

Public Document Pack

Your ref
Our ref
Ask for Christine Lewis
Email



District Council House, Frog Lane
Lichfield, Staffordshire WS136YU

Customer Services 01543 308000

Dear Sir/Madam

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE SUPPLEMENT

Please find attached supplement papers for Overview & Scrutiny Committee on **THURSDAY, 20TH JANUARY, 2022 at 6.00 PM**

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Christie Tims', written over a light grey circular stamp.

Christie Tims
Chief Operating Officer

SUPPLEMENT

- | | | |
|----|---|--------|
| 5. | Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) – Budget Consultation
Background Paper | 3 - 38 |
|----|---|--------|

This page is intentionally left blank

Priorities and Budget Consultation Feedback report

January 2022

Contents

1	Introduction	3
2	Executive Summary	4
3	Methodology	6
4	Results	7
	4.1 - Opinions about Lichfield District Council	7
	4.2 - Results – Services Provided	9
	4.3 - Spending Priorities	13
	4.4 - Fees, charges, income and other opportunities	15
5	Setting Council Tax	21
6	Additional suggestions and ideas	22
	Appendix 1 – Respondent Breakdown	29
	Appendix 2 – Summary of Business Survey results	30

1. Introduction

In the current financial year (2021/22) Lichfield District Council will spend around £11million (£10,991,000) on local services. Over £7million (£7,029,000) of this figure is generated through council tax. The balance (£3,962,000) is funded through business rates, other grants, surpluses and New Homes Bonus.

The government has been reducing the amount of core government grant received by local authorities every year, and next year Lichfield District Council could be required to pay an amount to the Government (although this will be subject to the Spending Review). This means facing significant and ongoing challenges providing the same level of services, and either needing to make further savings or generate additional income to fund the services delivered.

Talking to residents, businesses and community groups and getting their views plays an important part in the process of shaping future decisions on budget priorities and setting council tax.

A total of 264 people responded to the survey. This represents 0.316 of the adult population of the district and represents an increase of 116 respondents from the previous budget consultation in 2020. A full breakdown of respondents can be found in Appendix 1.

This report focuses on the results of the consultation with residents and the local community. A separate survey has been commissioned by the Economic Development Team and it was decided that this survey would be used as a guide to the priorities of the business community rather than trying to conduct two surveys in parallel aimed at the same audience.

