

APPENDIX 2

BUDGET 2019/20: CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

1.0 SUMMARY

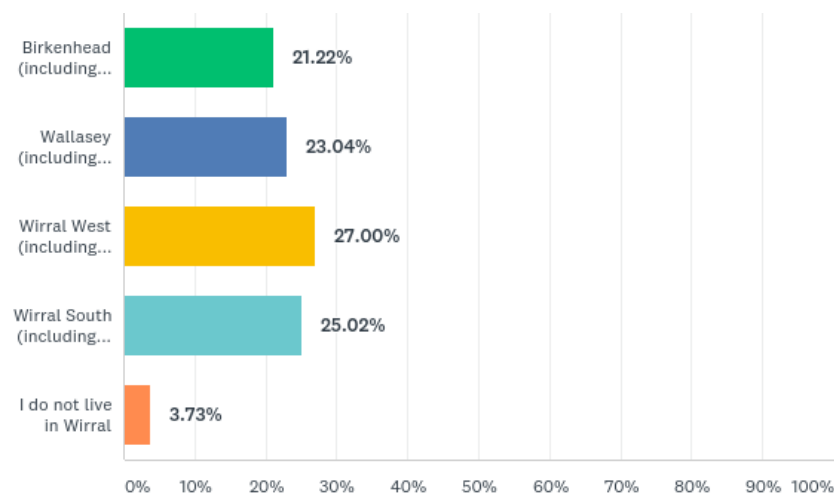
This report provides Members with an analysis of the feedback received from residents and council staff in relation to the council budget for 2019/20. The feedback includes:

- Results from the Budget Questionnaire
- Feedback relating to the budget proposals for municipal golf courses and the Floral Pavilion
- Data from the online budget simulator tool
- Feedback from residents and staff who attended a series of budget workshops during January 2019

Members are invited to take account of this feedback as part of the decision-making process for the 2019/20 budget and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

2.0 BUDGET QUESTIONNAIRE

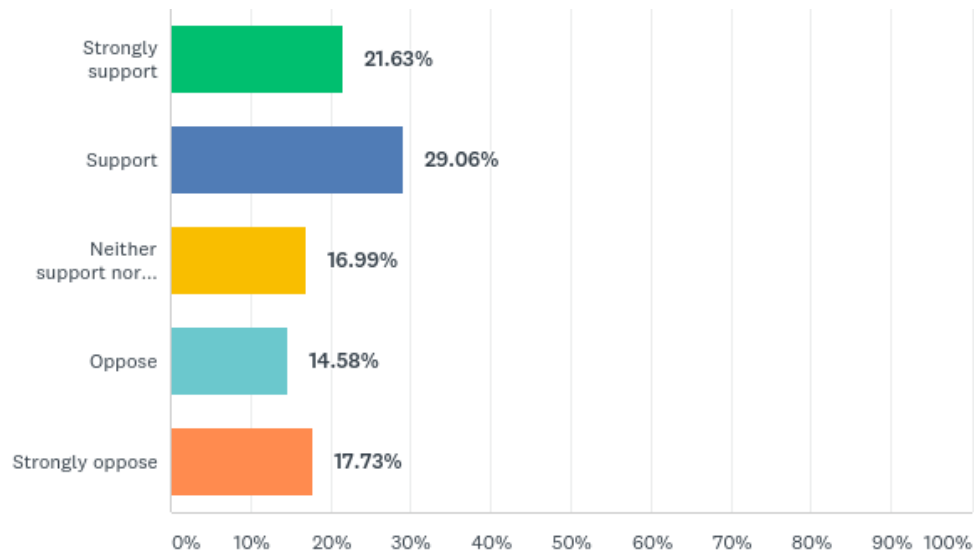
The budget questionnaire was made available to residents through local services, online, and through the local press, Wirral View and social media. A total of 1322 responses have been received. 93% of these responses came from people identifying themselves as Wirral residents. The geographic breakdown of responses is provided for Members in the chart below.



