**Resident budget consultation 2020-21**

Essex County Council spends over £2bn each year on essential services for the people of Essex.

This is a substantial amount of money, but it doesn’t go as far as we would like. Just like households across Essex, we have to make difficult choices about where we spend, and where to make savings. We face financial pressure because:

* the money we receive from national government has reduced – for every £1 we received five years ago, we receive only 37p today;
* more people need our services and support; and
* the costs of providing services has increased – partly due to inflation, but also as a result of changes in the law (e.g. the introduction of the national living wage).

To balance our budget, we have already had to make over £370m of savings over the past five years.

Recent government announcements have suggested that more money could be available for councils next year. This funding may be short term and is unlikely to be sufficient to meet the rising costs of council services. Our longer-term financial position remains unclear.

There are some big decisions ahead and we would value your views before setting next year’s council budget (April 2020 to March 2021).

**Questions:**

**[NB. all respondents will be asked a series of standard ‘about you’ questions’ to allow analysis of consultation results by age/geography/ etc]**

1. **Overall, how well informed do you feel about local public services?**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Very well informed | Fairly well informed | Not very well informed | Not well informed at all | Don’t know |
|  |  |  |  |  |

1. **What impact have changes to Essex County Council service had on your [household/business] over the last 4 years?**

* A strong positive impact
* A slight positive impact
* No impact
* A slight negative impact
* A strong negative impact

2b. **Please describe the changes you have noticed and the impact they have had.**

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1. **Which of the following is closest to your view?** (Select one only)

* The Council hasn’t had much financial pressure in recent years and will continue to have adequate funding in the future
* The Council has had a lot of financial pressure in recent years but is through the worst of it
* The Council has financial challenges ahead which will likely involve some spending reductions
* The Council has serious financial challenges ahead which will likely involve large spending reductions

1. **How strongly do you agree or disagree that Essex County Council should do each of the following when faced with financial pressures?** (Select one per statement)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Agree strongly** | **Agree slightly** | **Neither agree nor disagree** | **Disagree slightly** | **Disagree strongly** |
| Streamline services so that we can deliver the same outcomes | **** | **** | **** | **** | **** |
| **Introduce charges for some services which are currently free/subsidised** | **** | **** | **** | **** | **** |
| Reduce or stop delivering some services to protect other services | **** | **** | **** | **** | **** |
| **Encourage local people and communities to deliver certain services** | **** | **** | **** | **** | **** |
| Help people to help themselves more so they have less reliance on publicly funded services | **** | **** | **** | **** | **** |
| **Prioritise spending to protect services for the most vulnerable and those without choice** | **** | **** | **** | **** | **** |
| Use / partner with other organisational bodies to provide services | **** | **** | **** | **** | **** |

1. **If a service in your local area was at risk from financial pressures, would you do any of the following?** (Select all that apply)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **I would volunteer some of my time/[my employees time]** | **I would make a one-off donation** | **I would pay a new or higher charge when I used the service** | **None of these** |
| Local Service | **** | **** | **** | **** |
| **Local School** | **** | **** | **** | **** |
| Local Organisation or Community Group | **** | **** | **** | **** |
| **Local Charity** | **** | **** | **** | **** |

1. **Which, if any, of the following should be protected from any funding reductions?** (Please select all that apply)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Education** | | **Children & Family Services** | | **Adult Services** | | **Highways & Transport** | |
| Primary Schools\* | **** | Funding for early years and childcare | **** | Care and support for vulnerable older people | **** | Maintenance of roads, footways and bridges | **** |
| Secondary Schools\* | **** | Child Protection | **** | Care and support for people with learning disabilities | **** | Street Lighting | **** |
| Adult Education | **** | Fostering & adoption Services | **** | Care and support for people with physical and sensory disabilities | **** | Subsidised transport (e.g. rural busses and concessionary fares) | **** |
| Support for learners with special educational needs | **** | Children’s mental health services | **** | Care and support for people with mental health needs |  | Home to school transport | **** |
|  |  | Youth Offending Support | **** |  |  |  |  |
|  | |  | |  | |  | |
| **Environmental Services** | | **Economic Growth** | | **Public Health** | | **Cultural Services** | |
| Trading Standards | **** | Attracting inward investment | **** | Obesity programmes | **** | Libraries | **** |
| Waste Management & Recycling | **** | Economic Regeneration | **** | Smoking cessation | **** | County Parks | **** |
| Flood protection | **** | Investing in Essex’s Transport Infrastructure |  | Health Checks | **** | Tourism | **** |
|  |  | Investing in Essex’s Digital Infrastructure |  | Drug and Alcohol Treatment | **** | Sports and leisure provision | **** |

\*Schools funding is directly allocated from central government but is passed on to schools via the county council

**6b. Please let us know why you believe these areas should be protected**

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1. **Which, if any, of the following should be prioritised for any increase in spending?** (Please select a maximum of three)

