



Kettering
TOWN COUNCIL

Community • Environment • Heritage

KETTERING TOWN COUNCIL

REPORT FOR DECISION

Item No:- 24/060

Committee:-	Council
Date:-	11 th December 2024
Author:-	Martin Hammond, Town clerk
Report Title:-	Results of Budget Consultation
Wards Affected:-	All

1. Purpose of Report

To report on the results of the budget consultation for next year's budget and seek Council's advice about any changes they wish to make to the budget as a consequence.

2. Recommendation

Instructions are requested on any changes to the budget as a result of the consultation.

3. Information - Background

3.1. The consultation on the 25-26 budget ran from 30th October to the 2nd December and comprised an online consultation document and questionnaire, supported by regular social media posts to advertise its existence. Given the limited change to the budget proposed this year, the consultation was of a more limited scope, but did ask for ideas about things the town council should be addressing.

3.2. A total of 31 people made written comments and these are set out in summary form in section 4 below. The actual responses are set out here:-

4. Consultation Responses

4.1. A series of questions were posed through the consultation material, asking for views on the main changes to services and for whether the council should continue existing services and activities. Respondents were free to comment on any aspect of public services in Kettering and a wide range of remarks were collected about NNC and other public services,

4.2. A total of 45 written responses were received and these are summarised below.

4.3. Question 1 – is the proposed level of the budget and precept reasonable?

Yes	No	Not sure
45	8	10

Several of the “no” answers provided an explanation for their position:-

- The budget should increase by inflation 2
- The town centre should have more spent on it to improve it 3

Those who provided commentary when answering yes, were concerned to support the town centre, and the local economy.

4.4. Question 2 – what enhanced or continuing services do you support?

Item	In favour	Against
- enhanced service areas		
Flowers and hanging baskets	17	9
Neighbourhood Plan	30	3
Fully funding Kettfest	15	11

Item	Support	Oppose
- continuing service areas		
Events	24	1
Markets	30	
Allotments	16	1
Grants and Town lottery	23	

Infrastructure investment	25	
Toilets	23	
Support to local Charities	27	

Respondents elaborated on their choices in the free text boxes on the questionnaire. There was a widespread support for events, markets, grants, planting schemes in the town centre, toilets and the neighbourhood plan. There was less enthusiasm for supporting the full cost of Kettfest, with several saying it was a lot of money for a single day event.

Particular other comments included:-

- relocating the market to Market Place 3
- improving the quality of the market 1
- Charging for events 1
- Toilets needing to be free to use 1
- worry that toilets would attract drug use and anti-social behaviour - 2

Several respondents felt that the Town Council's spending was unimportant compared to the need to improve the town centre and improve roads. One person felt that events were not value for money.

4.5 Question 3 – What else needs doing that the Town Council could address?

a) The following ideas for the Town Council to implement were:-

- a literary festival (instead of Kettfest)
- youth services
- providing more warm spaces
- urban art
- more events

b) The following things that the Town Council should focus on, alongside NNC were

- town centre regeneration
- Improving the appearance of gateways to town

4.6 Other comments. There were a number of comments about local services, most of which are the remit of NNC, and on the overall condition of the town centre. These are summarised below

Economy

- Poor quality and poor frequency bus services
- Condition of the town centre; need to fill empty shops (a number of comments)

Local needs

- A sixth form college
- More social care spending

NNC services

- Parking enforcement
- Condition of roads and footpaths
- Gutter cleansing
- Need for more electric vehicle charging points on street
- Improving parks and empty spaces
- Graffiti removal

5. Finance, Legal and Resource Implications

The costs of the consultation were minimal

6. Climate Change implications

The Council's budget and corporate plan incorporate climate change implications as relevant to each area of activity.

7. Policy Implications

The Corporate plan is the policy framework for the Council and it and the budget should mirror each other.

Background Papers

Consultation responses online and on paper



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