

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**CABINET
MONDAY, 23 JANUARY 2017 AT 2.00PM**

Agenda Item
No.

4(i)

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ON THE INTEGRATED PLAN 2017/18 - 2019/20

Report of the Chief Executive and Director of Environment

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1. Purpose of report

1.1 To report on the public engagement activities undertaken on the Council's budget and spending priorities for 2017/18 and beyond.

2. Summary

2.1 The results of the key public engagement activity undertaken on the Integrated Plan for 2017/18 – 2019/20 are set out in the paragraphs below.

2.2 The IP engagement process has primarily been focussed on informing and raising awareness with residents about the financial pressures faced by the County Council. A variety of techniques have been used to engage with the public on this. This has included an online survey for residents on budget priorities, events with community leaders and discussions with members of the Hertfordshire Youth Parliament.

2.3 This approach is largely a reflection of the fact that with the multi-year financial planning process employed by the County Council, any significant service changes will be subject to their own consultation exercises and Cabinet decisions.

3. Recommendation

3.1 That Cabinet notes the results of the public engagement activity undertaken and takes this into account when considering the proposed Integrated Plan for 2017/18 – 2019/20.

4. Background

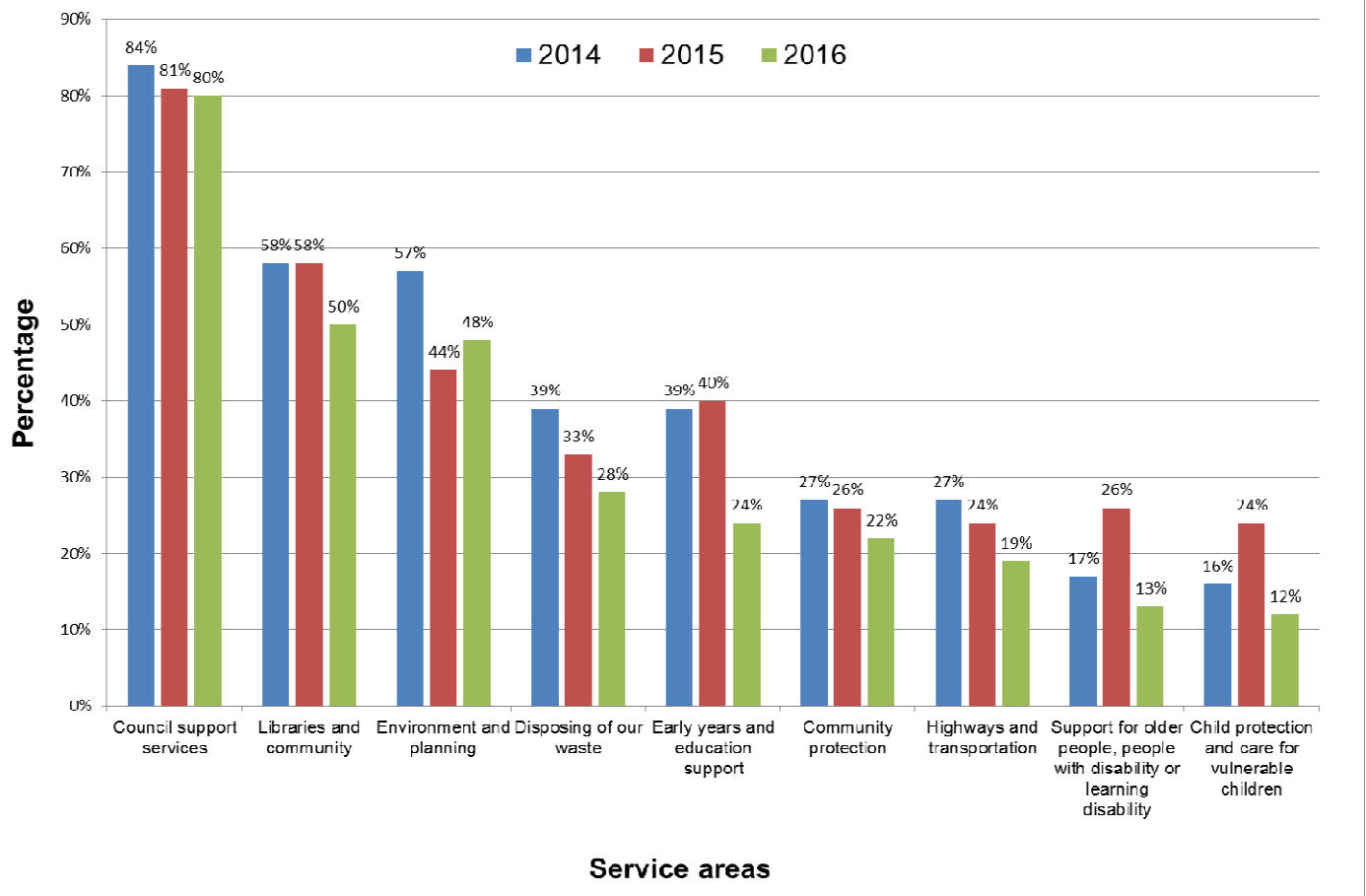
- 4.1 The County Council has a good track record of consulting and engaging with residents using a wide variety of methods. Ongoing dialogue concerning the financial issues the Council faces continues to be promoted through channels such as Herts Horizons, the Council website, and through stakeholder groups. It is continuing to develop its use of social media in order to widen participation and engagement.