The consultation questionnaire then went on to gather views on a range of ideas and proposals which could generate financial savings. The feedback from these proposals are provided for Members in the charts below.

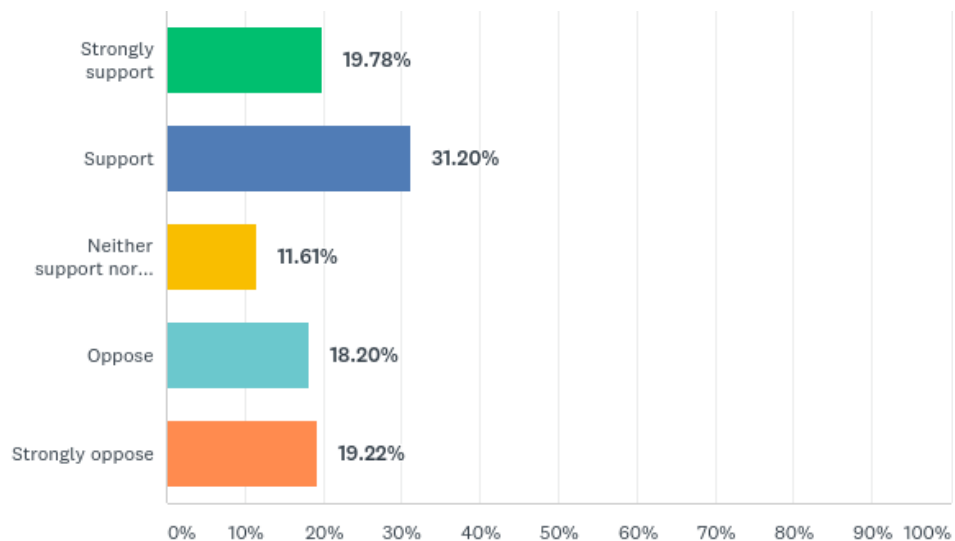
Proposal

Wirral Council could look into whether a charitable organisation, a private company, or a community or voluntary organisation, could provide a cheaper, more efficient service for some Council functions. To what extent do you support or oppose this approach?



Proposal

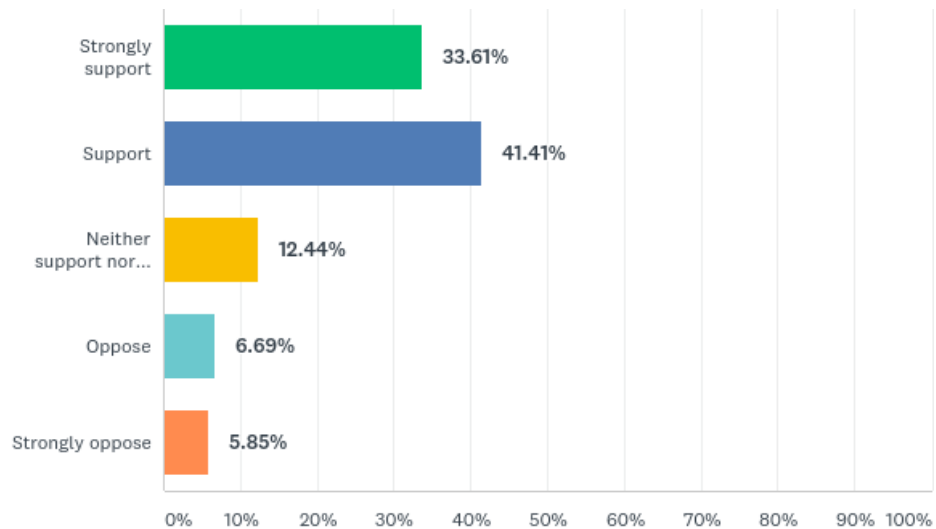
Provided the Council was still responsible for making sure the quality of services was high enough, would you support the Council paying someone else to deliver services, rather than delivering them itself?



