

Annex 5

Budget Engagement

Member Scrutiny and Consultation

The role of scrutiny in the budget setting process is key to ensure sufficient challenge and governance is in place to support the robustness of the Budget, Finance and Commissioning Plan. Informal briefing sessions have been held with members in December 2022 and formal briefing sessions in January 2023.

Town & Parish Liaison Committee Budget Consultation

The Town and Parish Liaison Committee is a meeting of key stakeholders with the Borough. The Budget, Finance and Commissioning Plan has been shared and discussed at the Committee on 26th January 2023. The minutes of this meeting can be found via the following link:

<https://democracy.nelincs.gov.uk/meetings/category/town-and-parish-councils-liaison-committee/>

Public Budget Consultation

A public budget consultation ran from 7th December 2022 to 27th January 2023. The consultation focused upon what the Council's priorities should be for the 2023/24 financial year. A survey asked about

- The services you need the most ?
- What you want the Council to protect now and in the future?
- Ideas or comments about how the financial pressure on services should be handled

The results can be found via the following link <https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/consultation-and-surveys/past-consultations>

Business consultation

The Budget, Finance and Commissioning Plan has been shared with the development and growth board members for comments and feedback

Other

There has been coverage of the budget within local media, along with interviews and stories on local and regional broadcast media. Budget updates have also featured in the staff newsletter and in bulletins from the Chief Executive.

2023/24 Budget Consultation - Summary

The Council's on-line consultation, giving residents, businesses and organisation a chance to have their say on our budget proposals for the next financial year, this year attracted 344 responses from across the Borough. The six-week consultation was promoted via media release, social media activity and the consultation mailing list of 5,000 subscribers, directing respondents to an on-line questionnaire on the budget challenges facing the authority. The survey included sections where residents and businesses could indicate how much they supported specific functions on a scale of 1-10, 1 being least supported and 10 being most supported. Those taking part highlighted Adult Social Care as the area they most supported and the least supported area was planning for the fourth year in a row. The year on year changes in priority areas were minimal.

The key themes arising from the consultation were as follows:

Categories	Count
Improvement in the town (Investment and economy, better coordination, includes where improvements are deemed a waste of money)	54
Partnership working	17
Reduce Management Costs	11
Health and Social Care	8
Corporate privatisation and the use of contractors and consultants (bring in-house, use wider range of suppliers)	6
Improve children services	5
Internal Improvements within NELC	5
Better employment opportunities	4
Reduce antisocial behaviour	4
Fix/Improve Council owned buildings	3
Support Community Projects	3
Improve the communication between the public and the Council	2
Reduce crime, increase enforcement	2