- 4.2 Specific service-related proposals which affect the integrated plan are each subject to their own individual consultations, the outcomes of which are reported to Cabinet separately at the appropriate time.
- 4.3 Alongside this consultation activity, the County Council has engaged widely with service users and partners to help shape its future spending and service plans. Notable examples of this include:
- a) The Council's involvement in the key countywide partnerships such as Hertfordshire Forward, the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership. Hertfordshire Forward's annual conference held on 30 June 2016, focused on the future challenges and opportunities for Hertfordshire in relation to health and social care integration.
 - b) Engagement with key partners such as the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, the county's district and borough councils, the Highways Agency and the Department of Transport on major transport schemes.
 - c) Countywide conferences on health and wellbeing (24 June 2016), working with the voluntary and community sector (14 November 2016) and public health (coming up on 22 February 2017).
 - d) Work with the county's town and parish councils to develop closer working arrangements, including updating the appendix of our Shared Statement of Partnership Principles outlining areas in which Parish and Town Councils can work more closely with the County Council.
- 4.4 The following activities have been undertaken for this year's engagement with the public on the Integrated Plan:
- a) An online questionnaire inviting residents to feedback what is important to them and the priorities they consider the Council should be focusing on. A copy of the survey can be found at Appendix A. The results of this survey are summarised in this report.
 - b) A community leaders' engagement event took place on 1 December 2016.
 - c) Statutory consultation with the business community via the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce is planned for January 2017.

- d) An engagement activity with members of Hertfordshire's Youth Parliament took place on 1 November 2016.