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Education** | | **Children & Family Services** | | **Adult Services** | | **Highways & Transport** | |
| Primary Schools\* | **** | Funding for early years and childcare | **** | Care and support for vulnerable older people | **** | Maintenance of roads, footways and bridges | **** |
| Secondary Schools\* | **** | Child Protection | **** | Care and support for people with learning disabilities | **** | Street Lighting | **** |
| Adult Education | **** | Fostering & adoption Services | **** | Care and support for people with physical and sensory disabilities | **** | Subsidised transport (e.g. rural busses and concessionary fares) | **** |
| Support for learners with special educational needs | **** | Children’s mental health services | **** | Care and support for people with mental health needs |  | Home to school transport | **** |
|  |  | Youth Offending Support | **** |  |  |  |  |
|  | |  | |  | |  | |
| **Environmental Services** | | **Economic Growth** | | **Public Health** | | **Cultural Services** | |
| Trading Standards | **** | Attracting inward investment | **** | Obesity programmes | **** | Libraries | **** |
| Waste Management & Recycling | **** | Economic Regeneration | **** | Smoking cessation | **** | County Parks | **** |
| Flood protection | **** | Investing in Essex’s Transport Infrastructure |  | Health Checks | **** | Tourism | **** |
|  |  | Investing in Essex’s Digital Infrastructure |  | Drug and Alcohol Treatment | **** | Sports and leisure provision | **** |

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**7b. Please let us know why you believe these areas should be prioritised**

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**8. Which, if any, of the following should be considered for funding reductions in order to allow investment and protection in other areas?**(Please select a maximum of three)

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Education** | | **Children & Family Services** | | **Adult Services** | | **Highways & Transport** | |
| Primary Schools\* | **** | Funding for early years and childcare | **** | Care and support for vulnerable older people | **** | Maintenance of roads, footways and bridges | **** |
| Secondary Schools\* | **** | Child Protection | **** | Care and support for people with learning disabilities | **** | Street Lighting | **** |
| Adult Education | **** | Fostering & adoption Services | **** | Care and support for people with physical and sensory disabilities | **** | Subsidised transport (e.g. rural busses and concessionary fares) | **** |
| Support for learners with special educational needs | **** | Children’s mental health services | **** | Care and support for people with mental health needs |  | Home to school transport | **** |
|  |  | Youth Offending Support | **** |  |  |  |  |
|  | |  | |  | |  | |
| **Environmental Services** | | **Economic Growth** | | **Public Health** | | **Cultural Services** | |
| Trading Standards | **** | Attracting inward investment | **** | Obesity programmes | **** | Libraries | **** |
| Waste Management & Recycling | **** | Economic Regeneration | **** | Smoking cessation | **** | County Parks | **** |
| Flood protection | **** | Investing in Essex’s Transport Infrastructure |  | Health Checks | **** | Tourism | **** |
|  |  | Investing in Essex’s Digital Infrastructure |  | Drug and Alcohol Treatment | **** | Sports and leisure provision | **** |

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**8b. Please let us know why you believe these areas should be considered for funding reductions**

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**9. Please let us know of anything else you would want us to consider**

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**About You**

In order to ensure the continued development of our Diversity and Equality practices, everyone that we work with is asked to complete the information below. You are not obliged to answer any of the questions, but the more information you supply, the more effective our monitoring will be. If you choose not to answer questions, it will not affect your participation. The information you supply below is confidential and will be used solely for monitoring purposes

**What is your age?**

Under 16

16 - 20

21 - 30

31 - 40

41 - 50

51 - 60

61 - 70

71 - 80

81 - 90

91 or over

Prefer not to say

**To which gender identity do you most identify?**

Male

Female

Transgender Male

Transgender Female

Prefer not to say

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Prefer to self-describe:

**What is your marital status?**

Married

Civil Partnership

Single

Widowed

Prefer not to say

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Other, please state:

**What is your religion/faith?**

Christian

Muslim

Hindu

Buddhist

Sikh

Jewish

None

Not sure

Prefer not to say

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Other, please state

**What is your ethnicity?**

White British

White Irish

White Other

Gypsy / Roma

Traveller of Irish Heritage

Black or Black British African

Black or Black British Caribbean

Mixed White/Black African

Mixed White/Black Caribbean

Black Other

Asian or Asian British Pakistani

Asian or Asian British Indian

Asian or Asian British Other

Mixed White/Asian

Asian Other

Chinese

Mixed Other

Not Known

Prefer not to say

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Other, Please specify

**Do you consider yourself to have an impairment?**

Physical Impairment

Sensory Impairment

Learning Difficulty or Disability

Mental Health Needs

No Impairment

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Other, please state

**What district do you live in?**

Basildon

Braintree

Brentwood

Castle Point

Chelmsford

Colchester

Epping Forest

Harlow

Maldon

Rochford

Tendring

Uttlesford

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Other, please state

**How did you find out about the budget consultation?**

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The next phase of our budget consultation will consist of a series of workshops with Essex residents and Essex businesses.

This will provide an opportunity to discuss everything in more detail and help us to shape and inform next year’s budget 2020-21.

We would love to talk to as many people as possible, so that you can have your views heard. If you are interested in being involved in the next phase, please provide a contact email or telephone number and will be in contact shortly with further information.

Contact telephone number

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Contact email address

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