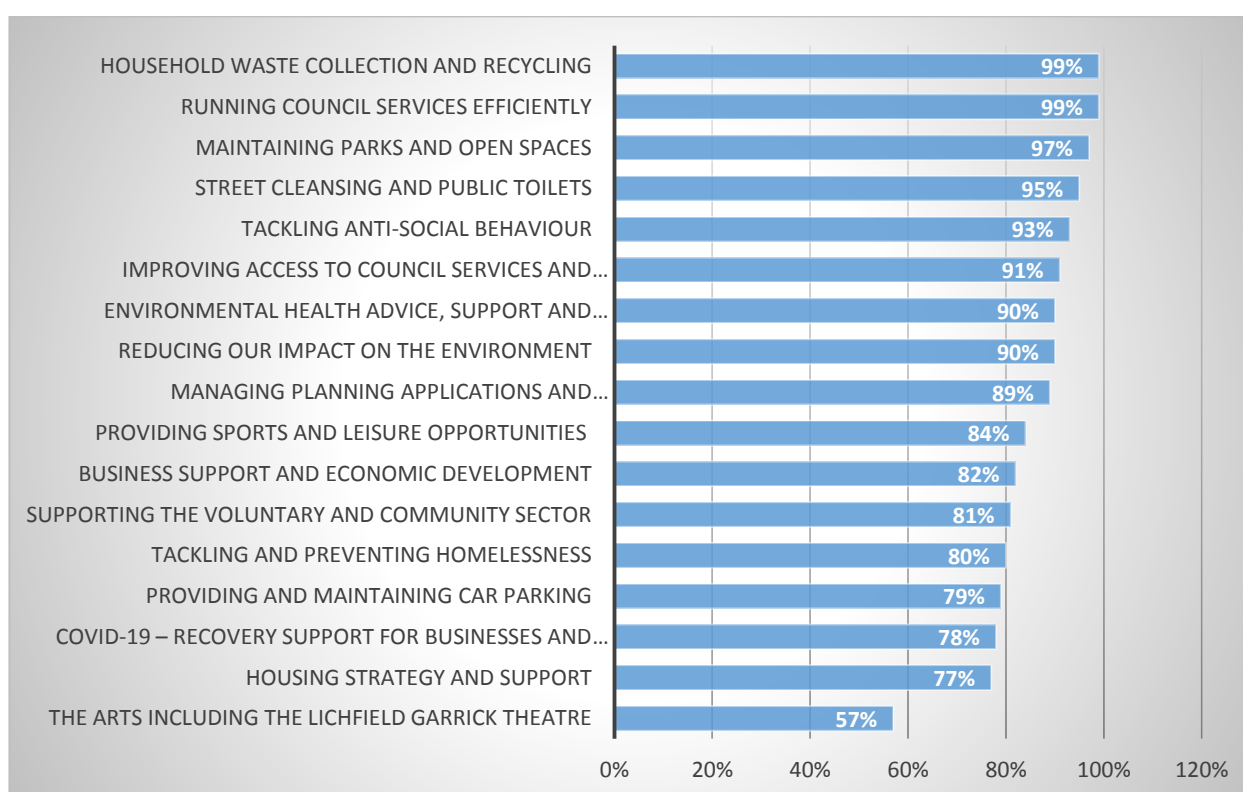
An overview of the business survey results are contained in Appendix 2.

2. Executive Summary

Using a similar question set to allow for comparison with previous budget consultation and resident surveys there was a reduction in overall levels of trust and satisfaction expressed by residents in this year's priorities and budget consultation. It is perhaps worth noting that a national residents' survey conducted by the Local Government Association in October 2021 also registered a decline in satisfaction with local councils.

Lichfield District Council has four strategic priorities set out in its Strategic Plan for 2020 to 2024. These priorities are to Enable People, Shape Place, and Develop Prosperity and Be a Good Council.

Respondents were asked to consider a wide range of service priority areas that align to these strategic priorities. Areas that were highlighted as most important were; household waste collection, recycling and running the council and its services efficiently, maintaining parks and open spaces. Also in the top five areas of importance were street cleansing and tackling anti-social behaviour. The top four priority areas are the same as highlighted in the 2020 survey.



Spending Priorities and Council Tax

There was a continued feeling from respondents to the survey that spending should be maintained rather than increased across the majority of service areas. Only in one area were the majority of respondents in favour of reducing spending – the Arts including the Lichfield Garrick.

Fees and income

The largest proportion of respondents (69%) felt that either Lichfield District Council's approach to fees was currently about right or that no additional fees should be introduced.

Only 32% felt that there was scope for increases and put forward alternative suggestions for sources of income generation which ranged from commercial sponsorship, increased for more regular fines, large-scale events or ideas for reductions in spending.

