to them, we listened and used their priorities to help set our budget. Do you agree or disagree that we should continue to protect and invest in these priority services which residents told us matter most?

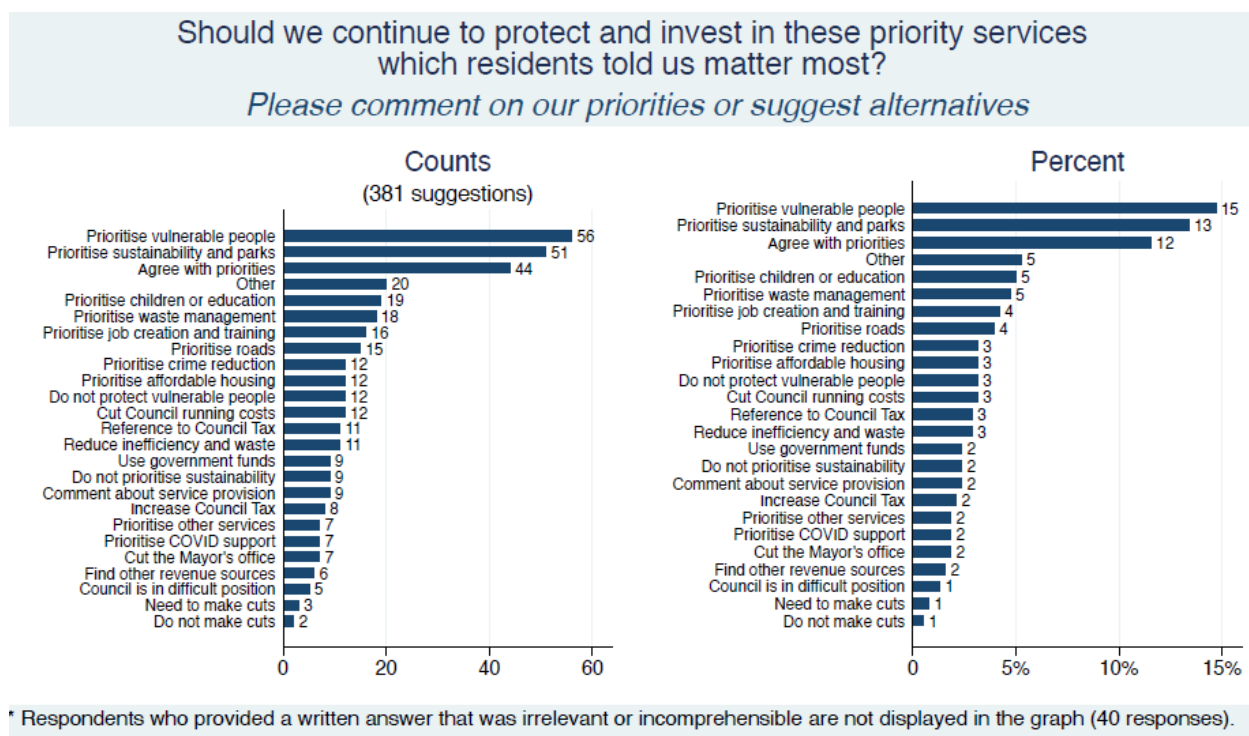
*Please tick those priorities that are important to you (please tick all that apply)
Please give any comments on our priorities, or alternatives you think we should consider.*

- 6.3 **Q2.** Do you agree or disagree with the proposed options to save around £50m in 2021/22 to balance our budget?
Please give any comments on any of the specific savings options, or alternatives you think we should consider.
- 6.4 **Q3.** Please give any general views and comments on the proposed budget.

7.0 Consultation questionnaire analysis

- 7.1 **Question 1. When we asked Manchester people what matters most to them, we listened and used their priorities to help set our budget. Do you agree or disagree that we should continue to protect and invest in these priority services which residents told us matter most?**
- 7.2 72% of respondents agreed (31% strongly agreed and 41% agreed). 13% of respondents disagreed (7% disagreed and 6% strongly disagreed).
- 7.3 Members of the public were also asked to share any comments on the priorities or alternatives they thought we should consider. Of the 878 responses, 287 respondents provided an answer to the open-ended question pertaining to priority services.

