



## 2014/15 Budget Consultation Summary

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During November/December 2013 public meetings were held in each ward to get feedback and ideas from the public on how the budget should be spent. In addition there were meetings at Hazel Court and West Offices to consult with staff, and York CVS was consulted, as was Copmanthorpe Parish Council. Three sessions were held in supermarkets and the equalities group was also consulted. Each meeting was attended by senior council officers to answer any questions from the public. Residents could also respond online (via the website) and on forms available in the Customer Centre.

Residents were asked to consider four questions:

- 1) What are the most important issues to you? E.g. Clean streets, schools, healthcare
- 2) What should the council continue funding?
- 3) What should the council do differently to reduce costs and save money?
- 4) Where do you think communities and residents could play a greater part in supporting their local area and city?

Over 1,850 responses were received. Answers were anonymous, but residents were asked to give the ward in which they live. Responses are published on the website.

### **What are the most important issues to you? E.g. clean streets, schools, healthcare**

- a) A very high-scoring service was health care, specifically for older residents, and also that there should be more emphasis on preventative healthcare.
- b) Many residents felt that education should be a high priority so that all children and young people could reach their full potential.

- c) Residents were also concerned about public transport, especially to and from work. There were suggestions about opening railway stations in Strensall, Haxby and at York Hospital as well as improving train services to Harrogate and Poppleton. Some respondents specifically mentioned improving rural bus services; others wanted using the bus service to be made more attractive to encourage more residents to use it.
- d) Sustainable transport is a high-priority for many residents
- e) A popular answer here was also adult social services, especially care for the elderly. Several respondents asked for more help for elderly residents to stay in their own homes but elderly people's homes were also a priority.
- f) Although not rated as highly as health care, clean streets were also a priority for many residents. One or two residents mentioned specific streets, but most referred to clean streets in general, with litter and leaf removal a priority.

### **What should the council continue funding?**

- a) The highest number of responses asked for continued funding for health, elderly and disabled care. Several residents specifically mentioned care for those with mental health problems or learning difficulties. Again, support to keep residents living in their own homes is a priority for many.
- b) Road maintenance, including gritting and the provision of salt bins was a priority for continued spend. General road maintenance was also listed as important; some called for particular roads to be repaired but most called for all roads to be maintained in a good state of repair.
- c) Children's social care and childcare were also priorities for many residents. Some residents paired this with adult/elderly social care. Youth clubs and other activities for children were seen as an important service.
- d) Again, provision of affordable and reliable public transport was seen as important, with services for rural areas getting several mentions. Residents mentioned the potential for increasing evening bus services, leading to less people using their cars to come into the city.

e) Clean and litter-free streets were mentioned again in response to this question. Many residents asked for more say in where litter bins were placed, whilst others specifically mentioned dog-fouling and asked for more measures to stop this from happening.

**a) What should the council do differently to reduce costs and save money?**

a) The “20’s Plenty” scheme is not seen as a priority except in some specific areas, for example around schools, parks, shopping areas and accident black spots.

b) Residents asked for the collections to be stopped at a slightly later time in the year. There are also calls for help and information about composting.

c) Bus services are once again a popular point. Residents would like to see more rural services, more frequent buses, and there are several suggestions that smaller, more frequent buses might be more cost-effective. Some residents felt that the bus travel subsidy should be removed; whilst others wanted the free bus passes to be replaced by passes requiring a small payment (e.g. 20p per journey).

d) Residents, particularly in urban wards, felt that the council should be giving more support to voluntary groups, including assured funding for the CVS to facilitate volunteering. It was also suggested that the council should have a database to support community activity. By doing this it could save money.

**b) Where do you think communities and residents could play a greater part in supporting their local area and city?**

a) The most popular suggestion here was that residents could be more involved with litter-picking and keeping streets clean and tidy. Some suggested that residents and shops should be responsible for keeping the fronts of their properties litter- and snow-free. There was also a suggestion that residents could be responsible for cleaning street furniture, bus stops etc.

b) There were several suggestions that residents could help by recycling more and thereby reducing the landfill costs. It was mentioned though that the council needs to ensure that there are adequate facilities to make it easier. There were also calls for

more help with composting to reduce the amount of kitchen waste going to landfill.

- c) Volunteering in care homes and youth clubs was suggested as a way in which residents could become more involved in their communities. Some residents suggested that the more able-bodied could support elderly residents in their own homes by helping with shopping etc whilst others suggested that volunteers could help to run youth clubs.
- d) The snow warden scheme is already a success and there have been several suggestions that residents should join the scheme as a way of helping the community. There were some suggestions that residents should be responsible for clearing snow from in front of their homes and businesses as is done in other countries.
- e) There were several suggestions that residents could help to reduce crime. Mainly the suggestions were that residents could join neighbourhood watch schemes, but there were more general suggestions that residents could help to reduce anti-social behaviour and improve community safety.