Council Tax

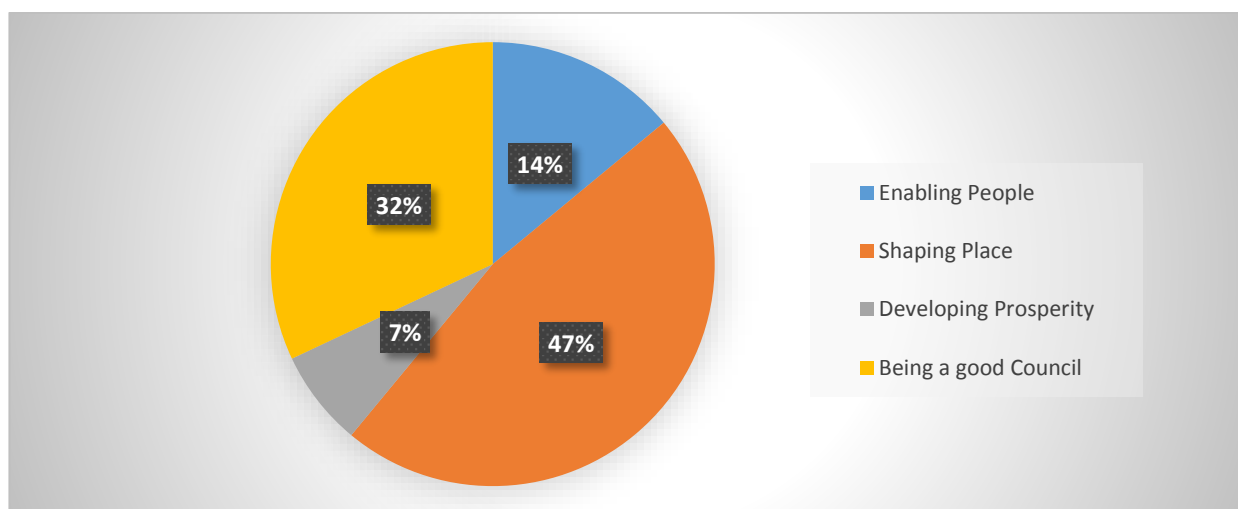
The majority of respondents (87%) indicated that an increase in Council Tax would be acceptable with 54% of the total expressing that an increase of 2% or £5 would be acceptable to them.

3. Methodology and engagement

The budget consultation was launched on 4 October 2021 and was open until 30 November.

The primary method of response to the consultation was via an online questionnaire. The questionnaire was based on a similar question set to that used in 2020 to enable comparison with previous results. The questionnaire included a range of questions derived originally from Staffordshire County Council's Feeling the Difference survey and giving residents an opportunity to express their views on trust in, and satisfaction with, local public services. This was followed by questions asking respondents to rate service areas in terms of importance and spending priority. The final set of questions asked respondents for their views on the council's approach to fees and charges and to potential future levels of Council Tax.

The questionnaire was accessible on-line through the Lichfield District Council website and a dedicated consultation platform. During the consultation period the platform had 1772 page visits from 700 visitors. Alongside the formal questionnaire, visitors to the consultation platform we're given additional opportunities to engage with the consultation by asking questions, posting ideas and taking part in a poll on the council's strategic priorities. This poll asked respondents to rate which to them was most important of the council's four strategic priorities. The results shown below;



Promotional activity

The consultation was promoted in the October and November LDC e- News which has a mailing list of over 18,500 per edition and promoted through local media and social media. The consultation was featured on the Lichfield Live website on 4 October and in the Lichfield Chronicle.

The consultation was promoted regularly on social media using Twitter and Facebook resulting in total Twitter impressions of 6870 and Facebook reach of 12,600 across a total of 24 social media posts.