Graph 1 - Coded responses expressing views pertaining to priority services



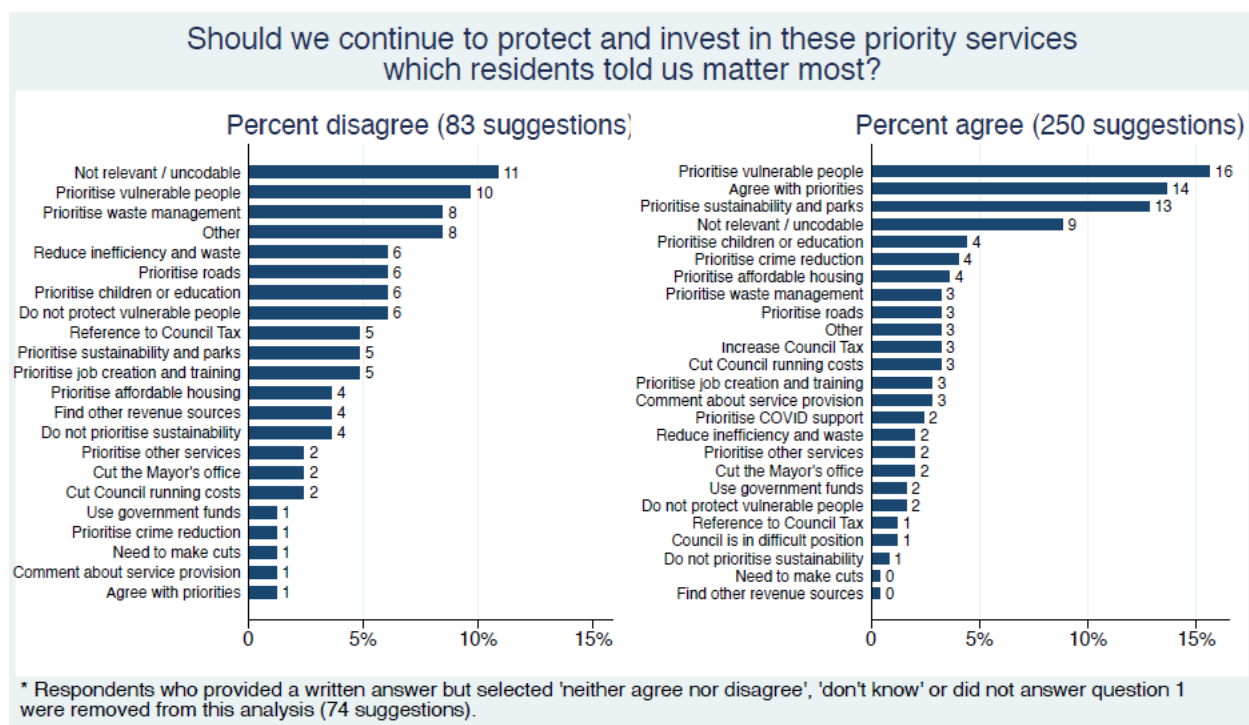
7.4 Graph 1 shows that the most prominent theme across all open-ended responses was that vulnerable people should be protected (15% respondents, 56 suggestions), with respondents voicing the importance of services relating to homelessness support, adult and social care services, among others. This is closely followed by:

- 13% of respondents (51 suggestions) suggested that the Council should prioritise sustainability initiatives focusing on the environment as well as parks and green spaces
- 5% of respondents (19 suggestions) emphasised the importance of children or educational services
- 5% of respondents (18 suggestions) wanted waste management services
- 4% roads (15 suggestions) and job creation and training (16 suggestions) to be prioritised
- 12% of respondents (44 suggestions) expressed their agreement with all the listed priority areas and were not able to indicate a particular priority
- Other suggestions were also provided, but with lower frequency.

