BUDGET ENGAGEMENT 2022-23
Results Report – December 2021

PLYMOUTH
CITY COUNCIL

INTRODUCTION

A public engagement to support the 2022-23 budget setting process took place between Friday 05 November and Sunday 28 November 2021. A questionnaire was developed which asked respondents to prioritise key public services the Council provides – these were themed into the following service areas:

- Leisure
- Transport
- Children and young people
- Environment
- Waste and recycling
- Growing Plymouth's economy
- Health and adult social care

The questionnaire also asked respondents to give their views on the savings proposals being put forward by the Administration to balance the Council's budget for the 2022-23 fiscal year.

1196 online questionnaires were completed and entered for analysis.

Four emails were received with ideas and suggestions (these are summarised in Appendix 1).

In addition, an online engagement with business representatives took place on 06 January 2022.

The results of all engagement activity will be considered by the Council's Cabinet and will also be submitted as part of the budget scrutiny process undertaken by Plymouth City Council Members in January 2022.

METHODOLOGY AND COMMUNICATION

A questionnaire was developed which themed and listed the key public services the Council provides. In order to fully understand customers' priorities, respondents were asked to rank the services within each theme, with 'one' being the service most important to them. We also asked respondents to tell us their overall top three priorities. The second part of the questionnaire asked respondents to give their views on the savings proposals being put forward by the Administration to balance the Council's budget for the 2022-23 fiscal year.

The questionnaire was available online through Plymouth City Council's consultation portal and hard copies were made available at Libraries and upon request.

A communications plan was developed which set out the required materials, branding and opportunities for advertising and promoting the engagement.

The engagement exercise was promoted in the local media and through the Council's own channels. Posts were viewed by more than 17,000 people on Twitter and 77,500 people on Facebook and arrived in almost 73,000 inboxes via our e-newsletters.

The engagement featured on a banner on the home page of the Council's website and a budget web page provided more information and a link to the questionnaire. Plymouth Newsroom featured a news item and release.

The story was run on Plymouth Live and in the print version of The Herald and a partner pack was created to encourage large organisations to share in their internal newsletters and through their networks.

Social media posts were shared by community leaders and councillors, and engagement was amplified by shares with community Facebook groups.

There were also social media posts inviting residents to complete the questionnaire while waiting for their booster vaccination at Devonport library.

Libraries staff were given access to a print version of the questionnaire and social media posts and pieces in email newsletters asked residents to inform their friends and family without internet access on how to take part.

The questionnaire was shared with Plymouth City Council employees in the Staff News publication and on the internal Staff website.

Representatives from the business community were invited to join an online meeting with a presentation from the Council setting out the budget position and providing the opportunity for the business community to feedback and ask questions – this took place on 06 January 2022.

SECTION 1 - WHO RESPONDED?

This section provides an overview of how many people responded and the demographics of those respondents.
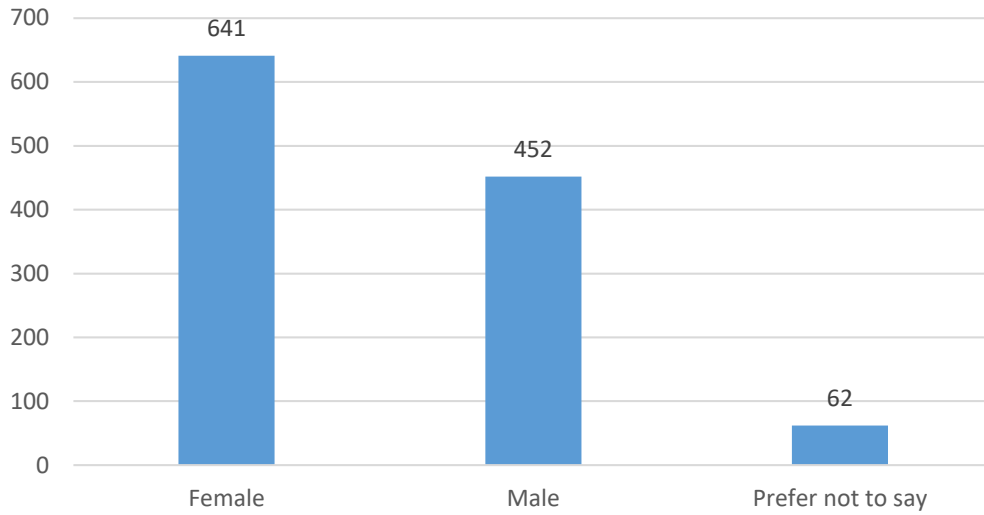
Table 1 – Number of respondents

Online questionnaires submitted	1256
Minus inadmissible/duplicated responses	(60)
Total	**1196**
Additional comments via email	4

The following demographic information has been compiled from the total number of questionnaires analysed (1196). This information has been used to identify the views of different groups of people where possible throughout this report.

Respondents by age group
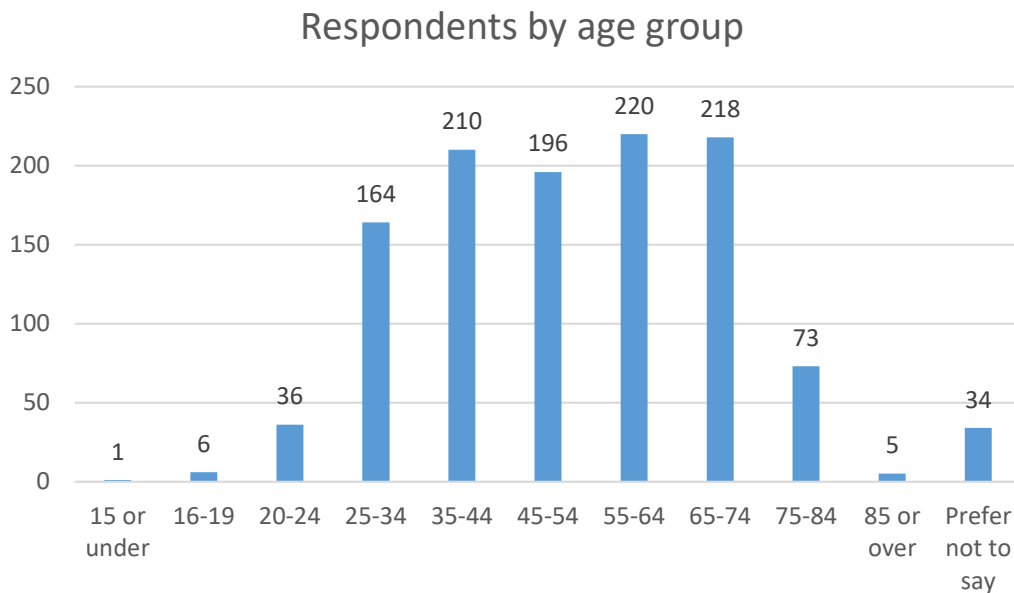
The age group with the highest number of respondents is the 55 - 64 age group (220). This was closely followed by respondents in the 65 – 74 age group (218) and those aged between 35 and 44 (210). There was a lower level of response from respondents aged 75 and over and those aged 24 or under.
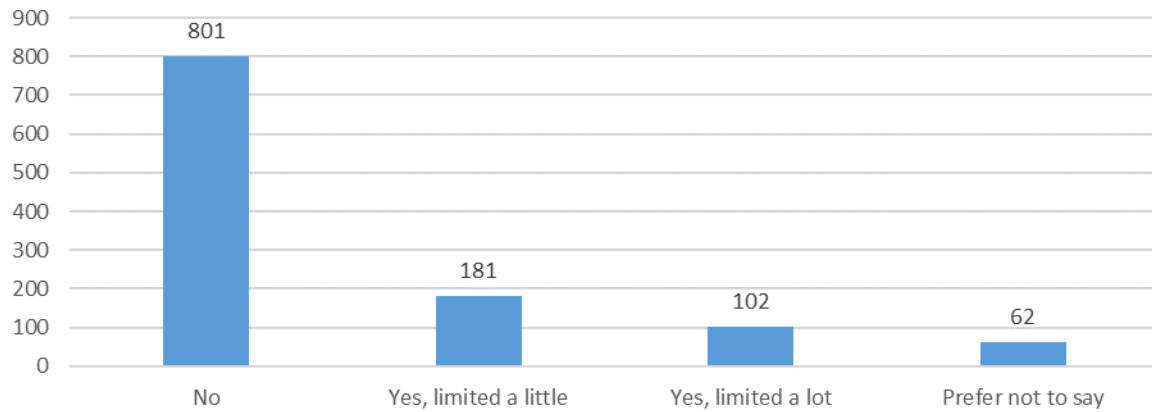
Respondents by Sex

There was a high number of female respondents (641) compared to male respondents (452) who took part in this engagement.

Please can you tell us if your gender identity is the same as the sex that you were registered with at birth?
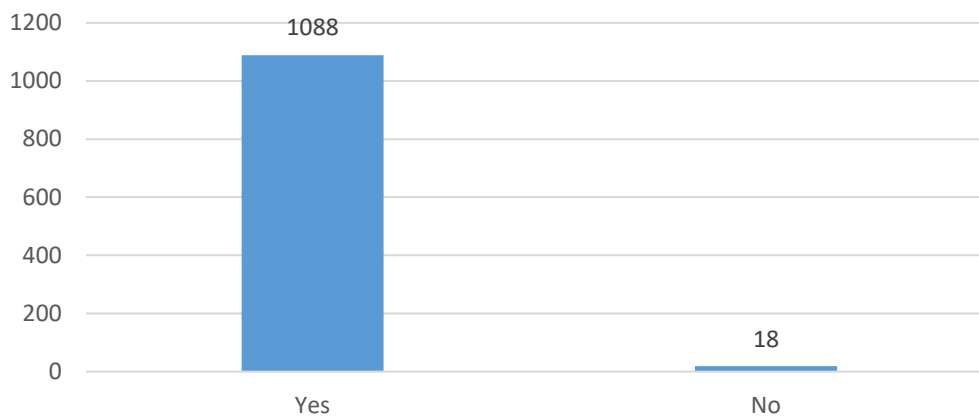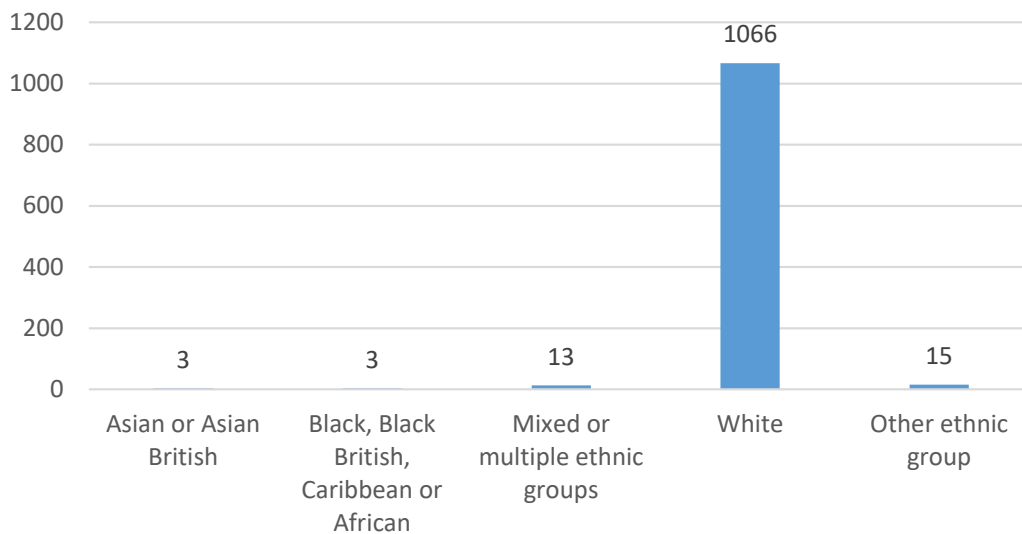

The majority of respondents indicated that their gender identity was the same as the sex that they registered with at birth.