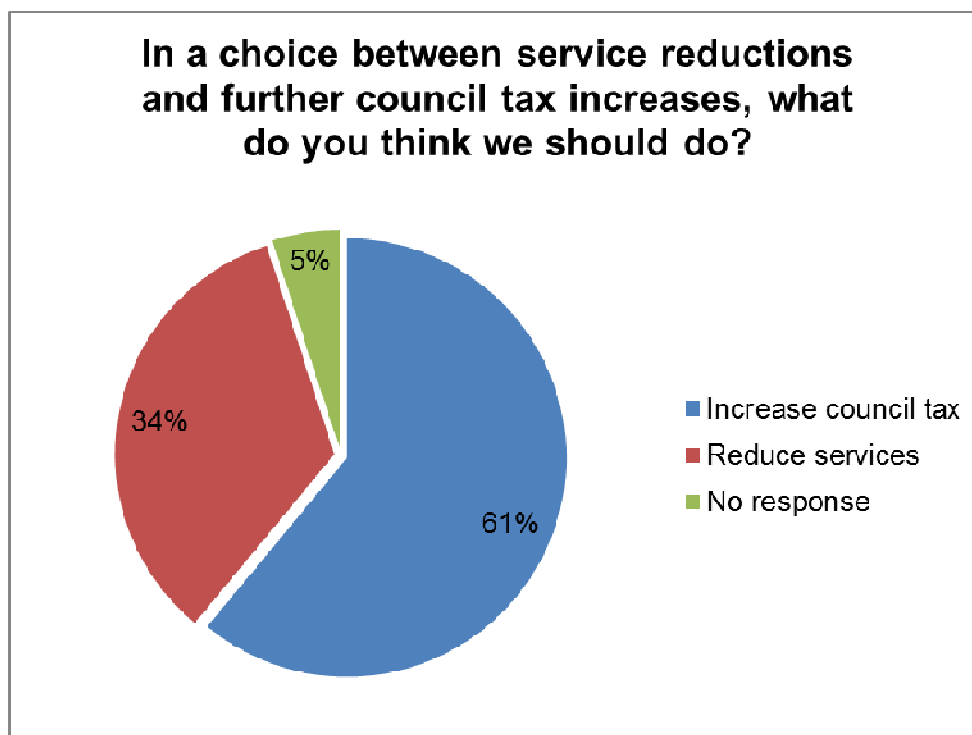
5. Online Questionnaire

- 5.1 An online questionnaire was created and published on the Council's website, which asked respondents a number of questions on their priorities and the service areas they considered spending could be reduced by the County Council. The survey opened on 10 October and ran until 11 December 2016.
- 5.2 Press releases were issued inviting people to have their say via the online questionnaire. Social media communications were also put out to direct people to the survey and two email bulletins were sent out to around 1000 subscribers of the Update Me email service.
- 5.3 An email was sent to members of the Hertfordshire Citizens Panel, a representative group of around 1500 Hertfordshire residents, inviting them to take part in the online questionnaire. A paper version was posted to those panel members who have not provided email addresses.
- 5.4 There were 1937 responses to the survey this year, which is nearly three times higher than the response rate last year. However, these respondents are not a direct representation of Hertfordshire's population. For example, young people aged 18-24 were under-represented, as in previous years, and people aged 35-54 were over-represented. Furthermore, there were a lot more female respondents (67%) compared to male respondents (33%).
- 5.5 In response to the question "**In which service areas do you feel that spending should be reduced?**" the participants answered broadly the same way as they have done in previous years. The most supported areas for spending reductions were 'Council Support Services', 'Libraries and Community services' and 'Environment and Planning'. The full results for this year (compared with 2014 and 2015) were as follows:

Percentage of respondents supporting reduction in expenditure on services, by service (2014-16)



- 5.6 Although the services where respondents were willing to accept reductions were in a similar priority order to last year, the proportion of people willing to support service reductions is lower this year than last. For example, in 2015 40% of respondents were willing to accept reductions in ‘early years and education support’ – this year that fell to 24%. Similarly, 26% of respondents were willing to accept reductions in ‘support for older people, people with disabilities or learning disabilities’ in 2015, compared to just 13% this year. There was also a drop from 24% to 12% of respondents willing to accept reductions in ‘child protection and support for vulnerable children’ this year.
- 5.7 The only exception to this, however, is ‘environment and planning’, which is now supported by 4% more respondents compared to 2015, although it remains 9% lower than in 2014.
- 5.8 In response to the question, **“In a choice between service reductions and further council tax increases, what do you think we should do?”**, 61% preferred council tax to be raised than see reductions in services. This has fallen over the past two years, from 65% in 2015 and 69% in 2014.