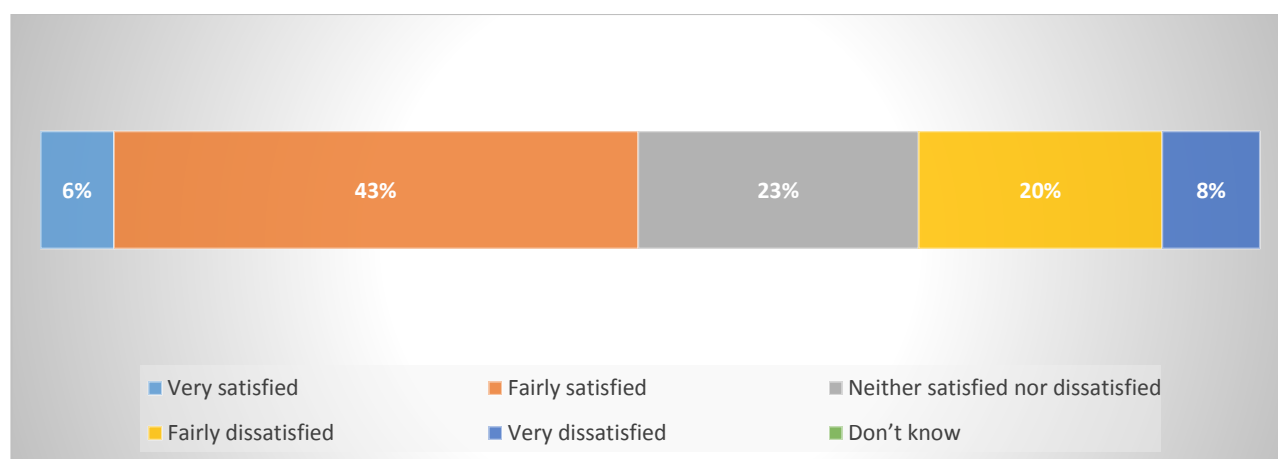
4. Results

4.1 - Opinions about Lichfield District Council

Respondents were asked to express their overall opinions about Lichfield District Council. This section questions was taken from the question set used in the Staffordshire County Council's 'Feeling the Difference' and previously used as part of Lichfield's strategic indicator set. The majority of questions were repeated from the 2020 survey with questions added on the extent to which respondents feel the council acts on the interests of local people, and how respondents feel overall about the council.

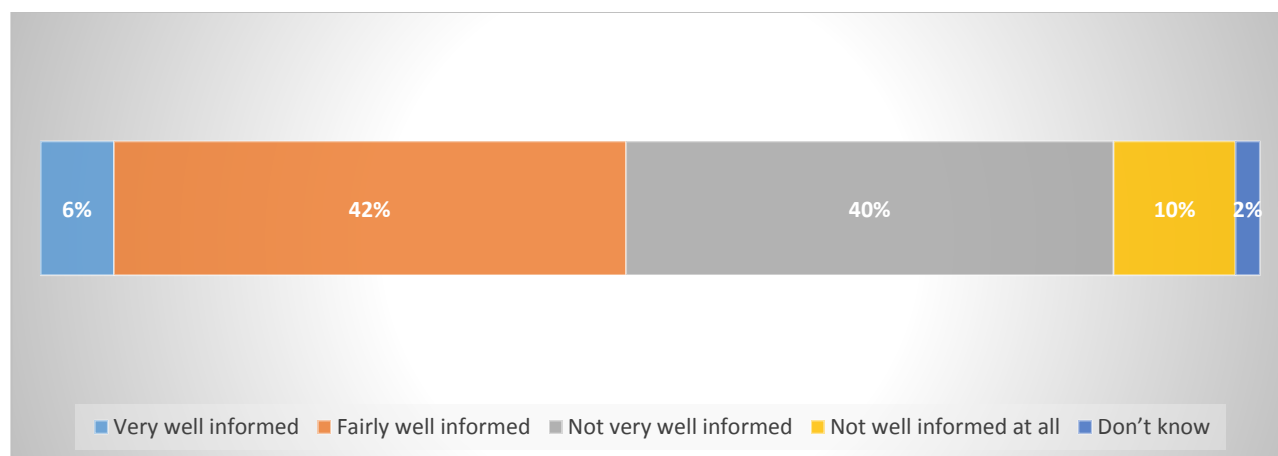
Overall satisfaction

Just under half of respondents (49%) stated that they were either fairly or very satisfied with the performance of Lichfield District Council which is a reduction from the 2020 survey where overall satisfaction was 60%