Are your day-to day activities limited because of a health problem or disability, which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?

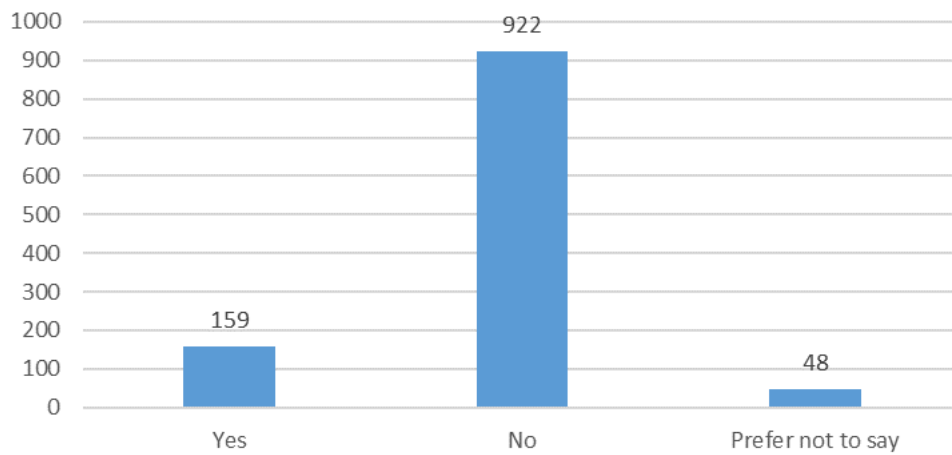Most respondents indicated that they did not have any limitations due to a disability (801), 283 respondents did indicate that they were 'limited a little' (181) or 'limited a lot' (102). A further 62 respondents chose not to respond to the question.

Respondents by ethnicity

The majority of respondents identified their ethnicity as 'White.' The engagement received very few responses from any other ethnic group.

Please can you tell us if you have previously served in the UK Armed Forces?

The majority of respondents stated that they were not previously in the armed services (922), however 159 respondents stated that they were.

Please can you tell us if you have children under the age of 16 yrs?
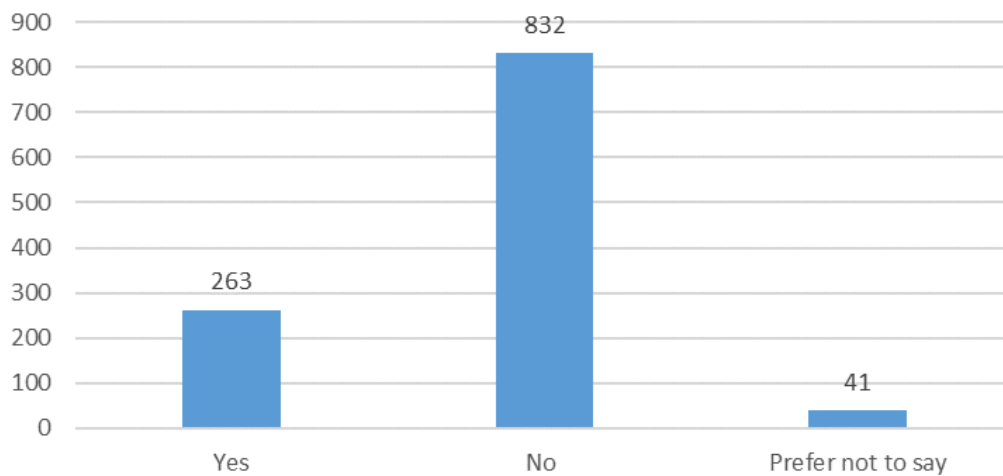
832 respondents indicated that they do not have any children under the age of 16, compared to 263 of respondents who do.

Please can you tell us if you consider yourself as a carer for a relative or friend?

834 respondents indicated that they consider themselves a carer for a relative or friend.

Locality / Area of Plymouth

Respondents were asked to provide either their postcode, ward or area in which they live. This information was collected to identify if there were any differences in views between respondents in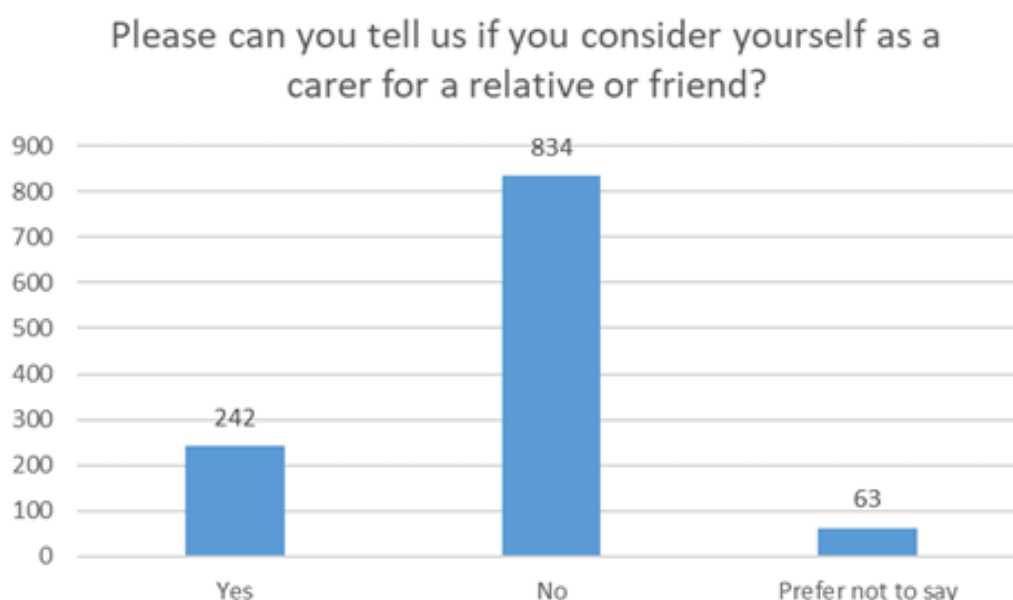 different areas of the city. 1091 respondents provided this information, but we were not able to match the information provided to a specific locality in every case. 979 respondents have been matched to a locality, and these have been analysed. Table 2 shows the number of respondents from the different areas by locality.

Table 2 – Number of respondents by locality

Locality	Number
South West	195
South East	104
Central & North East	237
North West	175
Plympton	122
Plymstock	146
Total	979

The highest number of respondents reside in the Central and North East locality, and the lowest number from the South East locality.

SECTION 2 – YOUR PRIORITIES

Service Priorities

Respondents were asked to indicate within each of the seven service themes, the services that were a priority to them by ranking them in order of importance. Table 3 shows the number one (highest) priority selected for each of the service area within each theme. The table also compares results to a similar exercise carried out in 2011 to support the 2012-13 budget setting process. This shows that what was important 10 years ago is still important today for those who responded to these engagement activities.

It is important to note that these results do not necessarily correlate to levels of satisfaction with services provided by the Council. In a recent survey of the Plymouth population satisfaction with the Council's refuse collection service was at its highest at 79 per cent, 15 per cent higher than recorded in 2019. Similarly, satisfaction with parks and open spaces in Plymouth has increase by three per cent since 2019 and is now at 60 per cent.

Table 3

Service Theme	Highest Ranked Priority 2021	Highest Ranked Priority 2011
Leisure	Park and open spaces	Park and open spaces
Transport	Road maintenance	Road maintenance
Children and Young People	Support for vulnerable children, children in care or in need of protection	Support for vulnerable children, children in care or in need of protection
Environment	Environmental regulation, e.g. food safety, trading standards, noise control	Refuse collection
Waste and Recycling	Refuse collection	
Growing Plymouth's Economy	Creating and protecting jobs across the city	Creating and protecting jobs across the city
Health and Adult Social Care	Support for mental health services	Support for older people to live independently

The priority rankings were derived through analysis which applied weighting to the data. The following table provides an example of how the weightings were applied.

Variable	Preference 1	Preference 2	Preference 3	Preference 4	Preference 5	Preference 6		
	Count x 6	Count x 5	Count x 4	Count x 3	Count x 2	Count x 1	Total Score	Rank
1a. Sports and leisure facilities	498	370	244	180	98	74	1464	3
1b. Libraries	510	315	204	219	118	70	1436	4
1c. Museums/galleries	120	230	260	189	270	72	1141	5
1d. Theatres/concert halls	144	255	220	249	158	109	1135	6
1e. Events and tourism	624	395	312	156	94	41	1622	2
1f. Parks and open spaces	510	440	364	210	64	35	1623	1

Count = number of responses

Preference 1= respondents first preference

The following charts present the overall rankings for each of the service areas within each of the service themes. They are accompanied by a brief analysis including an analysis of where each service area is positioned when all 35 service areas are ranked together in one table (see appendix 2).