Comments and Feedback

- 5.9 28% of survey participants (552) left additional comments covering a wide range of topics. Many comments covered several different subjects.
- 5.10 These comments present an interesting snapshot into some residents' views, but it is important to emphasise that they are not representative of the overall views of respondents to the survey as a whole.
- 5.11 Out of the 552 responses, 39% called for reductions (in one form or another) in the funding of services, whereas 22% wanted services to be maintained or improved. A further 17% of responses suggested alternative ways of working, 16% commented on the quality of existing services, and the rest (6%) made comments about the survey itself.
- 5.12 The most common suggestion for reducing spending was to make efficiency savings. Proposals ranged from using more technology (such as skype or self-service web portals) and improving staff efficiency to making better use of Council property. For example, some respondents argued for greater asset and property sharing, such as sharing buildings and operations across services and with district councils. Making energy efficiencies within property was also mentioned, as well as across services (such as cutting back on street lights or investing in LEDs).
- 5.13 The next most common theme in respondents' suggestions was around reductions in salaries and numbers of staff, particularly at the senior and management level. There were also a number of comments criticising the staff pension scheme this year. Some responses called for a reduction in expenses associated with councillors and council meetings, with a handful

suggesting reducing the number of councillors. Finally, there were a small number of responses calling for a reorganisation of local government.

- 5.14 Other suggestions for alternative ways of working included: more joined up working and building better partnerships; making better use of volunteers and encouraging communities to become more self-reliant; investing in prevention; exploring opportunities for income generation and/or commercialisation; and bringing outsourced services back in-house. The latter tended to emerge from concerns over existing services from external contractors, particularly in highways.
- 5.15 As with last year, many responses were targeted at specific service areas, such as comments about existing service provision within highways and waste disposal. General criticisms were made in particular around road quality, reductions in bus services, inadequate provision of street lights and reduced opening hours of recycling centres. Comments about libraries were split evenly between those calling for the service to be maintained and those suggesting a reduction in the number of libraries.
- 5.16 Additionally, there were still a significant number of comments in favour of continuing to support services for the vulnerable (including elderly people, disabled people, children and people with learning difficulties and their carers). Many respondents argued that the choices were incredibly difficult to make and/or that it is impossible to endorse any further reductions. Some showed an understanding of context and asked for the Council to make a stand against further cuts from central government. Others asked why there was a need for cuts and often even called for an increase in budgets.
- 5.17 As has been the trend in previous years, there were again a large number of comments and suggestions which related to a range of things which are either beyond the Council's control or which relate to services delivered by other organisations, such as housing, waste collection and planning and housing developments.
- 5.18 The 37 respondents who made comments about the survey itself were in general critiquing the lack of information available for them to make an informed decision. Some also argued that the survey was leading and said they would prefer a greater cost breakdown and/or to be able to choose options within services, not just choose a service area as a whole.

6. A Strategic Consultation and Engagement Event for Community Leaders

- 6.1 On Thursday 1 December, community leaders from across Hertfordshire gathered for the Council's annual event 'Meeting Hertfordshire's Challenges.' Representatives from the voluntary and community sector and parish and town councils attended to hear about and discuss the council's budget and its spending priorities over the next few years.
- 6.2 The Executive Members for Resources & Performance, Highways, and Adult Care & Health all spoke about the financial challenges their portfolios face

and answered questions that arose from the audience. Guests were then given the opportunity to discuss the topic in groups, with a chance to feedback to the wider group at the end.

6.3 Community leaders responded and engaged well with the discussion. Their comments tended to focus around the following themes:

- Continuing to improve partnership working across the county
- Informing and engaging organisations at the grassroots level (including parish and town councils and small charities/non-governmental organisations (NGOs) from day one in planning and shaping policies and services
- Communicating inclusively with local residents and empowering them to co-design and co-produce services
- Giving small organisations more time, more training opportunities and simpler processes for responding to tenders when commissioning
- Providing adequate roads, transport and infrastructure to accommodate the growth in population following the construction of thousands of new homes
- Ensuring all Hertfordshire County Council's decisions are clear and transparent

6.4 The participants were thanked for their time and ideas. A more detailed summary of discussions at the event can be found in Appendix B.