7.5 Graph 2 displays the suggestions by whether respondents agreed or disagreed that we should continue to protect and invest in the priority services which residents told us matter most (Question 1).

7.6 Overall, 75% (250 suggestions) were given by individuals who were in favour of the proposals.

Graph 2 - Responses split by whether they agreed or disagreed with the listed priority services



7.7 Of those respondents who **agreed** with the proposal, the following suggestions were made:

- 16% (39 suggestions) specifically felt that vulnerable groups should be protected
- 13% of respondents (32 suggestions) who stated that sustainable development and parks was important
- 4% of respondents (11 suggestions) wanted children or educational services, crime reduction (10 suggestions), and affordable or social housing (9 suggestions) to be prioritised
- 14% of respondents (34 suggestions) expressed their agreement with all the listed priority areas and were not able to indicate a specific priority
- Other suggestions were also provided, but with lower frequency. 22 responses were not codable or not relevant (responses that were out of context, unintelligible or presented particular situations without actually addressing the issue under consultation).

7.8 Of those respondents who **disagreed** with the proposal, the following main suggestions (83) were made:

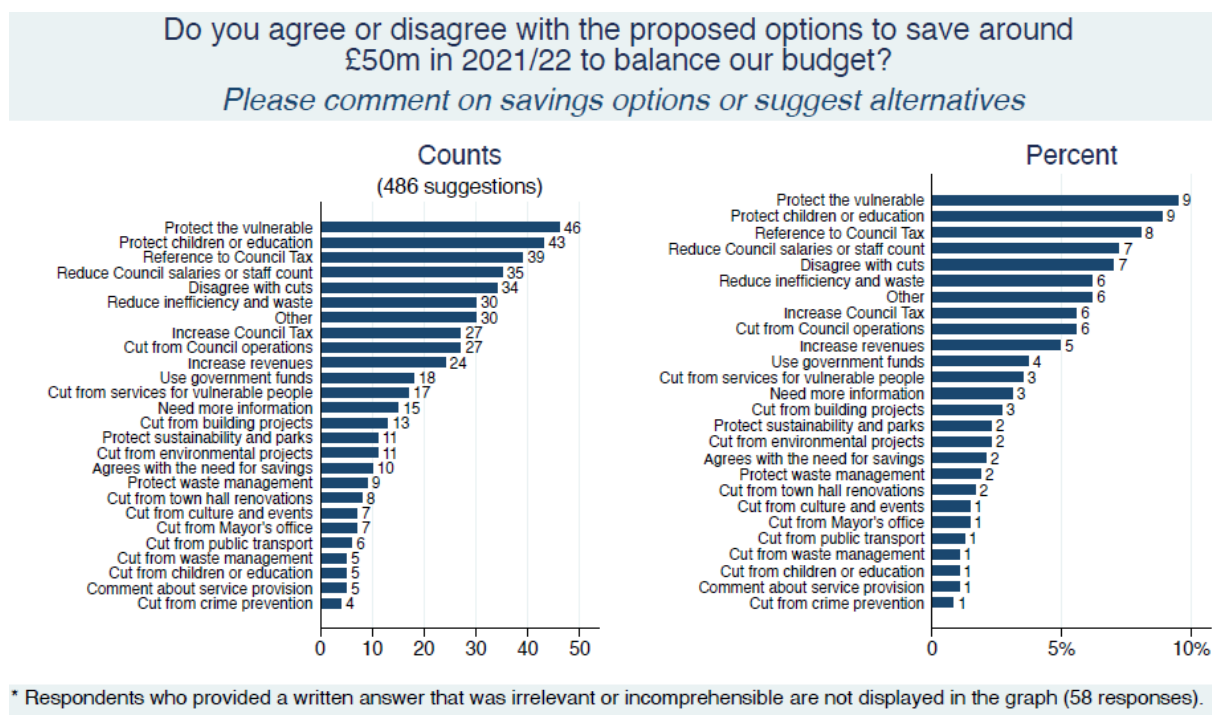
- 10% of respondents (8 suggestions) felt that the Council should prioritise the protection of vulnerable people
- In contrast, 6% of respondents (5 suggestions) stated that vulnerable people should not be protected