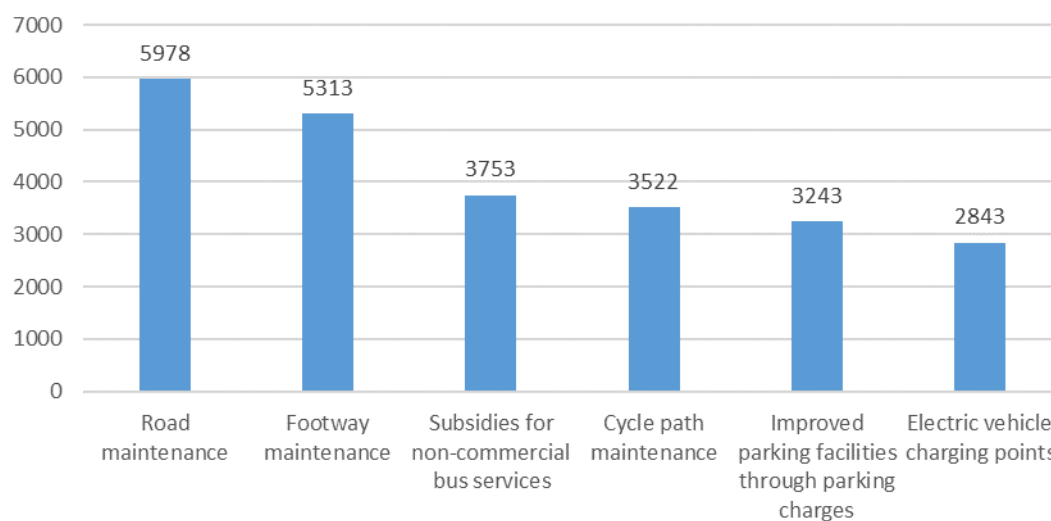**Lesiure - Total weighted score**

| Service area	Weighted score
Park and Open Spaces	6145
Sport and Leisure Facilities	4135
Libraries	3931
Events and tourism	3663
Museums	3501
Theatre/ concert halls	3229
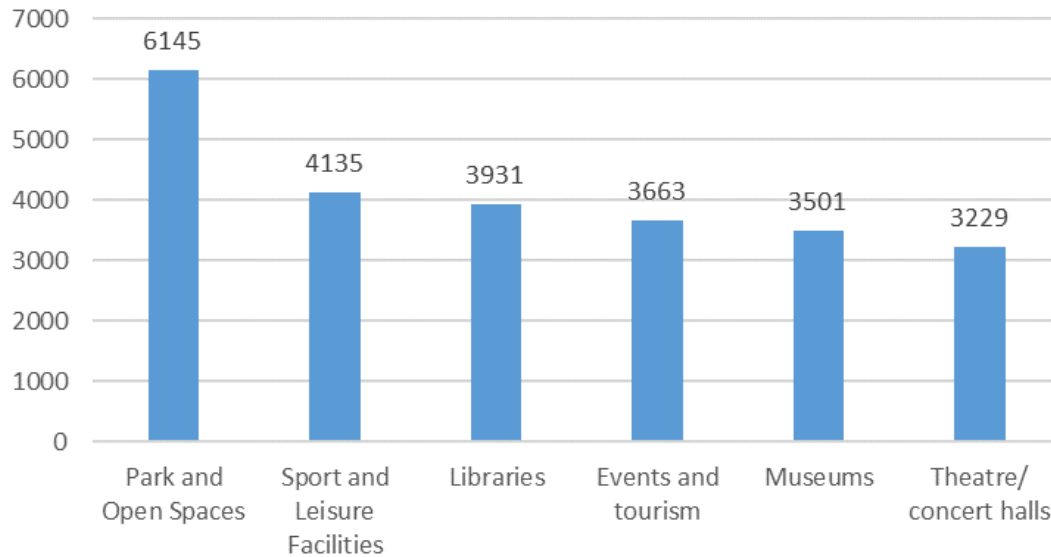
Within the 'Leisure' theme, parks and open spaces was selected by respondents as the highest priority. Theatre and Concert halls was selected as the lowest with a weighted score of 3229. When looking at the overall position of these in appendix 2, parks and open spaces ranked third out of 35 service areas. Theatre and concert halls were ranked third from the bottom of the overall service area list.

Transport - Total weighted score

| Service area	Weighted score
Road maintenance	5978
Footway maintenance	5313
Subsidies for non-commercial bus services	3753
Cycle path maintenance	3522
Improved parking facilities through parking charges	3243
Electric vehicle charging points	2843

Within the 'Transport' theme, road maintenance was identified as the top priority for respondents. Electric vehicle charging points was chosen as the lowest priority. When looking at the overall position of these in appendix 2, road maintenance ranked fourth in the list of service areas. Electric vehicle charging points were ranked last in the overall service priority list.

Children and Young people - Total weighted score
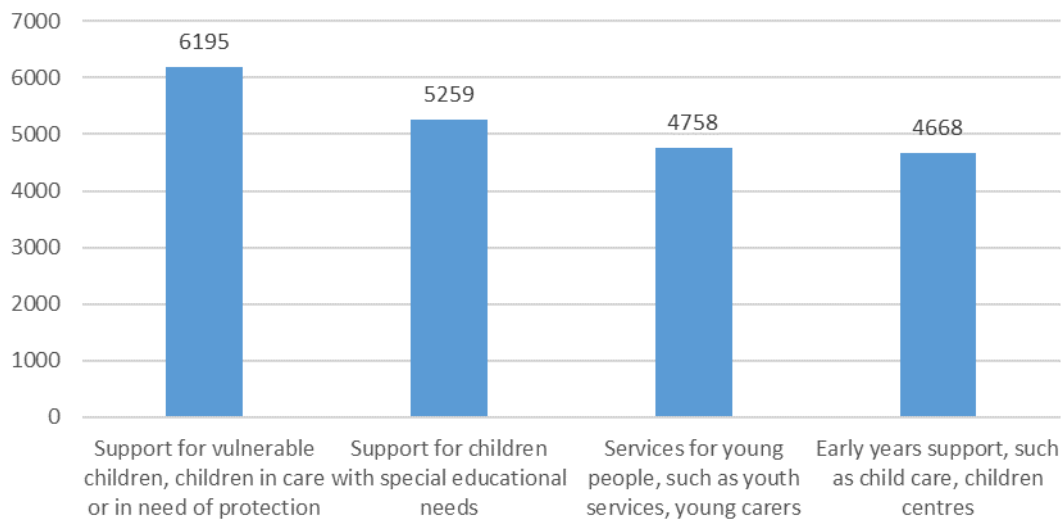
Support for vulnerable children, children in care or in need of protection is the highest priority for respondents with a weighted score of 6195. Early years support, such as childcare and children centres was the lowest priority. When looking at the overall position of these in appendix 2, support for vulnerable children, children in care or in need of protection ranked second in the list of service areas. Early years support, such as childcare and children centres was ranked mid-table (19th) in the overall service priority list.

Environment - Total weighted score
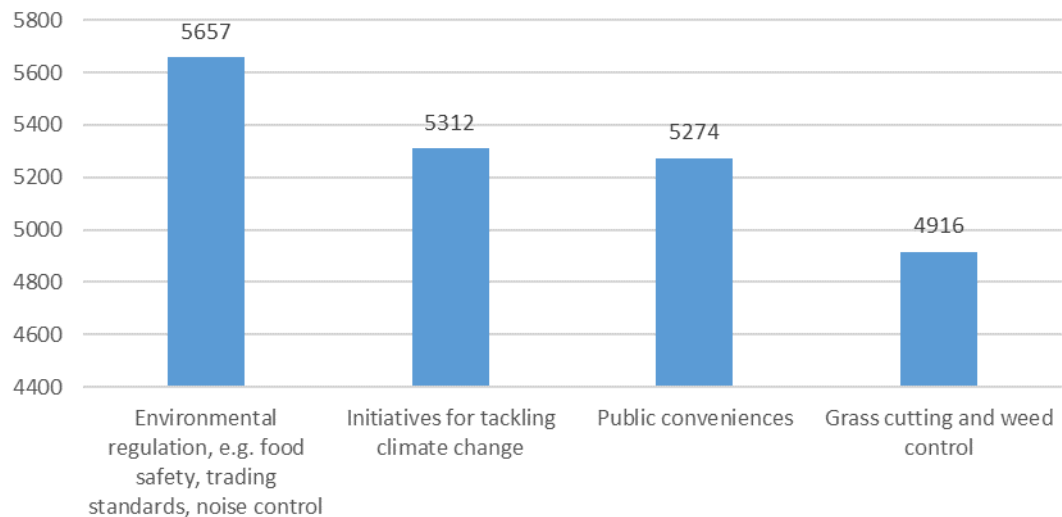
Environmental regulation, e.g. food safety, trading standards, noise control was selected as the highest priority within the 'environment' theme, with grass cutting and weed control being the lowest. When looking at the overall position of these in appendix 2, environmental regulation ranked fifth in the list of service areas. Grass cutting and weed control ranked 14th out of 35 in the overall service priority list.

Waste and Recycling - Total weighted score
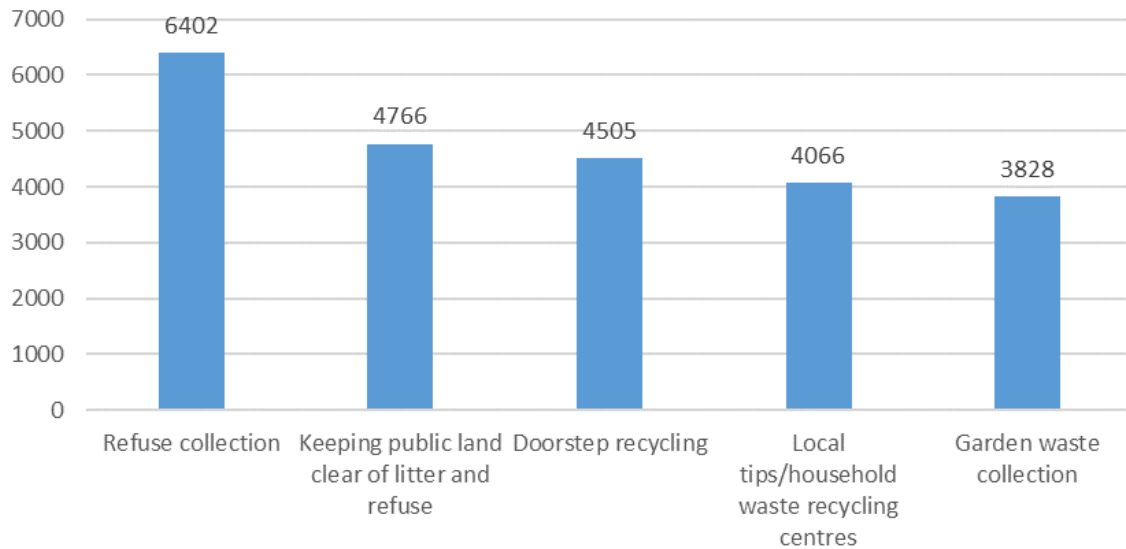
Refuse collection was selected as the highest priority within the waste and recycling theme with garden waste collection being the lowest. Refuse collection ranked top out of the 35 service areas with garden waste collection ranking 27th overall.

Growing Plymouth's economy - Total weighted score
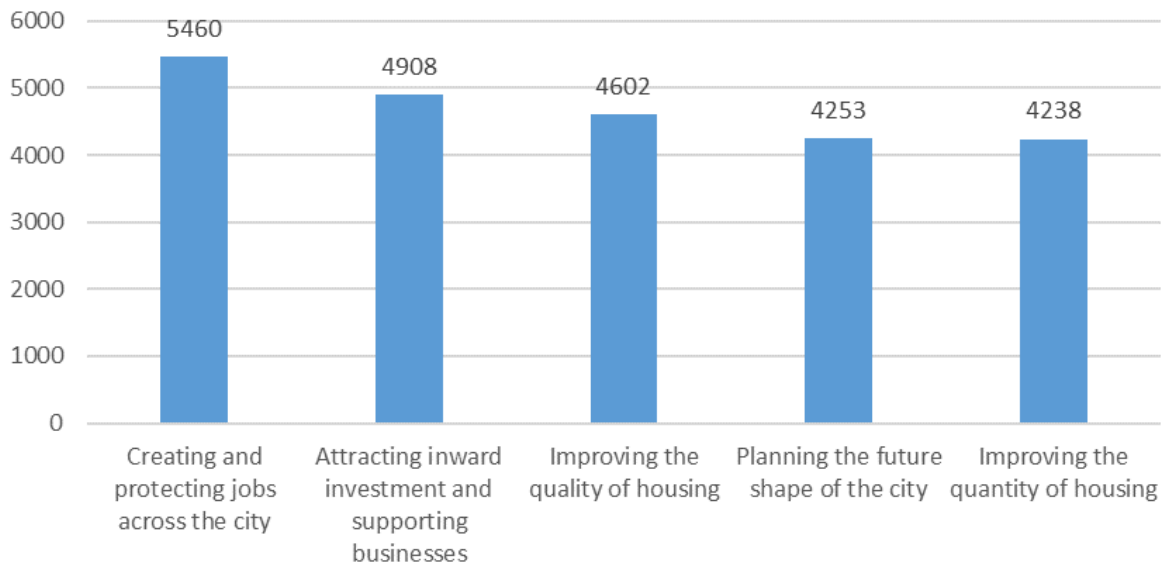
Creating and protecting jobs across the city is the highest priority within the 'Growing Plymouth's Economy' theme with a weighted score of 5460. Improving the quantity of housing was the lowest priority. Creating and protecting jobs ranked sixth out of the 35 service areas listed, with improving the quantity of housing ranking 23rd.