7. Youth Engagement

7.1 In conjunction with Youth Connexions, a discussion on the Council's priorities and budget was held with Members of the Hertfordshire Youth Parliament (MYP) on 1 November 2016. The feedback showed a good understanding of the services delivered by the County Council, including some benchmarking against the work of neighbouring councils.

7.2 There was little consensus amongst MYPs about where best to reduce funding. For example, a lively debate was held regarding whether or not keeping up with technological innovations should be a priority for the Council, or whether or not libraries should be viewed as an essential community asset. Whilst there was an agreement that adult care and children's services are very important, there was a divide between those that thought there was room for reduction due to the scale of funding in these areas, and those that didn't.

7.3 The MYPs did, however, agree on certain measures, such as improving partnership working, making more efficiency savings and where possible increasing the shared use of space in Council property. They also argued that more information was required about specific costs within each service area and what the implications would be if cuts were made, before they made any decisions.

7.14 A summary of the discussion can be found in Appendix C.

9 Consultation with the Business Community

- 9.1 Following confirmation of the County Council's draft Integrated Plan at Cabinet on 23 January 2017, Hertfordshire businesses will be contacted, via the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce, to encourage businesses to comment. This timing is in line with requirements under the Non-Domestic Ratepayers (Consultation) Regulations 1992.

10. Financial Implications

- 10.1 The financial implications of the Integrated Plan are considered elsewhere on this agenda. This report relates to the public engagement and consultation on the draft plan and there are no financial implications for this work.

11. Equalities Impact

- 11.1 The equalities implications of the Integrated Plan are considered elsewhere on this agenda.

Background Information

County Council consultations webpage <http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/your-council/consult/>

Your Priorities Survey 2017/18

We want to hear your views on how we should be spending your council tax money over the coming year.

Hertfordshire County Council provides vital services to everyone who lives in Hertfordshire, whether that's providing social care, maintaining the county's 3,000 miles of road or running the county's fire and rescue service.

The Council continues to face significant financial challenges. Since 2010, we have made savings of almost £250 million from our annual budget and we must make further savings of £75 million by 2020. This is because the Government has significantly reduced its grant to councils and because the number of people living in Hertfordshire is growing every year. As our population ages and more people require care, more of our budget will be spent on supporting older people. For instance, an additional £8.1 million was needed to support older and vulnerable people this year. We also have a growing number of children in the county who need school places.

Which is why it is important that we get your views so we can continue to provide the right services for the right people, making sure we are focusing on the most important things that matter to you and always ensuring that we are being as efficient as possible.

If you live in Hertfordshire, these decisions affect you, so please have your say.

Your feedback will be used to inform our decision-making process; you will be able to follow the discussion and find out the final outcome at the County Council Meeting on 21 February 2017

Have your say by filling out this survey before the end of Sunday 11 December 2016.


The Council will continue to explore ways of doing things better.

The services below are listed in the order of how much we spend on them (from largest to smallest).


While recognising there are no easy answers, in which service areas do you feel spending should be reduced? (Please tick at least three areas)

Your feedback will be used to inform our decision-making process; you will be able to follow the discussion and find out the final outcome at the County Council Meeting on **21 February 2017**


1. Support for older people and those with physical disabilities, mental health support needs and learning disabilities

	<p>(£312.5 million pounds in 2016/2017)</p> <p>This pays for things like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Safeguarding adults at risk of abuse or neglect - Support to help people in need of care and support to leave hospital - Help for people to stay well and independent in their own homes - Help for older people and disabled people with activities such as getting up, washed and dressed - Day activities and other services for adults with disabilities, mental ill health, dementia and for older people. - Residential and nursing care - Information and advice - Support for carers to help them stay well and continue to provide care 	<p>Maintain budget</p>	<p>Reduce budget</p>
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2. Child protection and care for vulnerable children