- 8% of respondents (7 suggestions) stated that waste management was important
- 6% (5 suggestions) argued for children or educational services and roads (5 suggestions) to be prioritised
- 5% of respondents (4 suggestions) wanted sustainability and parks, and job creation and training (4 suggestions) to be prioritised
- 4% (3 suggestions) of respondents stated that the Council should not prioritise sustainability / environmental investments (e.g. greener city)
- 4% of respondents (3 suggestions) felt that the affordable housing should be prioritised
- 6% (5 suggestions) emphasised the need for the Council to reduce inefficiency and waste without specifying how, or to find alternative sources of revenue (4% respondents; 3 suggestions)
- 5% (4 suggestions) made reference to the proposed Council Tax increases and their impact, which was outside the scope of the consultation.
- Other suggestions were also provided, but with lower frequency
- 11 responses were not codable or not relevant (responses that were out of context, unintelligible or presented particular situations without actually addressing the issue under consultation).

7.9 Question 2 - Do you agree or disagree with the proposed options to save around £50m in 2021/22 to balance our budget?

- 7.10 In question 2, members of the public were asked in a closed question whether or not they agreed or disagreed with the proposed budget savings options. 27% of respondents agreed (4% strongly agreed and 23% agreed). 43% of respondents disagreed (24% disagreed and 19% strongly disagreed).
- 7.11 370 respondents provided an answer to the open-ended question pertaining to saving options designed to balance the budget by making savings of £50m in 2021. The suggestions are illustrated in Graph 3.