Health and Adult social care - Total weighted score
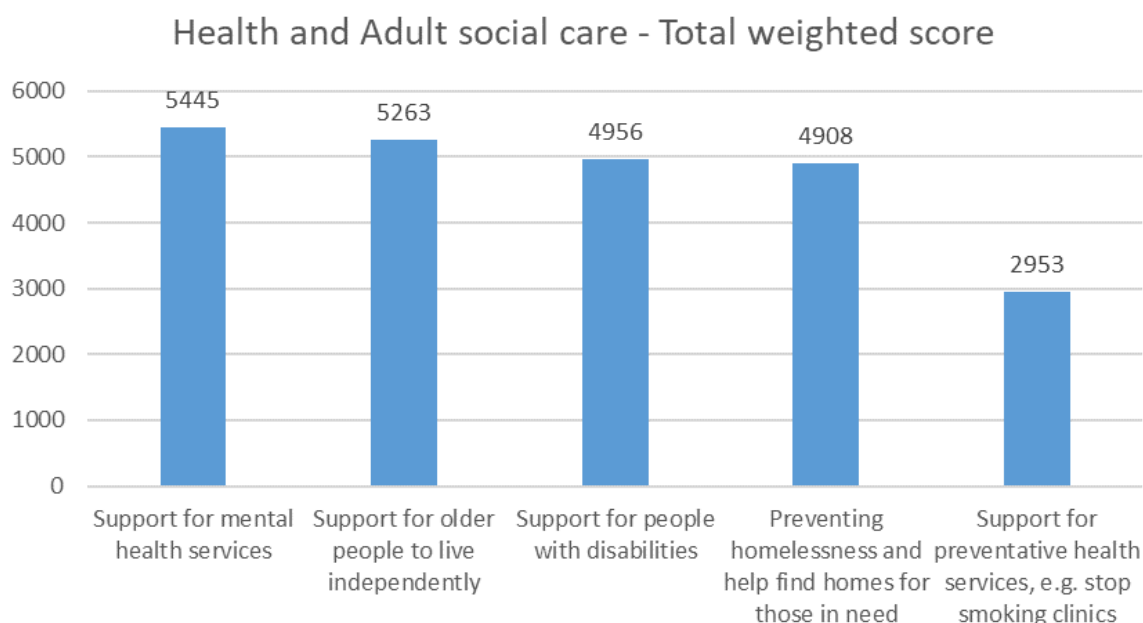
The 'health and adult social care' theme contained five service areas. Support for mental health services was the highest priority within this theme with a weighted score of 5445. Support for preventative health services, e.g., stop smoking clinics was selected as the lowest priority.

When looking at the overall position of these in appendix 2, support for mental health services ranked seventh in the list of service areas. Support for preventative health services was ranked second to last (34th) in the overall service priority list.

(Appendix 3 presents the weighted scores for all individual services within each identified theme).

Further analysis of priorities

Locality - In nearly all localities, the priorities align with those indicated by all respondents. The one exception is in Health and Social Care - preventing homelessness came out as a higher priority than support for older people to live independently, for people in the South West locality and support for mental health services came out as a higher priority in the South East locality.

Age - There are three main differences when responses were analysed by age group:

- Environment - younger respondents indicated that climate change is high priority, in contrast to those aged 55 and over, who view environmental regulation (which includes noise reduction) as their highest priority with climate change being the second.
- Growing Plymouth's Economy - respondents up to the age of 65 view creating and protecting of jobs in the city as the highest priority, whereas those aged 65 and over viewed the quantity of housing as the highest priority.
- Health and Adult Social Care - respondents up to the age of 54 indicated support for mental health services as the highest priority, whereas those aged 55 and over indicated that support for older people to live independently as the higher priority.

Sex - There was only one area where a difference in priority for males and females was identified in the analysis. In the area of Health and Adult Social Care females were more likely to view support for mental health services as the highest priority, whereas males view the support to help older live independently as the highest priority. It is worth noting that support for mental health services was the second highest priority for male respondents.

Veterans - The highest priority for veterans within the 'Environment' theme was Public Conveniences. This is the only area where there is a difference between responses from veterans and all respondents.

No discernible differences were found in the analysis of the other demographic groups and in some demographic groups the number of respondents were too low to carry out any meaningful analysis.

Top Three priorities

Within the section of the engagement, respondents were asked to think about and write in their top three things they thought the Council needs to focus on for the city and residents in the year ahead.

Out of the total 1,196 survey respondents, 1104 entered an answer for all three of the priorities that they would like the Council to focus on, giving a total of 3,354 comments. These free text responses were analysed thematically, with 29 distinct themes being identified. These themes can be seen in Appendix 4.

The top three service priorities identified from the thematic analysis are:

1. **Economy:** This includes a range of aspects related to economic improvement, for example generating inward investment, creating and protecting local jobs, and supporting businesses, as well as other factors related to investment in tourism, culture and events. Responses frequently cited a combination of economy boosting ideas, such as increasing tourism to generate employment opportunities, so it was difficult to separate out business-specific comments from those that were more angled towards cultural aspects. In total, 303 responses related to the economy.

2. **Maintenance/repair of roads and pavements:** Included in this theme were references to the condition of highways, roads and pavements and the need for their maintenance or repair, for example filling in potholes and resurfacing roads and footpaths to make them safer for pedestrians and road users. In total, 293 responses related to the maintenance or repair of roads and pavements.

3. **Waste:** All aspects of household, recycling and garden waste collection and disposal were included in this theme, for example comments on the frequency of collections and discouraging fly-tipping. In total, 261 responses related to waste.

Social care was divided into three separate themes to cover adults, children and young people, and more general comments regarding social care. When taken together, these themes accounted for 433 of the total responses, meaning that social care, would as a whole come out as the top priority, emphasising the importance placed on providing care for the most vulnerable residents.

SECTION 3 – INTEREST IN COUNCIL FINANCES

To inform future communication and engagement activity around this topic, the questionnaire asked respondents to indicate their level of interest in the council's finances and the budget setting process. There is a positive response to this question, with 1,078 of respondents either very or fairly interested. The breakdown of responses is shown below.

Please can you tell us how interested you are in the Council's finances and how we balance the books?
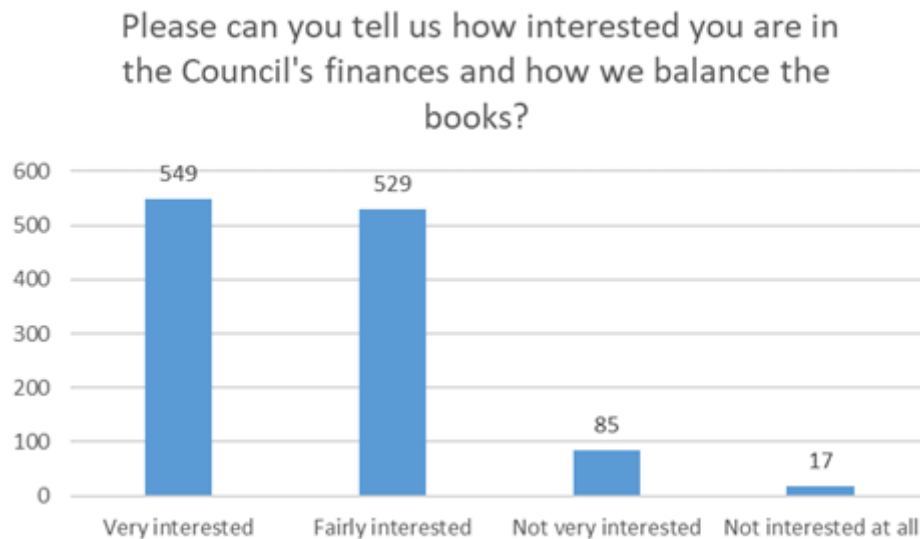
SECTION 4 - PROPOSALS FOR SETTING A BALANCED BUDGET

In this section of the questionnaire respondents were asked to consider a range of proposals that could achieve budget savings for the coming financial year. The aim was to be able to determine the general level of agreement for the proposals and provide the opportunity for respondents to comment and suggest further ideas. The proposals were themed and accompanied by supporting information to ensure respondents were fully informed before providing their response.

4.1 Continuously improving what we do to provide better value for money

The questionnaire set out several proposals for increasing efficiency and reducing costs for the next financial year, these included cutting out paperwork; reducing the number of meetings; doing more transactions online; using new technology; improving efficiency i.e. business and administrative cost and providing services in new ways.

Respondents were asked if they had any comments on the plans set out - 616 comments were received for this question covering a range of views on each of the proposals. There were 79 responses that were supportive across all proposals, only six respondents were against all proposals put forward in this section of the engagement.

The engagement received 140 positive views about the Council cutting out paperwork and a further 114 in respect of reducing the number of meetings. Together, 50 negative or more neutral comments were received where respondents didn't express a view either way. A sample of positive comments include:

> "Fully support anything that saves money as well as protecting the environment..."

> "I think using technology to be more efficient is great and also having less meetings face to face and using less resources has a better carbon footprint."

> "Looks promising, less meetings, less paperwork, more efficient IT systems etc..."

> *"[The proposals] all sound like sensible ideas. The fewer 'panels' and 'committees' the better. The focus should be on 'getting things done' and not 'process'."*

However, for some, the comments came with a note of caution, particularly around openness and transparency and ensuring digital inclusion, for instance:

> *"Reducing cost by cutting back paperwork is important, but please remember there are lots of people who don't have access to modern technology and also those who actually prefer to correspond by letter."*

> *"Agree with cutting out paper for Council meetings - need to focus instead on how to increase residents' engagement in democratic processes so that decisions taken are more representative of local people's views."*

> *"Good ideas but awareness that not all people have access to/can use digital services and they shouldn't be/ feel excluded is important."*

> *"I agree with all the suggestions, but with a note of caution that there are adequate records to ensure transparency of any online or telephone transactions. Also, that "reviews" carried out are equally transparent, and that the review itself does not cost more in time and money than the service itself, and that that those affected have an opportunity to be fully involved and to engage with proposed changes."*

The negative or more neutral comments specifically relating to cutting out paperwork and reducing the number of meetings again cited concern around digital exclusion and transparency of council decisions, a sample of these include:

> *"Cutting out all paperwork to go completely digital will not suit everyone immediately - ambitious and possibly counter-productive."*

> *"Reducing paperwork does not always equate to improved efficiency as computer systems and staff need to be well integrated to work effectively (training, correct resourcing etc) so all departments should be re-assessed and audited following transition period."*

> *"The budget deficit should not be an excuse for fewer meetings. We need more democracy and more transparency, not less. That goes for putting all admin online too - sorry, but you need printed copies of things so that they cannot be suddenly changed online without any way of seeing what the changes were. That is all part of the democratic process."*

The analysis showed that 117 positive comments were received about the Council doing more transactions online with a further 51 negative comments. 125 neutral comments were received where respondents didn't express a view either way. Within the negative and neutral views (176 in total) respondents were again very concerned about those unable to access services or information digitally (127). Other negative or more neutral comments included:

> *"There is only so much cost saving you can keep doing, if you're going so electronic, you're surely putting jobs at risk. You need to look at job creation and forcing those that can work into jobs..."*

> *"Sort out the appalling website which is difficult to use. Talking to a person to sort out a problem is so much easier; you can explain what is needed and you get on the spot answers and not days later via the online service."*

> *"Going online is expensive, makes staff lazy and inaccessible and does not offer anything more for the taxpayer. It usually means services are frustratingly impossible to obtain. It involves too many expensive Information Technology staff, outrageously expensive IT equipment and focuses on statistics rather than service."*

130 positive comments were received about using new technology and 39 either negative or more neutral comments where respondents didn't express a view either way. There was some concern about the proposal for dimming street lighting (23 respondents mentioned this in their comments),

however, there was support for the use of new technology especially if it released carbon benefits. A sample of comments is provided:

> "You could even cut out some of the street lights after midnight as that will help the carbon footprint and save money."