	(£102.6 million pounds in 2016/2017)	Maintain budget	Reduce budget
	<p>This pays for things like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Keeping vulnerable children safe within their families - Providing foster carers and residential homes to support our children looked after - Finding new adoptive families for children looked after - Providing support to disabled children and their families 		


3. Early years and education support

	(£72.9 million pounds in 2016/2017)	Maintain budget	Reduce budget
	<p>This pays for things like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing 82 Children's Centres delivering early support to children and families - Supporting families through parenting programmes - Continually improving early years nursery education and schools; - Ensuring sufficient school places are available - Ensuring vulnerable young people can access services they need - Working to keep children and young people healthy and happy 		

4. Council support services

	(£59.5 million pounds in 2016/2017)	Maintain budget	Reduce budget
	<p>This pays for things like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial services - Legal services - Personnel - Information communication technology - Property services - Communications - Support to the democratic process 		


5. Highways and transportation

	(£59.3 million pounds in 2016/2017)	Maintain budget	Reduce budget
	<p>This pays for things like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintenance of 3,000 miles of roads and pavements - Repairs and resurfacing - Road improvement schemes - Streetlights - Gritting in the winter - Subsidising and supporting bus services - Road safety 		

6. Disposing of our waste

	(£43.2 million pounds in 2016/2017)	Maintain budget	Reduce budget
	<p>This pays for things like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring the waste you produce is legally and safely disposed of in well managed facilities. - Providing residents with a network of household waste recycling centres (tips/dumps). - Making arrangements for the reuse, recycling and composting of waste to reduce the amount sent for disposal (such as in landfill sites). <p>* Your local district and borough council pays to collect rubbish and recycling from your home.</p>		


7. Community protection

	(£35.6 million pounds in 2016/2017)	Maintain budget	Reduce budget
	<p>This pays for things like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fire and Rescue Service - Trading standards (regulating local business) - Emergency planning and resilience 		

8. Libraries and other community services

	<p>(£14.1 million pounds in 2016/2017)</p> <p>This pays for things like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 46 public libraries (supporting literacy and access to reading, information and online services) - Registrars (registration of births, deaths, marriages and civil partnerships) - Hertfordshire Archives (preservation of local historical records) 	<p>Maintain budget</p>	<p>Reduce budget</p>
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9. Environment and planning

	<p>(£3.6 million pounds in 2016/2017)</p> <p>This pays for things like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working with district councils to ensure future growth is well planned with the right infrastructure - Ensuring up to date policies are in place from waste and minerals planning - Monitoring the impact of potential airport expansion in the South East and the growth of London - Looking after footpaths, bridleways and the environment - Flood management issues 	<p>Maintain budget</p>	<p>Reduce budget</p>
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Do you have additional comments about how we could reduce spending in some areas?

<p>In a choice between service reductions and further council tax increases, what do you think we should do?</p>	<p>Please tick one</p>
<p>Increase Council Tax</p>	
<p>Reduce services</p>	

Meeting Hertfordshire's Challenges: Oak Room, Hertfordshire Development Centre, 6-8pm Thursday 1st December

Event Summary

On Thursday 1st December, community leaders from across Hertfordshire gathered for Hertfordshire County Council's (HCC's) annual event 'Meeting Hertfordshire's Challenges.' Representatives from the voluntary and community sector and parish and town councils attended to hear about and discuss the Council's budget and its spending priorities over the next few years.

Cllrs Chris Hayward, Terry Douris and Colette Wyatt-Lowe all spoke about the financial challenges their portfolios face and answered questions that arose from the audience. Guests were then given the opportunity to discuss one of the following four questions in groups, with a chance to feedback to the wider group at the end.

1. In an era of rising demand and reduced resources, how can we better work together as partners to balance our need to provide statutory services whilst protecting and supporting our most vulnerable residents?
2. How could HCC further change its processes or behaviours to improve the relationship with the organisation/community you represent?
3. How can we encourage residents to take greater ownership over local issues and challenges, to take part in thinking of creative solutions, and to have a voice in local decisions that affect them?
4. Do you have any thoughts about how the Council's budget decisions could have had an impact on people regarding; being younger/older, ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability, marriage/civil partnership?