Graph 3 - Coded responses expressing views pertaining to saving options

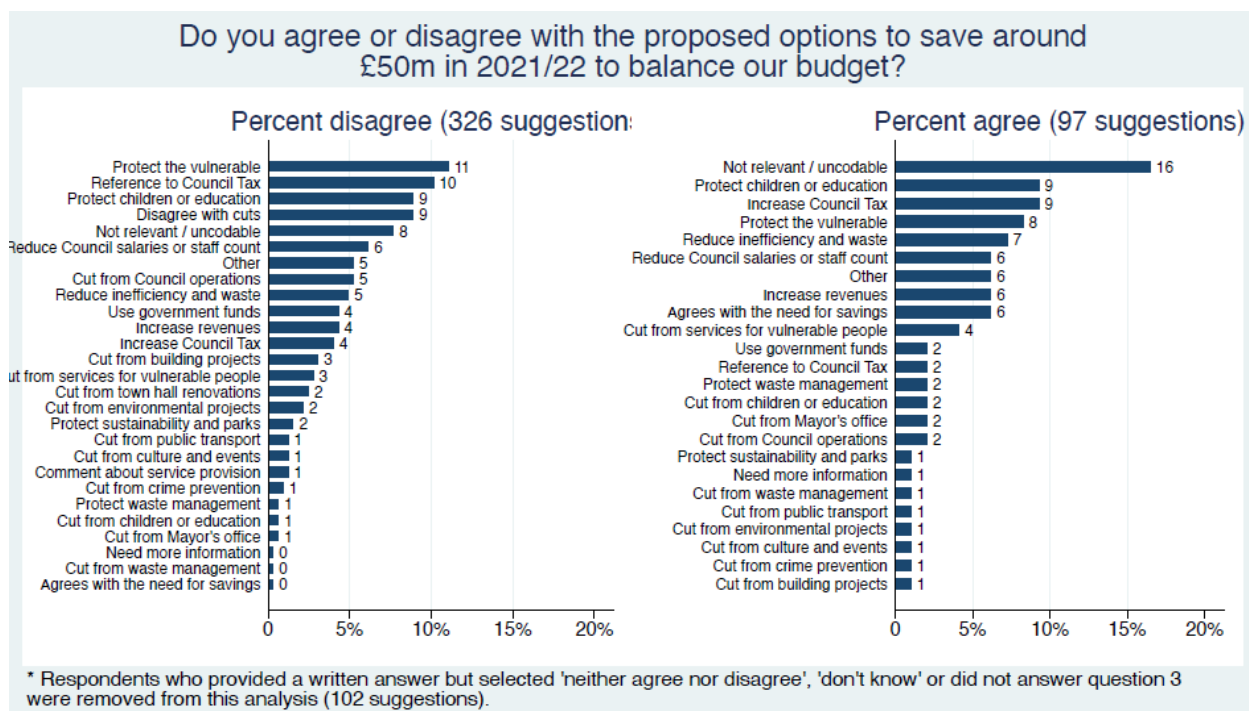


- 7.12 Prominent themes across all open-ended responses were that vulnerable people (9% respondents; 46 suggestions) and children or educational services (9%; 43 suggestions) should be protected.
- 7.13 The most frequently cited area of saving, by 7% of respondents (35 suggestions) was to Council staff (including Councillors) salaries or posts.
- 7.14 More broadly, Graph 3 shows that:
- 7% (34 suggestions) disagreed with the proposals for cuts
 - 6% (27 suggestions) commenting that the Council should make savings from Council operations (corporate core)
 - 5% (24 suggestions) stated that the Council should find ways to increase their revenues
 - 6% (30 suggestions) commented that the Council needed to reduce inefficiency and waste without specifying details
 - 6% (27 suggestions) suggested increasing Council Tax as a solution to increase revenues
 - 8% of respondents (39 suggestions) made references about the impact of the proposed increases to Council Tax
 - Other suggestions were also provided, but with lower frequency
 - Of the overall number of responses, 58 responses were not codable or not relevant: responses that were out of context, unintelligible or presented

particular situations without actually addressing the issue under consultation (not displayed in the graph).

7.15 Graph 4, below, displays the suggestions by whether respondents agreed or disagreed with the proposed savings options (Question 2).

Graph 4 - Responses split by whether they agreed or disagreed with the suggested saving options



7.16 Overall, 23% (97) of suggestions were given by individuals who were **in favour** of the proposal. Of those respondents, the following suggestions were made:

- Reductions to Council (including Councillor) salaries or posts was the most frequently cited saving area (6%; 6 suggestions)
- Although, a slightly higher proportion (7%; 7 suggestions) commented that the Council needed to reduce inefficiency and waste but without specifying details
- 4% (4 suggestions) argued that there should be cuts to services for vulnerable people
- 6% (6 suggestions) reiterated their agreement with the need for savings
- While in agreement with the proposals, 8% (8 suggestions) emphasised that services for the vulnerable, as well as children or educational services (9%; 9 suggestions), should be protected
- 9% (9 suggestions) suggested of an increase in Council Tax to offset savings
- 6% (6 suggestions) stated that the Council should find ways to increase their revenues

- Other suggestions were also provided, but with lower frequency
- 16 responses were not codable or not relevant (responses that were out of context, unintelligible or presented particular situations without actually addressing the issue under consultation).