> "Can we not reduce maintenance costs for some buildings and facilities by using more renewable technologies to reduce running costs e.g. more solar and ground source heat pumps at the life centre, solar thermal to heat the lido, solar PV on Ballard house. Anaerobic digestion of food and garden waste? Grant funding for innovative solutions would help meet capital costs and revenue costs would be reduced. Install as much solar PV as possible on public car parks with a view to capturing and storing the energy via batteries and selling via EV (Electric Vehicle) chargers."

> "Please ensure cuts don't result in deaths by allowing criminal activity to flourish and increase unchecked. I live in an area where I feel unsafe in the daytime and feel unable to go out after dark unless there is good lighting and the knowledge that there are enough police available to deter criminal behaviour.

> "Becoming cost effective is a necessity, however how much does it cost to introduce new technology, systems etc? That could be used in other areas. What are the overall benefits and cost savings?

177 positive responses were received about improving efficiency in the Council, only 20 responses were identified as being negative with a further 12 being categorised as neutral. Analysis showed that there was support for proposals that would reduce management, administration or building costs and for any changes that would make interactions with customers more efficient. However, in reviewing how the Council can be more efficient there was some concern about services being reduced as a result. A sample of comments is provided:

> "Scale back on management roles and invest in people working on the front line. Entire service needs to be massively rescaled from management and office personnel heavy to more front-line worker heavy."

> "These plans only go so far; they actually just streamline doing the same things in the same ways, they do not change the way the council interacts with customers. Large quantities of work is generated by failure demand; while obviously it is preferable for e.g. bins not to be missed, requests not to be closed in error without being actioned, etc., by far the greater issue is that as an organisation the council doesn't proactively contact customers unless it has to. It expects customers to contact the council to chase-up or complain about something. An example: If Waste not been able to collect someone's Bulky Waste as promised, that customer should be contacted that day with a revised date. Instead, they wait, get angry and call [us] (involving 1 staff member - contact centre) who has to raise a complaint for them, which then needs to be allocated (involving 2 staff members - complaint triage) to an officer to investigate and respond (involving 3 staff members - investigating officer) in order for the customer to be informed when the next collection will be. That's four members of staff's time wasted when if the collection crew at end of shift sent Text Messages to any customers they've not managed to get to. This would be easily achieved, practical, and entirely free to the council. This is just one example of how massive amounts of staff time is wasted by an organisational policy that is reactive not proactive and expecting customers to chase every time something goes wrong...."

> "It sounds like you plan to spend a lot of money changing your IT system... you need to cut costs by employing less people in the office... everyone should be paid no more than the living wage including the council lead, by having less people you'll be forced to prioritise what actually needs to be done... don't pay consultants...same as any good house hold budget if you can't afford it, you don't have it."

The engagement received 124 positive views in relation to proposals about providing services in new ways. 48 comments were either negative or more neutral where respondents didn't express a view either way. The analysis showed that there was support for more joined up services and for encouraging local communities or the voluntary sector to get involved with supporting services to

deliver. However, there were 30 specific comments which raised concern about private-sector involvement. Comments include:

> *"Outsourcing does not always save money – it's often more expensive - invest in clean energy for public buildings - solar panels on roofs etc - it will save both money and the planet in the long term."*

> *"Increase shared services with neighbouring authorities e.g.: licensing, legal, waste, libraries, food safety. The council appears to spend a lot of money on external barrister for legal cases- it would be more cost efficient to employ a barrister"*

> *"It seems when a service is contracted out or shared then the quality of the service drops and the cost goes up."*

> *"You must value the willingness and expertise of volunteers prepared to share their wisdom and skills by listening to them, giving them support such as free training, public liability insurance and respect so that they can function effectively to support your work and their communities."*

> *"Providing services in news ways - whilst better joined up thinking between services is good, I hope that this will not lead to further services being outsourced to private companies. This is so often a false economy with services suffering, less joined up thinking, hidden costs, asset stripping etc leaving us all (except the shareholders) a lot worse off. There should be no place for private for-profit firms in providing council services or being paid with taxpayer's money."*

172 comments were categorised as being about something other than the proposals listed.

4.2 Caring for the elderly and vulnerable adults in our community

The supporting information for this section set out how the Council is working hard to provide more joined up care services with the NHS, prevent more people from needing care by focusing on services that help people stay healthy and remain independent for longer and how the Council is proposing to reduce costs by reviewing all externally commissioned contracts and by reviewing the cost of care packages for adults.

Respondents were asked whether they had any comment on the Council's plans to protect Adult Social care services whilst reducing costs. 557 respondents provided a comment out of the 1,196 total responses. 146 of those comments were found to be positive about the plans set out and 50 were clearly identified as being unsupportive.

Of those who can be identified as being supportive of the plans, there were three themes that were regularly cited in their responses. 77 respondents supported an increase in Council Tax to support these services; 13 people commented that they support work around prevention and early intervention while 10 people welcomed more joining up of care services.

Of those who supported an increase in Council Tax there were some caveats in the responses emphasising that this would be acceptable if they could be reassured that this would be spent on social care e.g. "*I would be happy to pay the increase as long as it definitely went for social care*" and "*I think the 1% council tax rise would be beneficial as long as it was only used for adult social care.*" Another respondent commented "*I think 1% sounds reasonable BUT not to be levied in a period of people suffering such as now with increase in energy bills and the impact of Brexit/Covid having on the country as a whole.*"

Of those respondents who supported the Councils plans to prevent more people from needing care comments included: "*A focus on health and preventative measures will enable more people of all ages to remain independent and not need far more expensive support*" and "*I think there needs to be a lot more focus on stopping people from getting really sick or going into crisis.*"

Respondents were also keen to see work toward more joined up care services including comments such as: "*I am proud of how health and social services have integrated to tackle it together*" and "*Joined up care is important to improve the care for the elderly.*"

Other comments that were supportive of the plans referenced the need to help people live independently and improve efficiency and value for money while ensuring quality of services:

> "*Support for independent living is critical*' and '*Support for elderly residents to remain living in their own homes is very important.*"

> "*Best value for money but must also ensure quality of services provided. Earlier review of care packages at appropriate costs. These services are vital but overpriced*' and '*If it's needed, do it. Cost shouldn't be the main driver though, value for money and quality should.*"

Of those respondents who were identified as being generally unsupportive of the plans the main themes cited in their responses included:

35 respondents objecting to any further increase in Council Tax with comments such as:

> "*No one will want Council Tax rises in the current economic climate.*"

> "*People cannot afford an extra 1 per cent precept added to their council tax to pay for social care. With the rising cost of utilities and pay freezes we cannot afford to pay extra council tax.*"

> "*Council tax is already high and to increase it now while other bills are also increasing is a risk to low income families. I do understand the hard decisions the council will have to make.*"

25 respondents commented that more funding should be available from central government while 3 respondents felt that people should pay for their own care.

> "*As a Conservative council, I'd expect you to go back to the Conservative government and firmly insist that they should be paying for this by raising taxes on the wealthy rather than asking your voters to pay even more than they can personally afford...*"

> "*Tory Councils should be pushing Tory government for more funding, with the increase in national insurance and council tax, electric, gas and fuel the Plymouth population is being forced into poverty which will put more pressures on services...*"

> "*You should ask these costs to come from the Government. Cut your cost according to your cloth and stop spending money when you don't have it...*"

Some respondents commented on the question but did not express a view either way specifically in relation to the proposals set out. General analysis of these comments found the top three common themes emerging were that respondents felt that externally contracted / commissioned services should be brought back in house, family should be supported to play a bigger role in the care for elderly relatives and that wages and conditions for care workers should be improved.

> "*Don't like this sort of thing being out sourced. These services should be in house so that they are tightly controlled by council professionals.*"

> "*Take all services back to inhouse. This will improve performance and accountability and retain staff by providing work progression and stop our tax money going into private hands.*"

> "*Encourage families to look after each other and their elderly relatives. A lot could be saved through doing this.*"

> "*Vital that this category of population is cared for properly. Care staff need to be paid a proper wage for the work they do.*"

> "*Care and support workers, despite the budget mentioned, are some of the most under paid and undervalued people in the work force...*"

Other themes coming out of the analysis included building more care homes and considering establishing council owned care homes; and providing short term care homes or convalescent homes to care for those coming out of hospital.

> *"You have closed most of the council care homes, build and open more ASAP."*

> *"Commission a study into whether a return to Council owned Care Homes would actually improve efficiency and save money whilst at the same time increasing the stock of care home places."*

> *"Many people could be cared for at a fraction of the price by providing convalescent accommodation for those who are discharged from hospital but are not yet well enough to look after themselves at home. Surly a bespoke unit that could cater for the short-term recovery period (maybe up to a month) using pensions to subsidise costs would be far cheaper (and probably safer) than paying agencies to send carers all over the city."*

> *"Work with NHS to provide purpose built and operated basic recovery facility as a half-way house between hospital and home to reduce bed blocking."*

4.3 Protecting vulnerable children and young people

The supporting information for this section set out the level of support that is provided to children and young people across the city by the Council. It also touched on the cost of this support, particularly in relation to providing placements for children in care through foster carers, residential care and secure placements.

It set out proposals to reduce costs in this area by increasing the number of in-house foster carers, reducing the need for more expensive placements with external providers and to deliver savings through further prevention work with families to avoid children needing to be placed in care.

Respondents were asked whether they had any comment on the Council's plans to protect services for children and young people whilst reducing costs. 432 respondents provided a comment out of the 1,196 total responses. 105 of those comments were found to be positive about the plans set out and 18 were clearly identified as being generally unsupportive. The remaining comments provided additional viewpoints but were not demonstrably in support of or against the plans outlined in the narrative.

Of those who can be identified as being supportive of the plans set out, respondents were in favour of a focus on prevention and early intervention. There were also several comments supporting bringing services in-house to reduce the cost of external provision:

> *"Early intervention is key."*

> *"I think that sadly whilst there will always be children in need, the last point made about working alongside and supporting families by delivering prevention work could make a difference both in terms of finance and outcomes for children."*

> *"Supporting families early is vital to prevent further problems. All the above proposals seem good."*

Of those who can be identified as not in support of the plans as set out, several respondents expressed the view that this area needed more investment rather than less. Others were concerned that reducing costs could lead to vulnerable children not being adequately supported:

> *"Reducing costs not the answer, resources must be protected."*

> *"I can't see this working, services are expensive, you get what you pay for, I can see many children slipping through the net. Hearing there are only 2,000 how many are not getting a service."*

> *"Children must not be placed at risk as a cost cutting measure."*

The three most common themes that emerged from the neutral comments not directly related to the plans outlined in the narrative were:

- Cost of care packages – 17 respondents queried the average cost of £48,900 per child and why the cost was so high.