The discussions ensuing from the presentations and questions focused mainly around the following themes:

Working in partnership

The need for a joined up approach where organisations work more closely to combine local expertise was echoed across the room. There was a commitment expressed towards making partnerships work to scale up achievements that are community-specific.

The need for both sides to follow and abide by the values and understandings of the Compact Agreement was reiterated to ensure mutual respect in all partnership

working. Concerns were raised that there is an assumption that the community sector is 'free' and made up only of volunteers. There were also concerns around staff turnover and a suggestion was raised to include the voluntary sector in staff inductions.

Communication with partners

The view was expressed that parish and town councils and small NGOs/charities at the grassroots level need to be engaged further by HCC. Guests asked to be involved from day one in planning services so that they can help shape policy as opposed to being forced to react to it. They argued this would also avoid a 'condescending' servant/master relationship.

Suggestions for creating an environment for active and open listening included establishing a forum for discussion with NGOs and opening up a request system for councillors to attend meetings with smaller organisations. It was felt that, although services are there, they are not being broadcasted far enough by HCC.

Communication with residents

One of the main concerns raised in this area was a lack of localised and inclusive communication. For example, with the move online, rural communities and non-IT users are at risk of becoming more isolated. One suggestion was to use bus timetables to reach these communities. Similarly, it was discussed that the location and formality of consultation meetings may result in the same people turning up to share their view. More informal meetings may attract a greater diversity of residents and improve the Council's reputation (as more 'human').

More generally, there were also discussions around the need for greater co-production with residents during the design phase of services, to empower them to get involved. It was also suggested that there is a need to manage the population's expectation of what the Council can provide, and with that greater encouragement of personal resilience.

Commissioning

Many people in the audience expressed concerns about the bureaucracy of the commissioning process, particularly for smaller providers. It was argued that small providers need more time to organise to respond to tenders, simpler processes and less jargon in commissioning work. It was also suggested that greater training opportunities are offered to these providers, many of whom 'retain local knowledge and offer more personal services'.

Accountability

There was some concern around the transparency and clarity of HCC's decisions, with a call for more open plans so everyone knows what is going on. One group suggested getting a local Mayor for 'better county accountability'.

Transport and infrastructure

A question was raised about the growth in Hertfordshire's population size and how the Council's capital approach plans to address the need for roads and infrastructure following the construction of thousands of new homes. In particular, concerns were expressed about the pressure being put on existing built-up areas.

In response to the latter, Cllrs Chris Hayward and Terry Douris spoke of the need to work with other local councils and the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership to lobby the government for more money to fund large infrastructure projects, where Section 106 money does not cover it. In particular, the need to improve East-West links in the county was flagged.

A concern with the provision and reliability of buses was also raised, particularly regarding Sunday and night-time services.

**Discussion with Members of the Hertfordshire Youth Parliament (MYPs):
Breaks Manor Youth Centre, Hatfield, Tuesday 1 November**

Discussion Summary

On Tuesday 1 November, an officer from the Corporate Policy Team attended a meeting of the Hertfordshire Youth Parliament. Each of the nine service areas from the 'Your Priorities' survey were discussed in turn, with regards to whether or not the MYPs thought there was capacity for budget reductions in each area. The notes below detail discussions had about each service, followed by more general comments expressed throughout the session.

1. Support for older people and those with physical disabilities, mental health support needs and learning disabilities

- There was general consensus that this service area was important and needed adequate funding. In a discussion about whether this budget or the library budget should be cut, one MYP said: "If Mrs Jones can't get dressed in the morning, she can't get to the library," highlighting the interdependencies between services and the importance of this particular service.
- However, the scale/size of the budget led a few of the MYPs to think there was room for reductions compared with other, smaller budgets. It was suggested that commissioning more services could help to reduce costs.