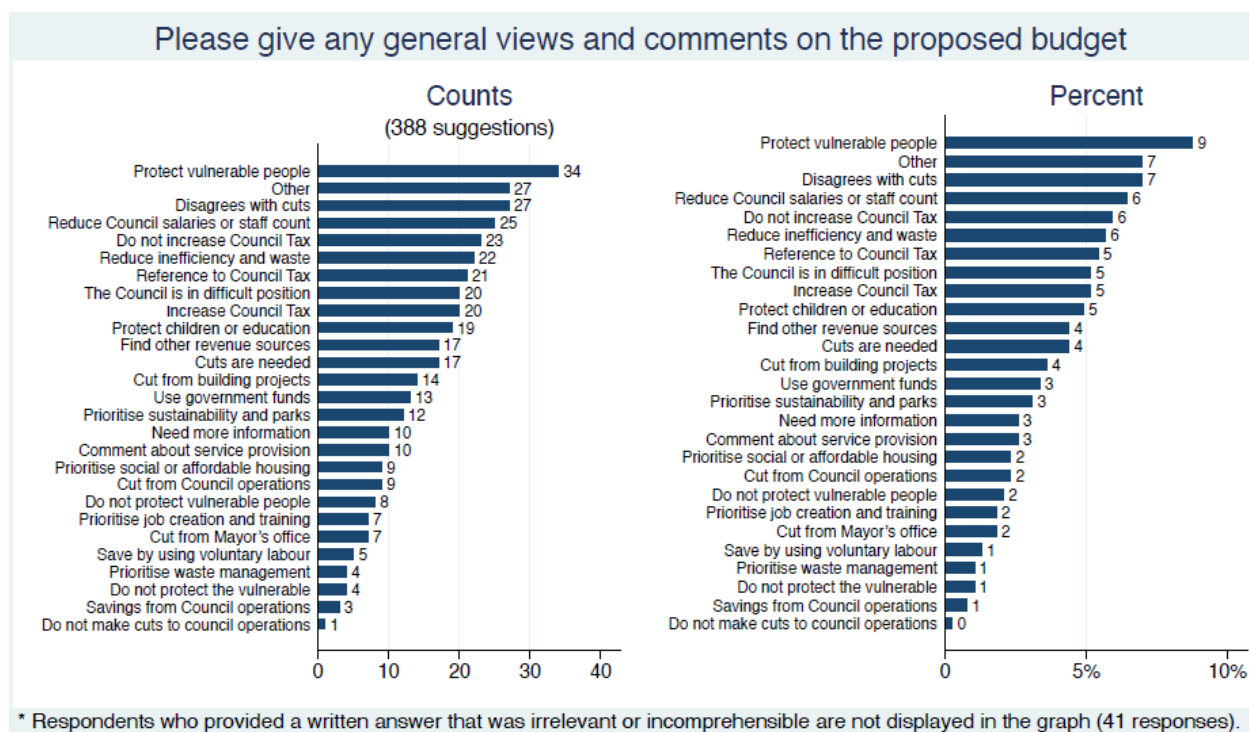
7.17 Of those respondents who **disagreed** with the proposal, the following suggestions (326) were made (see Graph 4):

- 11% (36 suggestions) stated that vulnerable people, as well as children or educational services (9%; 29 suggestions) should be protected
- 9% (29 suggestions) reiterated their disagreement with the savings
- While in disagreement with the proposals, 6% (20 suggestions) commented that the Council should make cuts to Council staff salaries or posts
- A further 5% (17 suggestions) stated that there could be cuts to Council operations
- While in disagreement with the proposals, 4% (14 suggestions) advised that the Council should use government funds to offset the need for savings
- A further 4% (14 suggestions) stated that the Council should find ways to increase their revenues
- 5% (16 suggestions) commented that the Council needed to reduce inefficiency and waste without specifying how
- 4% (13 suggestions) also suggested increasing Council Tax as a possible solution
- 10% (33 suggestions) made references to the impact of the proposed increases Council Tax which was not within the scope of the consultation
- Other suggestions were also provided, but with lower frequency
- 25 responses were not codable or not relevant (responses that were out of context, unintelligible or presented particular situations without actually addressing the issue under consultation).

7.18 Questions 3 - Please give any general views and comments on the proposed budget.

7.19 In addition to the comments specifically elicited for each of the two main questions, the consultation also provided the respondent with the opportunity to provide any other thoughts or comments they had on the proposed budget savings options. Of the 878 respondents, 303 provided such comments, totalling 4295 suggestions. These are shown in Graph 5.