Proposal

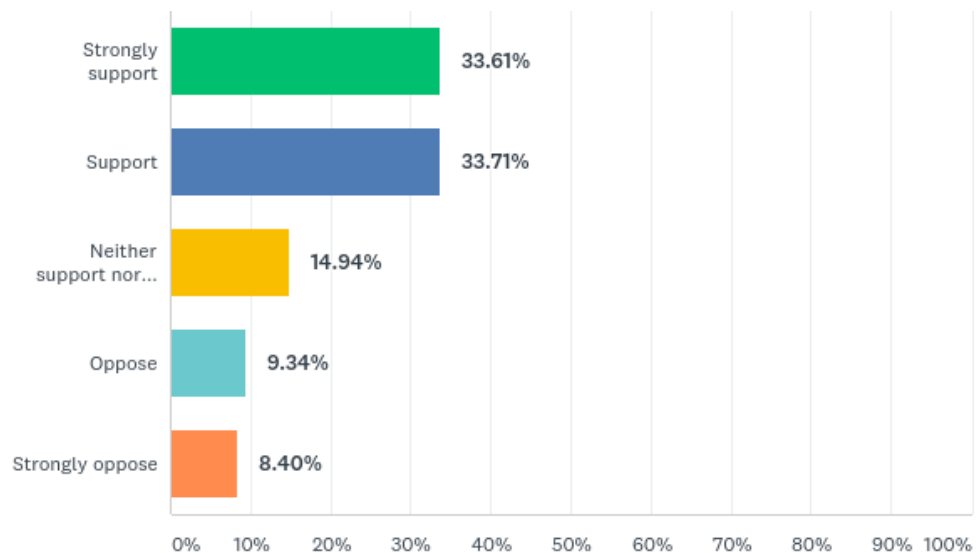
A number of Councils work together to provide joint services, which bring major cost savings. Wirral could work with Councils across Merseyside and

Cheshire to provide certain services this way. To what extent do you support or oppose this approach?



Proposal

The Council owns a large amount of land and buildings across Wirral, and could use this land to create jobs, drive growth in the economy and bring money into the Council to fund services. To what extent would you support or oppose this approach?

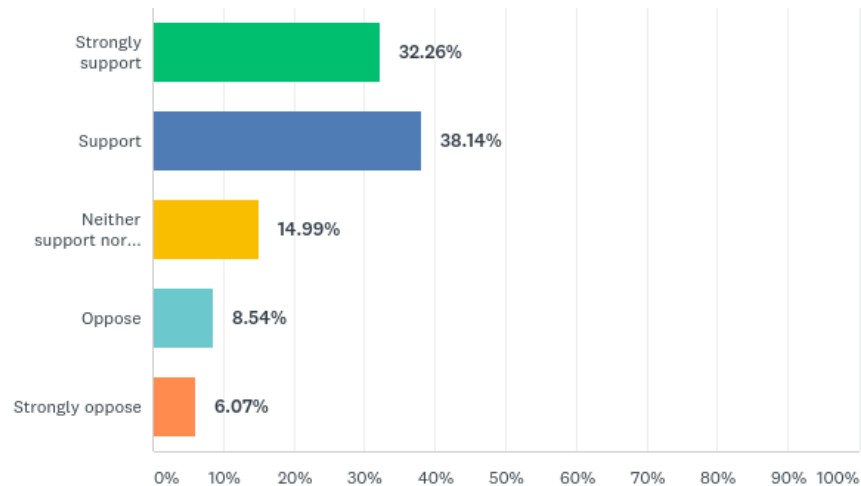


The budget questionnaire also provided residents with the opportunity to provide their views on the proposals regarding municipal golf courses and the Floral Pavilion.

The feedback on those two proposals is provided for Members in the charts below.