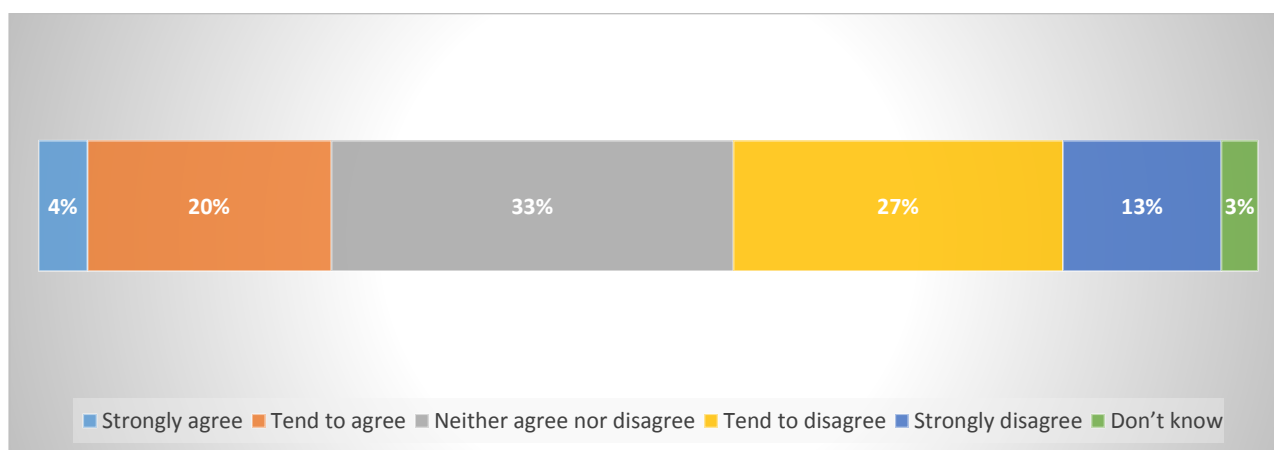
Keeping residents informed

Just under half of respondents (48%) indicated that they felt fairly or very well information about Lichfield District Council Services against 50% that believed they were not well informed. In 2020 the percentage respondents feeling informed was 54%.



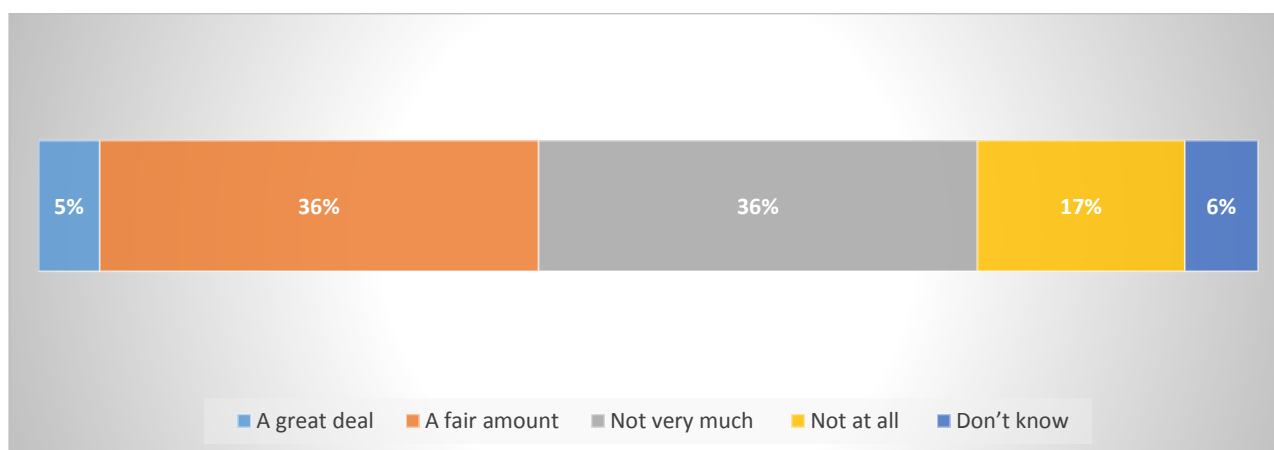
Providing value for money

A total of 24% of respondents felt that Lichfield District Council provides value for money (down from 35% in 2020) with 40% expressing the view that the authority did not (up from 24% last year). The largest proportion of respondents (33%) answered that they neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement.