    "How on earth does it cost £48,900 per child? You are being ripped off somewhere clearly."

- Further provision of or maintaining provision of children's centres – 13 respondents believed this to be important.

    "Childrens Centres and nurseries are essential. PLEASE make them one of your priorities for funding."

- Provision of youth services and youth clubs – 15 respondents commented that more youth clubs or services were important.

    "Many young people have no hope and no role models. We need more trained youth workers to work with them in the community, set up youth clubs, etc, to help set young people on a better path."

4.4 Investing in a clean and safe city and reducing our carbon footprint

This section of the questionnaire asked respondents whether they agreed with plans to protect services that keep Plymouth clean and safe. It set out how the Council has a focus on Plymouth being a clean, green and safe city and how it is looking at ways to raise income and encourage residents to help in the effort to keep the city clean.

In general, there was a positive response to the question 'Do you agree with our plans to protect services that keep Plymouth clean and safe?'. In total there were 764 responses to the question, and of those 506 provided a response that clearly supported the plans set out. In addition, a further 60 recognised the importance of a focus on keeping the city clean and safe but were not specific in their support of the plans. There were only 30 responses that clearly stated that they did not agree with the plans set out. All remaining responses were not clearly in agreement or disagreement.

This sections also asked some specific questions about whether respondents would be prepared to pay more for an improved environment and initiatives that help tackle climate change and how much would they be prepared to pay.

Would you be prepared to pay more for an improved environment and initiatives that help tackle climate change?
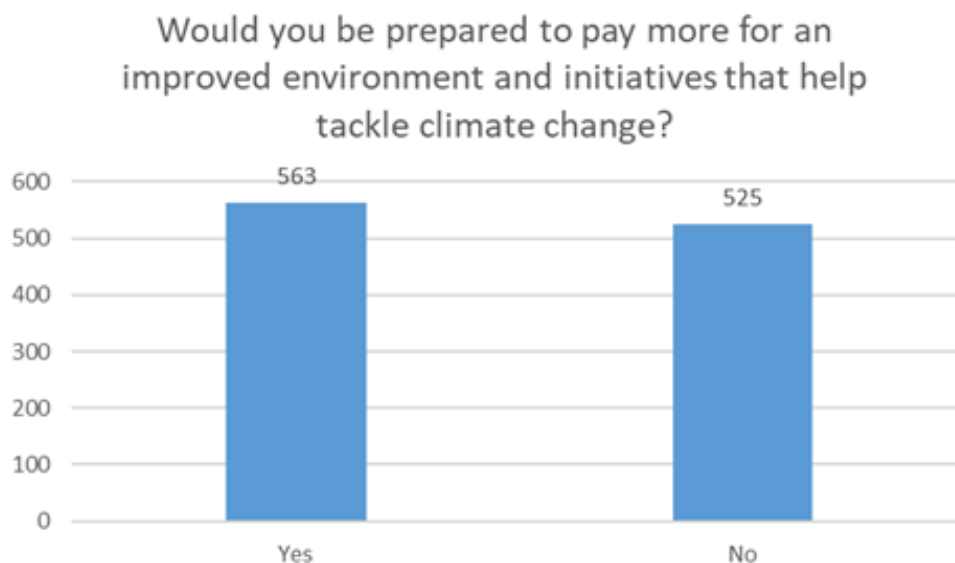
There is a relatively even split between those prepared and not prepared to pay more. 563 respondents agreed they would be prepared to pay more. 570 respondents then went on to state

how much they would be prepared to pay (seven more than stated they would be prepared to pay more). The majority of the 570 respondents (359) chose the option of 'up to £50 a year'. 137 respondents indicated that they would pay between £50 and £100 with a further 74 indicating that they would pay over £100 for an improved environment and initiatives to tackle climate change.

The engagement offered respondents the opportunity to suggest ways in which any additional funding could be spent in this area. In total 486 comments were received, 344 of which referred to a specific activity. The 10 most prevalent suggestions are listed below:

- Accessibility and quality of Public Transport
- Planting of Trees
- Increased and improved recycling opportunities, including food only recycling
- Increase in Electric Vehicle Charging points
- Improvement to cycle lanes
- Increased education to members of the public on how they can tackle climate change
- Encouraging of volunteers, residents, and community groups
- Increased use of solar power
- Charge for high emission areas such as the City Centre
- Improved transport infrastructure.

This section also asked whether respondents would be prepared to get involved in local activities that would improve the environment and which would help keep Plymouth tidy.

502 respondents selected 'maybe', however 396 indicated that they would be prepared to get involved in local activities. 210 who stated 'no' in answering this question.

4.5 Raising income and reviewing fees and charges

The question in this section asked respondents to comment on plans to protect services by increasing some fees and charges for some services. It set out how fees and charges for specific services that are not used by everyone are an increasingly important source of funding for the Council but emphasised that the Council will continue to maximise external funding opportunities and attract more grant funding over the next year. Of the 1,196 responses, 568 respondents provided a response to this question. The comments received in this section were mixed; out of the 568 comments received, 143

respondents indicated, either explicitly or more generally, that they were supportive of fee increases for services only used by some. However, the negative effect of increasing fees on the local economy and on household bills were cited several times as a potential impact.

Although there were only a few mentions, respondents provided a clear indication that an increase in fees would be supported for boat mooring as this was perceived as a 'luxury' and for trade waste disposal (28 and 11 respectively), however some raised concern about the potential increase in fly tipping if trade waste disposal charges were increased and therefore could be a counter-productive measure. A selection of representative comments include:

> "Boat moorings are a fair place to drive profit, a boat is a luxury, going to the toilet is not."

> "I think that boat mooring fees, particularly for leisure craft would be a good one."

> "Trade waste disposal needs careful consideration to avoid fly tipping."

> "The greater increases should always be on services where there is an element of choice. For example, boat mooring fees (having a boat is not essential unless you are using it to make a living). Similarly, trade waste disposal - traders can pass on costs to their customers."

> "Fees should reflect those charged by private companies, especially boat moorings and waste disposal."

> "Seems fair.... I'd like to see trade waste charges used to offset household waste charges at HWRC. Domestic customers should be encouraged to recycle as much as possible centrally and the charges in place definitely put people off."

There was less consensus amongst respondents on proposals to increase parking charges. Those supportive of an increase in parking charges tended to cite the positive impact that fewer cars in the city would have on the environment. These comments also stressed the importance of affordable public transport if parking charges were to increase. However, those more critical of an increase in parking charges (76) raised concerns about the potential negative impact that this may have on the city's economy and in particular footfall in the city centre:

> "...Stop increasing parking charges - the city centre is dying as it is now."

> "...Parking charges are expensive in Plymouth and having a detrimental effect on the town centre."

> "Parking is a massive issue and charging more will not solve the issue. Interestingly in Mutley since the car park has free parking you can rarely find a space! This must be helping local businesses. I am more likely to shop there than I town because I can park for free."

Responses about increasing resident permit charges also varied. Numerous responses cited the inconsistencies of resident permit parking charges across the city and the perceived unfairness of the system. Several responses provided insight into the challenges and frustration that some people encounter when trying to park near to their home:

> "Parking permit areas are in serious need of revision; most seem to be revenue sources rather than a help to residents."

> "Parking permits in particular are unfair, those residents pay council tax the same as everyone else, why should they have to pay to park near their homes, when other residents in other areas don't? They have not chosen to have permits, it was a council decided to put it in place and charge for it, they are penalised for their postcode."

There were a few supportive comments about charging for some elements of library services and museums, however those responses that favoured lower fees in these areas cited the vital role that free museums and libraries play for those people on low incomes:

> "I think museums and libraries should be kept fee free where possible (except fines) to encourage participation."

"I would be happy to pay a small fee to museums or even libraries, but also would expect that people on low incomes should still be able to access them for free."

"Library / Museum - these feel like essential services that need to be open to all without additional costs. This is especially important in addressing digital access for those without connection at home (Inc. vulnerable people / low income / older people)."

"Museums should be self-funded like the national trust, as should theatres."

"Libraries should be free. I would like to see all library fines abolished - customers who incur fines are more likely to keep the books and avoid using the library. This can be seen from customer library accounts. If a book is late being returned, it costs the library nothing. If it is never returned, we have to replace the book, costing money."

It was clear from the responses that closure of public conveniences would not be supported. Responses towards increasing charges for public conveniences were mixed with 67 respondents citing how important public conveniences were and/or that they would be happy to pay a small charge and 72 respondents expressing a strong view on the impact to residents and visitors if there were additional charges for this service. Respondents noted that if public conveniences are made available, they need to be high quality and kept clean especially for people with disabilities and underlying health conditions, young children and those who are pregnant. Respondents who were supportive stressed the importance of ensuring that payment is kept to a minimum and that there should be cash and online payment systems to ensure accessibility for all. A selection of representative comments include:

"Public toilets that are free to use should be a priority."

"I am happy to pay for public toilets if they are kept in clean, those in Armada Way are always spotless when I have used them."

"Public toilet availability should be free. Huge issue for disabled and those with other health issues, parents, small children etc if they can't access easily. May even result in people becoming effectively housebound and less healthy. Using public spaces creates other health issues. Surely a false economy."

"Do not charge for toilets - especially when the current charged toilets are not fit for purpose as cash is slowly leaving our wallets and replaced by card/mobile transactions."

"I say yes, charge 20p for spending a penny, however, what I would say is, invest in new technology. Allow for payment via contactless or have a pre-payment card people can top up... and if people pay to use the loo, it will require improvements on your part, they need to be clean, looked after and actually open!"

"I would pay a reasonable fee to use a public toilet if the toilet was properly maintained and managed."

A general theme which ran through the responses was that any fee increases should be minimal and where possible efficiencies should be made. Numerous responses cited that any increases need to be balanced against the cost of living and relative low wages in the city. Responses also stressed the importance of ensuring high quality service delivery.

"Fees prevent the less off taking advantage of a service."

"Cost of living is high enough and the south west is a low paid area."

"Increase fees for toilets, car parks and boat mooring but ensure value for money for these services (safety, security, user friendly etc.)."

SECTION 5 - COUNCIL TAX

This section specifically set out the case in relation to the impact of rising costs and the increase in demand for services on the Council's budget. The question asked respondents whether they would agree that the Council should consider an increase in Council Tax to help cover the rising costs and avoid having to make substantial cuts to local services.

Of the 1,196 responses 986 respondents provided a comment to this question. Of the 986 respondents, just under half (472) indicated that they would support the council considering an increase in Council Tax. 344 respondents were clearly unsupportive of any rise in council Tax, while 88 stated it depended on certain circumstances or weren't sure as they felt they didn't have enough information on the proposals.

Of those respondents who indicated that they would be supportive, 52 also made comments which suggested that they would like this to be a small, affordable increase, while 11 respondents agreed 'reluctantly'.

> *"Provided the increase wasn't too large yes. I appreciate costs have risen for the council, and that council tax may need to increase in line with inflation as the bare minimum."'*

> *"I can see how it would help to cover costs and continue to pay for services. But I would hope the increase would be reasonable for people to afford."*

> *"Only a modest increase. Many of those that have to pay council tax are struggling on fixed incomes with costs rising all around them…"*

Of the respondents who were supportive 26 also added comments to the effect that any increase would need to be justified and spent wisely with residents clearly being able to see where that money was being spent and that it was on areas of need.