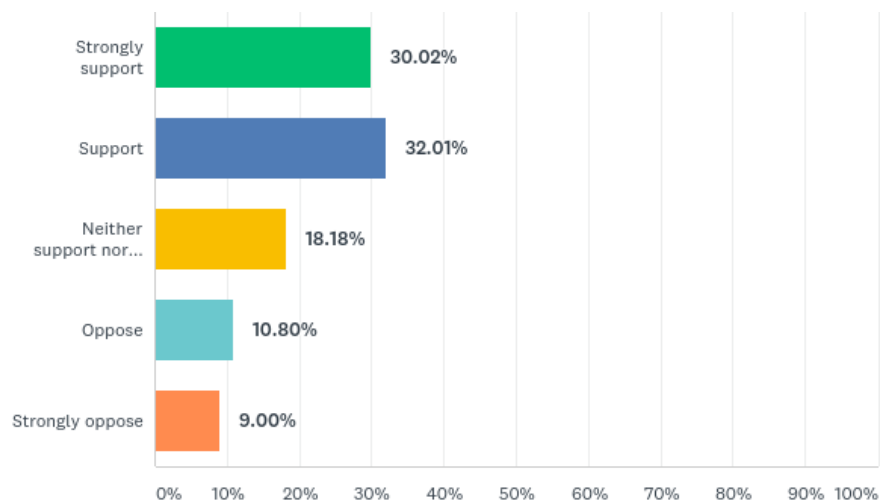
The Floral Pavilion

We are proposing to seek a specialist operator for the Floral Pavilion. Under this plan, the Floral would remain a theatre, it would still be owned by the Council, and there would be no staff redundancies, but a specialist theatre company would be asked to run it on our behalf – bringing in better shows, and providing a better service. To what extent would you support or oppose this option?



Municipal Golf Courses

Similarly, we are proposing to seek a specialist operator to run municipal golf courses. The golf courses would all remain as golf courses, they would still be owned by the Council, and there would be no staff redundancies, but we would ask an expert golf-company to take over the day-to-day management of the courses. To what extent would you support or oppose this option?



4.0 BUDGET SIMULATOR

The budget slider is a digital tool designed to improve public education regarding the complexities of Local Authority budget setting, as well as providing data illustrating views on certain council services.

The tool presents the current budget and current savings requirement, then asks the public to design a budget which satisfies them, broken down in the broad service areas, and includes opportunities to both cut costs, increase incomes and presents a likely outcome from changing the base budget for a service area.

The table below demonstrates the average financial movement residents proposed for each area of Council spend in order to achieve the £45m savings target.

The Average % Movement by Service

Social Care	
Children's Social Care	-7.27%
Early Help and Prevention	-9.18%
Adult Social Care	-9.00%
Infrastructure	
Housing	-20.73%
Highways and Traffic	-21.09%
Street Cleaning and Waste	-20.00%
Transport and Roads	-22.00%
Planning and Building	-22.18%
Cultural Services	-22.55%
Communities	
Libraries	-20.18%
Licensing, Trading Standards and Environmental Health	-18.91%
Parks and Open Spaces	-15.82%
Safer Communities	-19.82%
Sports and Leisure	-19.27%
Youth Services and Youth Offending	-19.09%
Community Services	-18.91%
Running the Council	
One Stop Shops	-23.82%
Corporate Services	-26.55%
Economic Growth	
Development of Local Economy	-21.45%
Fees and Charges	
Council Tax	3.52%
Business Rates	3.80%

Overall, there is a lower appetite to reduce the funding for Social Care than any other service. Corporate Services are the key area that these participants would deliver expenditure cuts.

5.0 BUDGET EVENTS

A series of events were organised for residents to come together, hear more about the budget proposals and debate how investments in Wirral are made. A separate series of events were organised for council staff.

These events generated positive debate, constructive feedback and a range of ideas and suggestions for developing financial strategies in the future. Further work is being done on the content from these events to inform future savings proposals.

The savings proposals put forward for consultation by Cabinet in November 2018 were not specifically commented on at these events, the discussions that took place were more around what services the public and staff value most and whether they wanted to submit any ideas to be fed into the future budget setting process and MTFS.