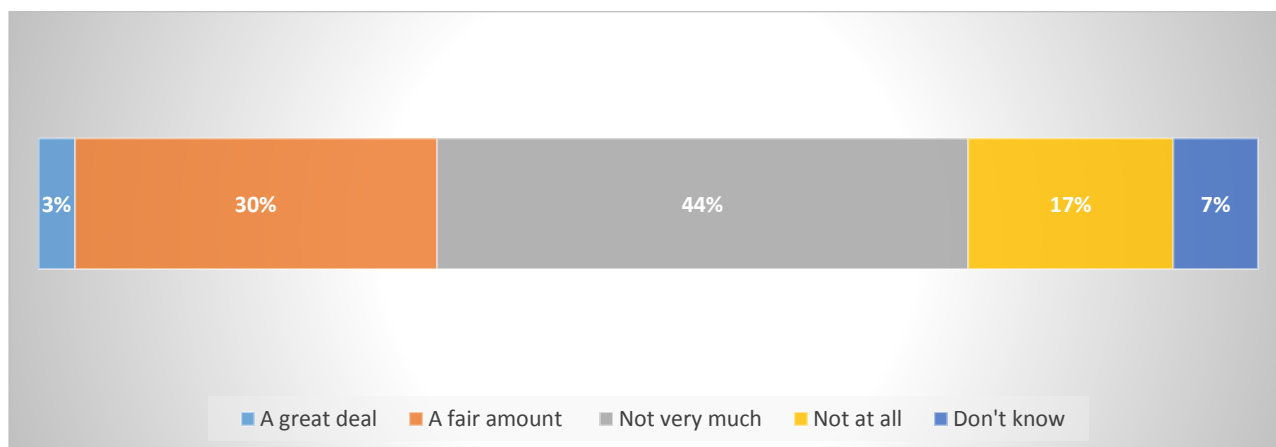
Trust in Lichfield District Council

In last year's survey the majority of respondents (62%) expressed that they had trust in Lichfield District Council with 34% saying that they did not. This year the overall number stating that they trust the council has reduced to 41% with 53% saying that they do not.



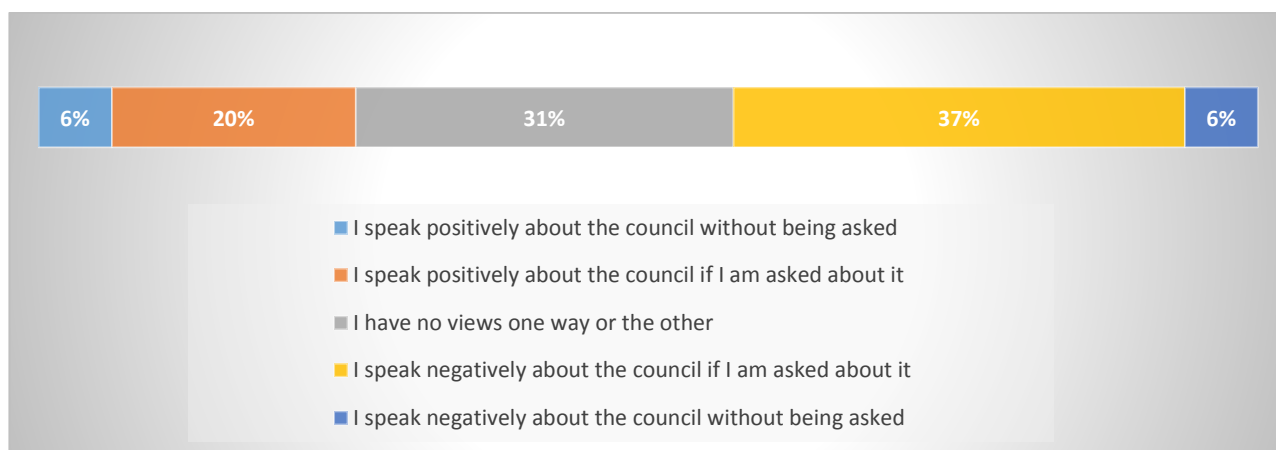
Acting on the concerns of local residents

This is a new question for the 2021 survey and is taken from the LGA's regular national polling on residents' satisfaction. A total of 33% of respondents believe that the council acts on the concerns of residents with a majority (61%) believing that the council does not.