> *"Yes, but as long as these are broken down and we can see the changes."*

> *"Yes, as long as the extra money is spent wisely, with thought and care and not wasted unnecessarily. With full disclosure of how every penny is spent!"*

> *"Yes, but you need to explain exactly how money is spent and why things are so expensive."*

Similarly, 11 of the respondents who were generally supportive also made comments that indicated that they would like to see improved efficiency, a reduction in waste and better value for money.

> *"Yes, but really reduce wastage on unnecessary schemes."*

> *"Yes, if all efforts have already been made to save waste and provide value for money…"*

> *"Yes, I agree that Council Tax would need to rise to cover any rising costs in tandem with continuing drives to improve efficiency."*

Of those respondents who clearly indicated that they would not be supportive of an increase in Council Tax, the top three reasons related to comments on cost of living rises (73), the Council needing to improve efficiencies in the first instance (25) and a view that council staff structures and wages needed to be reviewed and/or reduced alongside the cost associated with councillors (19).

Some of the key issues raised by those respondents who were concerned about the impact on cost of living were that an increase in Council Tax would be unaffordable due to the stagnation of wages and/or low wages in the city coupled with rising inflation and increases in other household bills such as utilities. Concerns were raised as to the impact on families (in particular low income families already struggling to pay bills) as well as those on a fixed income.

> *"The current economic climate is very difficult for the large proportion of Plymouth residents on below average incomes, particularly households with only 1 person struggling to pay all household bills."*

> *"You do not mention that those on fixed incomes are experiencing a big gap between income and expenditure. Council tax has increased massively in latter years."*

> *"Council tax is already unaffordable for some families. Increasing it even more will push more people into poverty."*

> *"Increasing the Council Tax would put a great strain on the elderly who are already struggling on their pensions and families on low income, especially with the rising costs of heating and cooking fuels which is quite serious."*

Other respondents felt strongly that the Council should focus on driving efficiencies rather than increasing Council Tax.

> *"No, the council needs a fundamental change. To work more like a business mentality where the profit is measured in services delivered well."*

> *"Rather than raise council tax, look at streamlining work practices and improving efficiency to better utilise the council tax you already get."*

> *"No increases. Less waste, more efficiencies before automatic increases."*

Similarly, a number of respondents wanted to see a review and/or reduction in council staff, structures and wages and the costs associated with councillors.

> *"Only when Councillor expenses are reduced..."*

> *"Cut services and Councillors wages / staff wages. I do not agree with paying more for a council that fails to deliver."*

> *"I think that the top tier of management needs to be culled rather than take even more from people who already don't have a lot. Wages are not rising as fast as you are taking."*

> *"I would only support yet another increase in council tax if it could be demonstrated that effective reviews of salaries, posts and efficiency had been conducted in respect of each dept."*

Other respondents expressed a view that it depended (70). The main themes coming out of this were that the money should be spent on services that were needed and not wasted, efficiencies should be made and services are improved and/or delivered as expected, such as getting the basics right e.g. waste collection, filling potholes and grass cutting.

> *"It's dependent on the use. If it's used for essential services I would. If it's to raise income for non-essential services then the answer would be no."*

> *"Only if you can demonstrate that efficiencies have already been made and there are no vanity projects underway. Then I would support an increase for baseline services."*

> *"Any increase needs to be quantified. You increased council tax last year and I'm yet to see any measurable effect of the increase. Yet you told us that it would be used to improve things like roads and street cleaning."*

> *"As long as all services are provided when they should be. I.e. bins are collected on time, potholes are filled in properly and in a timely fashion. The issue most people have with council tax rises is that we seem to get less whilst paying more. Council services seem to reduce each year (I.e the grass in Plympton over the summer was nearly the same height as I am!) and yet every year our bill seems to go up."*

SECTION 6 – FURTHER IDEAS/SUGGESTIONS

This final section asked respondents if they had any further suggestions about ways in which the Council could deliver all or some services more effectively to achieve savings.

Overall, 700 respondents chose to respond with 'no comment' or provided comments which did not offer further ideas or suggestions. Of the 484 remaining, there were four 'themes' respondents focused on. These were: changes to existing council services; reduce number of staff/review their efficiency; greater use of volunteers and 'disinvest in events, statues and land'. Of the remainder, comments about the number of councillors and highly paid PCC staff were another common theme which together totalled 59 comments.

Change/Increase/Reduce Services and charges - With the largest actual response to the question, the suggestions were very mixed. Many suggested increasing current charging regimes, where others suggested reducing them. Similar was found in relation to current services being delivered, with some saying they were unnecessary and should be stopped whilst others suggesting increasing provision. There was also conflict between delivering 'in house' services and 'outsourcing', using less contractors versus getting contractors to deliver all services. Generally, the comments were suggesting existing services could be done better and more efficiently.

Reduce number of staff/Review their efficiency - The response within this theme focused on the senior management structure of the council and pay with many suggesting either a reduction in salary and/or the reduction of posts. A large proportion also asked if all staff were efficient in what they do as there was a perception that staff are not necessarily always actively working to their capacity and in some cases their capability.

Greater use of volunteers - The suggestions here mainly related to utilising volunteers who might not always be working or in current employment, although others suggested council staff could also volunteer to do more. Notwithstanding, there was a real sense that access to volunteering was not always easy and more in this area could be done. There was a real link to community engagement and ownership suggesting taking responsibility for your local area would assist the council and promote community spirit.

Disinvest in events, statues and land - Most of the responses under this theme centred on statues and the resources allocated to these and general 'cultural' events, where this money could be saved. There were a few comments about disinvestment of land and property. Table 4 provides a breakdown of the themes and number of responses.

Table 4

Themes	Number
No Comment/ Comments of PCC not specifically related to further ideas	700
Purchase Assets/Investments to lease	13
Reduce number of Councillors and their expenses	26
Change/Increase/Reduce Services and charges	213
Stop paying high salaries	33
Reduce number of staff/review staff efficiency	54
Better enforcement and management of contracts	28
Greater use of volunteers	51
Disinvest in events, statues and land	41
Develop new services and charge for them	16
Lobby government for funding	9
	1184

SECTION 7 – BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT

The business engagement meeting had representation from the following;

- Devon and Plymouth Chamber
- Destination Plymouth
- City Centre Company
- Plymouth Waterfront Partnership
- Plymouth Federation of Small Businesses

A summary of the questions asked and the Council's response are set out below;

Table 5

Question	Response
Reserves Danger of cutting costs – is there a case for using more reserves?	Plymouth City Council (PCC) is seeking to make more efficient use of the resources it has. Using reserves will only have a modest impact, so we are striving towards applying a efficient and sustainable approach to the budget. The level of PCC reserves is also very modest in relation to the budget.
Deficit Is the deficit a common situation across the country? How are you going to fill the gap and is it an ongoing position?	Yes – PCC are 'par for the course' compared to most other Local Authorities. A Council Tax increase of some sort would go some way to filling the gap, also 'one off' funding streams will contribute toward closing the gap. Longer term - PCC will likely have some sort of budget gap, but there are also lots of uncertainties as there may be significant changes both to legislation and new burdens, which will impact on our finances. Also the whole Local Government finance funding systems looks like it could change going forward.
Borrowings With lending rates so cheap – what will the council do in relation to borrowing money?	The strategy for borrowing more money is linked to how successful PCC is in securing match funding. PCC is very good at leveraging government money and will continue to do all that we can to ensure the city continues to grow and that levels of investment are maintained.
Adult Social Care opportunities Suggestion that there are local businesses who can help look at the arena of ASC and its future reform which may assist PCC.	Noted and thank you. PCC will liaise directly to explore these opportunities.
Policy Given the Social Care cost pressures – is the Council intending to continue the inclusive growth initiative – now that Resurgam seems to be dropping off? An ask of PCC – please do not to pass on costs to businesses.	Yes – inclusive growth will continue. This will also include looking at our fees and charges policy and key projects which will look to reduce costs and be more efficient. Noted
Housing Are we are able to accommodate everyone we need to?	Yes, believe that there is no issues in this area. Housing pipeline is in a good position. Good sites and developments.

Visitor/Tourism	
Please do not to pass on costs to businesses.	Noted
The role of the partnerships is crucial to successful prosperity.	
Skills	
Please recognise that there are still shortages in the Visitor/Tourism and hospitability sector. Destination Plymouth and all partners, including PCC are working together successfully	We recognise that there is a gap and are looking to support the business sector as much as we can.
Need to recognise that there is a Skills crisis and a labour crisis in the city.	Completely agree and PCC would like to think that the business community have noticed that the City's Skills agenda has seen increased capacity, resources and investment in addressing this issue.
Skills – some great work going on but don't work in silo	Noted and thank you. Working with businesses and large employers in the city is key to the success of the Plan for Skills – we will continue to extend our reach and engage businesses in this agenda.

In addition to the business community posing questions, PCC asked the following;

Q. Ensuring PCC retains its capacity so that it is agile in securing government funding and has the ability to continue to secure this facility will be a big challenge for 2022. What importance do the business community place on Plymouth City Council being able to have the ability to secure government funding?

> *"Yes, this is very important - keep doing what you're doing. The council has changed significantly over the last 10 years and you should be congratulated for what you are doing."*

The meeting concluded with the agreement to organise another session with the business community over the summer to revisit the budget position.

Appendix 1 – Email responses

Respondent 1

Thoughts and ideas on Council spending and savings: - Asking the communities of Plymouth for volunteer support for those who need help on their estates, such as mentoring.

1) Social care for the elderly is important and a much needed service which needs to be reviewed and revised so the elderly are not left to fend for themselves especially those who are house bound and rely on carers with no local family support.

Maybe a community support group of vetted volunteer visitors to help with the mundane chores of house cleaning, gardening, shopping and general companionship conversation which would cut back on some of the daily costs of carers.

Maybe a support group from each area of Plymouth supporting their own areas and people?

2) Also maybe in regards to parks maintenance flower beds tree planting:-

Ask each area of Plymouth to donate time and plants creating and designing areas in their communities - a competition between the estates taking pride locally, include the unemployed for work experience and maybe certificates of achievements for them for taking part building up a current portfolio of work.

3) Maybe similar to a food banks a warehouse of donated furniture, TVs and electrical items, bedding, curtains and off cut carpets. Clothes for those who have nothing moving into accommodation for the first time.

Or those who have very little but need nearly new instead of giving to the charity shop for resale. Again for the unemployed learning repair skills from retired builders or with donated left over paints etc. Again, with community support to help with fixing, lifting and general repairs to homes. With supervision this would help the unemployed to gain work experience and a portfolio of achievements to add to their CVs.

Respondent 2

First of all, thank you for including us, the Council tax payers, in suggestions to help save money. It is very much appreciated.

1. My suggestion would be to stop funding the production of statues such as 'Bianca' and 'Rusty Reg' and to stop paying for visiting artists whose hotel bills & expenses are funded by us, the Council tax payers. The artists don't always turn up and there is no refund on these occasions. If an artist pulls out of their visit, once expenses are paid, could they be asked to reimburse the hotel and costs incurred by the Council? Whilst we are in the crisis we are, I would hope that no visiting artists would be taking up valuable, much needed resources.

2. I would also like to suggest that the Council charge each department for the hiring of rooms for meetings that take more than 1hr. Meetings rooms could then be offered to the public 'for hire' generating income.