2. Child protection and care for vulnerable children

- It was agreed that this is a very important service area, but again some MYPs argued that there would be capacity for reductions because it was the second highest budget area.
- Suggestions included: commissioning more of the service, although there was disagreement as to whether this saves money; working more in partnership with the Police and Crime Commissioner and possibly even moving some responsibilities to them; reducing bureaucracy to make efficiency savings.

3. Early years and education support

- Again some MYPs argued that the size of the budget in this area suggests capacity for reductions. One suggestion was to reduce the number of smaller children's centres and have one larger centre that stays open for longer and covers a greater geographical area, as done in Oxford. However, one MYP cautioned against making children's centres inaccessible for people who can't travel far, especially given the vastness of Hertfordshire's geography.

- There was some debate over whether early years nurseries should be funded by local government, but this was countered with the argument that low income families need somewhere to put their children without a high cost.
- The decentralisation of education nationally was discussed and it was speculated that councils could reduce their role here to make savings.

4. Council support services

- The MYPs were divided over whether or not budget cuts should be made in this area. It was discussed that if other services were reduced, the need to maintain this service at the current level would consequently also be reduced.
- MYPs discussed that cuts in this area could impact staff, which could slow processes down and negatively impact on the services provided to residents.
- There was considerable debate about technology. Some MYPs argued that it is essential for the Council to stay up to date with progress in IT, commending the new website. Others questioned the need for the Council to have a great 'shiny' website and argued that automating services takes away valuable human contact and community value.

5. Highways and transportation

- It was agreed that Hertfordshire's roads are better compared with other counties (for example Essex). This led some MYPs to comment that there could be room for reductions.
- There was a detailed discussion around the potential to reduce subsidised bus services. It was largely agreed that a targeted review would be required to assess demand for the services.

6. Disposing of our waste

- Most MYPs were in agreement that this is an essential service, but there were varying levels of agreement on its capacity to withstand budget cuts.
- One MYP argued that given targets from national government, it would be very difficult to make any cuts. He also said that it is important to maintain a 'green image'. However, another MYP argued that this could be cut as there are more important services to spend money on, where issues are more prevalent/visible.

7. Community protection

- Reasons raised for not cutting this service included: it is not that much compared to other budgets and fire and rescue is vital; this budget has

already been cut considerably; and fires stations provide more than just emergency response, they can get really involved in developing communities.

- On the other hand, there was speculation about the need for considerable emergency planning in Hertfordshire, although this was countered by raising the issue of potential flood disasters (which may increase due to housing developments) or car crashes, as there are a lot of motorways.
- There was some discussion about the potential to consolidate fire stations, ie. closing smaller stations and making one big one.

8. Libraries and other community services

- It was agreed that the budget for registrars needs to be maintained. Reasons cited for maintaining library budgets included: libraries can be core community centres/assets that bring people together; some older people rely on them; they have been cut many times already; and they are important for early development/welfare (such as through the Summer Reading Challenge or as a cheaper preventive measure against things such as mental health)
- A number of methods for reducing library budgets were also discussed, such as: hosting multiple services in the same building; consolidating libraries in close proximity to make efficiency savings; making greater use of school libraries; and reducing the need for staff by automating certain services.

9. Environment and planning

- One MYP said that it is important that the county ensures it remains diverse in services and that monitoring airport expansion is topical and important.
- With regards to maintaining footpaths, it was discussed that savings could be made through working in greater partnership with the National Trust and other charities, and/or making greater use of volunteers or young offenders who are doing community service.

General Comments

- A number of MYPs argued that they needed more information about the cost of specific items within services and what the implications would be if cuts were made to these before they could make any real decisions
- They agreed that all services were essential, so the real question was around what could be tightened, which is challenging
- One MYP continually expressed a need to maintain budgets for services that affect the largest amount of people and cut budgets where the least amount of people will be affected.
- When the MYPs were asked to choose which three services, if forced, they would reduce, not a single one chose the same three services.