Graph 5 - Coded responses expressing general views on the budget



7.20 Graph 5 shows that:

- 9% (34 suggestions) felt that the Council should protect vulnerable groups as well as children or educational services (5%; 19 suggestions)
- 7% (27 suggestions) reiterated their disagreement with the cuts
- 4% (17 suggestions) stated that the Council should find ways to increase their revenues
- A further 5% (20 suggestions) expressed their view that Council Tax should be increased to offset the need for cuts
- In contrast, 6% (25 suggestions) emphasised that the Council needed to
- reduce their staffing salaries or post count
- 6% (22 suggestions) commented that the Council needed to reduce inefficiency and waste without specifying details
- More broadly, 4% (17 suggestions) stated that cuts are needed
- 6% (23 suggestions) specifically mentioned that Council Tax should not be increased, while an additional 5% (21 suggestion) mentioned the impact of the suggested increases to Council Tax
- 5% (20 suggestions) acknowledged that the Council is in a difficult position
- 41 responses were not codable or not relevant (responses that were out of context, unintelligible or presented particular situations without actually addressing the issue under consultation).

8.0 Letters received

8.1 In addition to responding to the consultation survey, two organisations submitted detailed letters, the contents of which are summarised below.

8.2 Letter from Stagecoach Manchester:

The bus reform exercise is costly, with significant sums spent on creating and enacting the proposal; instead would advocate for cancellation of bus franchising proposals and focus on post-COVID recovery partnerships. The Council can also realise savings from its contribution to Transport for Greater Manchester: a large sum of money is spent on operational costs which includes staffing costs. Overall staffing levels have increased during the past decade and therefore should be reviewed. Furthermore, capital projects could be reviewed or deferred e.g. Stockport bus station re-building and Metrolink extension consultation plans. They acknowledge that the Council is facing difficult financial decisions.

8.3 Letter from The Parochial Church Council of Christ Church West Didsbury and St. Christopher Withington:

The proposed cuts to neighborhood services could have an adverse impact on community image and the wellbeing of the local population. Outdoor advertising will also have an adverse impact on the visual image of the city. Proposed cuts to already-stretched building and planning staff will present risks to the built environment. Review of homelessness operations may lead to efficiencies but concerned that this will not resolve the issue of homelessness. Positive that the Council wants to increase home visits for the vulnerable, but this would require careful management. Past reliance on private sector has resulted in poor care to vulnerable residents; instead, the Council should increase the use of volunteers.

9.0 Demographic and equality data

9.1 The demographic characteristics of the respondents to the survey were compared to those of the resident population in Manchester.

9.2 The consultation received a spread of respondents from across the city. However, analysis shows that the consultation was underrepresented in the North areas of the city. 25% of respondents were from wards in North Manchester, which make up 37% of the city's population.

Locality	Budget Responses	MCR comparator %
North	25%	37%
Central	19%	21%
South	46%	42%
No response	0%	-

Outside of Mcr/Postcode not recognised	10%	-
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- 9.3 Respondents aged 50-64 and 40-49 were overrepresented, as has been typical in previous budget consultations. Those aged 16-25 were underrepresented. There were no responses from children under 16, as would be expected.

Age Group	Budget Responses	MCR Comparator
Under 16	0%	20%
16 - 25 years	1%	20%
26 - 39 years	21%	26%
40 - 49 years	19%	11%
50 - 64 years	33%	13%
65 - 74 years	14%	5%
75 + years	5%	4%
Prefer not to say	6%	-

- 9.4 As regards ethnicity, White British respondents were overrepresented at 73% compared to 59% of the city's population. A full demographic analysis is provided in Appendix 1.

10.0 Recommendations

- 10.1 Members are asked to note the results of the consultation provided in the report.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Demographic analysis

Ethnicity		Budget Responses	MCR Comparator
Asian / Asian British	Bangladeshi	0%	1%
	Chinese	0%	3%
	Indian	1%	2%
	Kashmiri	0%	0%
	Pakistani	2%	9%
	Other Asian	1%	2%
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	African	1%	5%
	Caribbean	1%	2%
	Somali	0%	0%
	Other Black	0%	1%
Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Groups	White and Black Caribbean	1%	2%
	White and Black African	0%	1%
	White and Asian	0%	1%
	Other Mixed	1%	1%
White	English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	73%	59%
	Irish	3%	2%
	Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0%	0%
	Other White	7%	5%
Other Ethnic Group	Any other Ethnic Group	1%	3%
No response		2%	-
Prefer not to say		7%	-

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