3. Would it be possible to ask the Government to pay from a central pot of money, for the clean-up and legal expenses of moving travellers on when they have a dedicated site available to them? Do they really need to foul with human waste and litter our children's school playing fields? This is a danger to children, and those expected to clean up after the travellers and they know it. I have no problem with the travelling community, but, when they have dedicated sites and they use school properties instead, that is disgraceful & disrespectful to our community.

4. Could the Council charge for garden waste collections to home owners, not the elderly, infirm or vulnerable?

5. Could the property given by Nancy Astor to the people of Plymouth, on the Hoe, be let out to generate income when it's not being used by Circuit Judges?

Thank you for the opportunity of voicing suggestions. Good luck with your cost cutting programme. You are doing a fantastic job! Thank you!

Respondent 3

I would be happy to make a contribution to the free green waste collections. In Worcester they pay £50 a year. I would be happy to pay this if it helps.

Respondent 4

I am Plymouth resident and council tax payer.

The principle is good, but would it not be helpful to all residents if PCC set out the Main heading under which possible saving might be made. I suspect that PCC has a duty to comply with many statutory notices that members of the public would not be aware of, making the publics involvement far more difficult if suggesting a saving on a "statutory" issue.

As a start, families should be encouraged to support their respective families, but so often one hears "they can do that that's why they get paid". Far too many residents expect everything on a plate. I will fill in the PCC questionnaire, but would like to know where savings are a no no!

Appendix 2 – Service Priority – overall ranking

Priority Area	Overall rank	Group Rank	Weighted score	Weighted score gap
Refuse collection	1	1	6402	207
Support for vulnerable children, children in care or in need of protection	2	1	6195	50
Park and Open Spaces	3	1	6145	167
Road maintenance	4	1	5978	321
Environmental regulation, e.g. food safety, trading standards, noise control	5	1	5657	197
Creating and protecting jobs across the city	6	1	5460	15
Support for mental health services	7	1	5445	132
Footway maintenance	8	2	5313	1
Initiatives for tackling climate change	9	2	5312	38
Public conveniences	10	3	5274	11
Support for older people to live independently	11	2	5263	4

Support for children with special educational needs	**12**	2	5259	303
Support for people with disabilities	**13**	3	4956	40
Grass cutting and weed control	**14**	4	4916	8
Attracting inward investment and supporting businesses	**15**	2	4908	0
Preventing homelessness and help find homes for those in need	**16**	4	4908	142
Keeping public land clear of litter and refuse	**17**	2	4766	8
Services for young people, such as youth services, young carers	**18**	3	4758	90
Early years support, such as child care, children centres	**19**	4	4668	66
Improving the quality of housing	**20**	3	4602	97
Doorstep recycling	**21**	3	4505	252
Planning the future shape of the city	**22**	4	4253	15
Improving the quantity of housing	**23**	5	4238	103
Sport and Leisure Facilities	**24**	2	4135	69
Local tips/household waste recycling centres	**25**	4	4066	135
Libraries	**26**	3	3931	103
Garden waste collection	**27**	5	3828	75
Subsidies for non-commercial bus services	**28**	3	3753	90
Events and tourism	**29**	4	3663	141
Cycle path maintenance	**30**	4	3522	21
Museums	**31**	5	3501	258
Improved parking facilities through parking charges	**32**	5	3243	14
Theatre/ concert halls	**33**	6	3229	276
Support for preventative health services, e.g. stop smoking clinics	**34**	5	2953	110
Electric vehicle charging points	**35**	6	2843	

Appendix 3 – Service priority tables

Leisure	Rank	Weighted score	Weighted score gap
Park and Open Spaces	1	6145	+2010
Sport and Leisure Facilities	2	4135	+204
Libraries	3	3931	+268
Events and tourism	4	3663	+162
Museums	5	3501	+272
Theatre/ concert halls	6	3229	
Transport	**Rank**	**Weighted score**	**Weighted score gap**
Road maintenance	1	5978	+665
Footway maintenance	2	5313	+1560
Subsidies for non-commercial bus services	3	3753	+231
Cycle path maintenance	4	3522	+279
Improved parking facilities through parking charges	5	3243	+400
Electric vehicle charging points	6	2843	
Children and young people	**Rank**	**Weighted score**	**Weighted score gap**
Support for vulnerable children, children in care or in need of protection	1	6195	+936
Support for children with special educational needs	2	5259	+501
Services for young people, such as youth services, young carers	3	4758	+90
Early years support, such as child care, children centres	4	4668	
Environment	**Rank**	**Weighted score**	**Weighted score gap**
Environmental regulation, e.g. food safety, trading standards, noise control	1	5657	+345
Initiatives for tackling climate change	2	5312	+38
Public conveniences	3	5274	+358
Grass cutting and weed control	4	4916	
Waste and Recycling	**Rank**	**Weighted score**	**Weighted score gap**
Refuse collection	1	6402	+1636
Keeping public land clear of litter and refuse	2	4766	+261
Doorstep recycling	3	4505	+439
Local tips/household waste recycling centres	4	4066	+238
Garden waste collection	5	3828	
Growing Plymouth's Economy	**Rank**	**Weighted score**	**Weighted score gap**
Creating and protecting jobs across the city	1	5460	+552
Attracting inward investment and supporting businesses	2	4908	+306
Improving the quality of housing	3	4602	+349
Planning the future shape of the city	4	4253	+15
Improving the quantity of housing	5	4238	
Health and adult social care	**Rank**	**Weighted score**	**Weighted score gap**

Support for mental health services	1	5445	+182
Support for older people to live independently	2	5263	+307
Support for people with disabilities	3	4956	+48
Preventing homelessness and help find homes for those in need	4	4908	+1955
Support for preventative health services, e.g. stop smoking clinics	5	2953	

Appendix 4 – Top priority themes

Theme	Description	Example response	Total no. of responses
Addressing inequalities	A focus on addressing inequalities for residents in the city in terms of financial, diversity, economy, etc.	*Support for people on low income or no income. Food, heating etc.*	27
Car parking	Includes better car parking facilities, more free parking, and residential parking restrictions.	*Free or very cheap car parking*	12
City aesthetics	Mostly Street Scene and Waste related, e.g. cleaning streets, weeds, grass cutting, litter, generally making the whole city look better and more attractive for residents and visitors.	*Clean up all the city, not just the centre. In many areas it is dirty and scruffy*	204
City centre	Linked to economy but more specifically focused on the city centre, e.g. filling empty shops, bringing life back to the city centre.	*Continued investment in the city centre to encourage interest from big name business not already present in the city centre, fill empty shops with quality vendors not temporary/pop up phone repair shops/ Calendar shops.*	46
City pride	Enabling or encouraging residents to take pride in their city.	*Addressing civic pride*	5
Climate/ environment	Linked with sustainable transport and green spaces but specifically focused on motivations for improving the climate and environment.	*Climate emergency - improving the city's resilience*	242
Council tax	Anything to do with council tax, mostly referring to not increasing it.	*No council tax increase*	8
Crime and safety	Any aspect of crime, policing, or safety measures, e.g. CCTV, street lighting, ASB, visibility of police, etc.	*Making sure Plymouth is a safe place to live more police*	92
Development and infrastructure	Road layout and infrastructure to cope with the amount of traffic and in line with developments of the city, reducing congestion, road safety (e.g. speed limits). Also development of the city in general, e.g. distribution of funding, how to move Plymouth forward as a thriving city, etc.	*Improve infrastructure of the city and surrounding areas*	122
Economy	Inward investment, creating and securing local jobs, supporting businesses, boosting the economy, tourism/culture, and anything that generally promotes Plymouth. It is difficult to separate out tourism and culture from other things, e.g. investment, as it is all tangled up - e.g.	*Creating and protecting jobs across the city*	303

	people want investment to create jobs, which in turn will boost the economy and make Plymouth a place that people want to visit. Investing in the arts, events or tourism specifically will also create jobs and boost the economy. Respondents have frequently cited economic benefits when referring to tourism, culture, etc.		
Education, early years and YP	Anything to do with schools (including SEND), early years provision or support, or services for young people. More generalised about children and young people than social care.	*Support for parents with young children, like SureStart used to do. It saves money in the long term*	155
Flood prevention	Management and protection of the city from flooding.	*Avoid all flooding from rain and sea water protect our land*	15
Health	Anything related to public health, healthcare, NHS services, primary healthcare, etc. Includes COVID-19.	*Funding medical services publicly and ending private contracts (e.g. GP surgeries, buying back the hospital from the University etc.)*	85
Homelessness	Linked with housing, mental health services and social care but specifically focused on support for people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.	*Make every effort to reduce homelessness*	92
Housing	Includes social housing, housing developments, cost of buying and renting (affordable housing), quantity and quality of homes in Plymouth.	*Affordable housing and more council homes built*	202
Maintenance/ repair of roads and pavements	Reference to the maintenance or repair of highways, roads and pavements, including pot holes and condition of surfaces.	*Roads!!! Pot holes and uneven surface. 3 wrecked tyres in 2 months!!*	293
Mental health services	Access to services and the quality and suitability of support available for mental health.	*Access to mental health support is atrocious - something needs to be done about this*	172
Noise control	Measures to address noise in certain areas of the city or from vehicles.	*Better noise control around heavily populated student areas*	6
Parks and green spaces	Protection, maintenance or development of parks and green or open spaces for a range of benefits, e.g. environment, wildlife, physical and mental health and wellbeing, dog walking, etc. Includes green parks and play parks for children.	*To provide and maintain our open spaces. These places can be visited & used by all improving mental health & physical health*	155
Political	Political aspects including elections, councillors, councillor and council staff pay, etc.	*Stop having election every year, will save money*	16
Public services	Any reference to public services, including leisure/sports facilities, toilets, libraries, public conveniences, and delivery of basic/core services.	*Focus on provision that helps enrich the community with access to health facilities, i.e. swimming pools and gyms, educational provision, i.e. libraries.*	102
Resident voice	Ensuring that decisions are made based on residents needs or preferences, e.g. supporting communities to deliver services, resident consultation.	*Providing the services that score the highest as this will be people's priority*	13
Social care - adults	Reference to care of adults who are vulnerable, disabled, or require additional support from social care services. Includes	*Support for older people to live independently*	142

	general adult social care as well as support or services for the elderly, including care homes, and the social care workforce.		
Social care - CYP	Reference to care of children and young people who are vulnerable, disabled, or require additional support or safeguarding from social care services. Includes reference to the children's social care workforce.	*Protection of children from abuse, neglect, indifferent parenting, exploitation*	108
Social care - general	Reference to care of people who are vulnerable, disabled, or require additional support from social care services, e.g. to live independently. Reference given either to general social care, whole population, or a range of age groups (e.g. children and adults), or the social care workforce.	*Supporting vulnerable people*	183
Sustainable transport	Availability and affordability of public transport (e.g. buses), as well as safe options for walking and cycling and electric car charging points.	*Encourage and provide increased public transport, particularly easy access buses*	212
Value for money	Residents would like to ensure that money spent by PCC is worthwhile and provides value/ROI.	*Value for money and independent auditing*	28
Waste	Anything to do with waste collections, recycling, garden waste, including frequency of collections, measures to encourage recycling and reduce fly-tipping.	*Refuse collections, recycling and garden waste collection*	261
Adhoc	Anything that does not easily fit into one of the defined categories.		23
Blank	No response given.		234
TOTAL excl. blanks			3,354