Overall feeling about Lichfield District Council

This is another new question taken from the LGA's national resident's survey showing that 26% of respondents will speak positively about Lichfield District Council and 43% overall will speak negatively although the percentage of respondents that would speak negatively unprompted is only 6%. One-third of respondents (33%) stated that they have no view one way or the other.



4.2 - Services Provided

Respondents were provided with a list of service areas delivered or supported by Lichfield District Council and asked to rate the importance each service area. The service areas were themed under one of the strategic priorities;

- Enabling people
- Shaping place
- Developing prosperity
- Being a good council

The rating scale approach is the same as the scale used in the previous budget consultation surveys to enable comparison between results. The Fairly and Very important scores have been

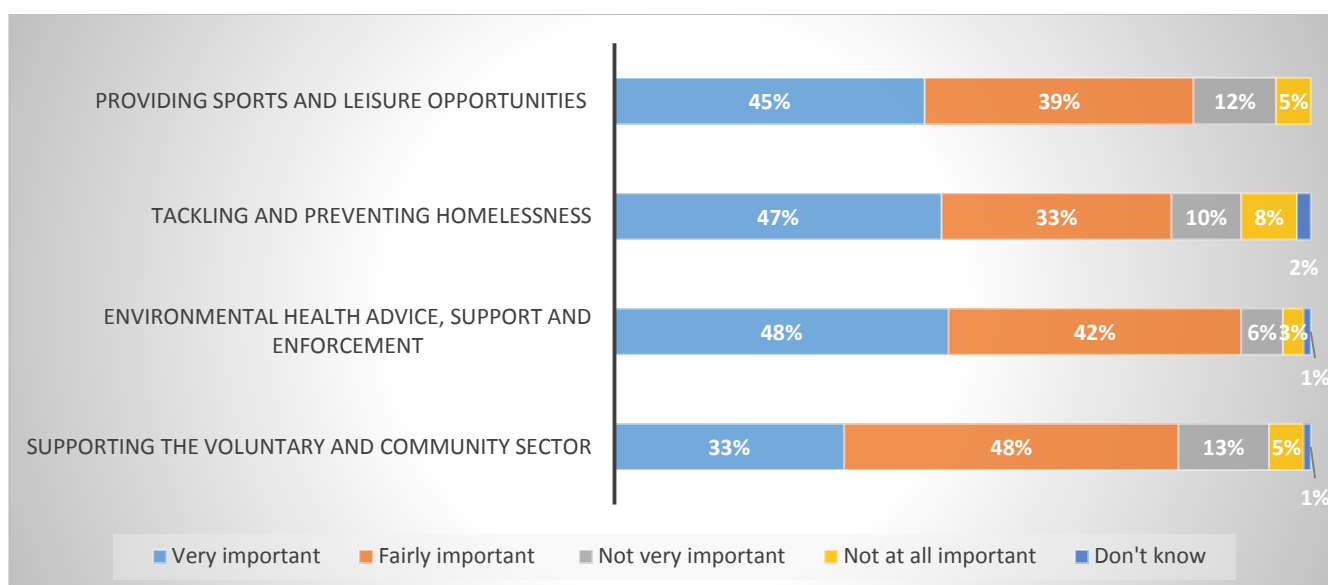
combined to provide an overall importance rating. Where the 'level of support' is quoted this is defined as;

- High 75% – 100% agree the service is important
- Moderate 50% – 74% agree the service is important
- Some 25% - 49% agree the service is important
- Low 0% - 24% agree the service is importance

The titles of some of the priorities were changed in this year's survey to make sure that the survey focused on priority areas rather than council functions and better explained the nature of the work carried out under that priority area.

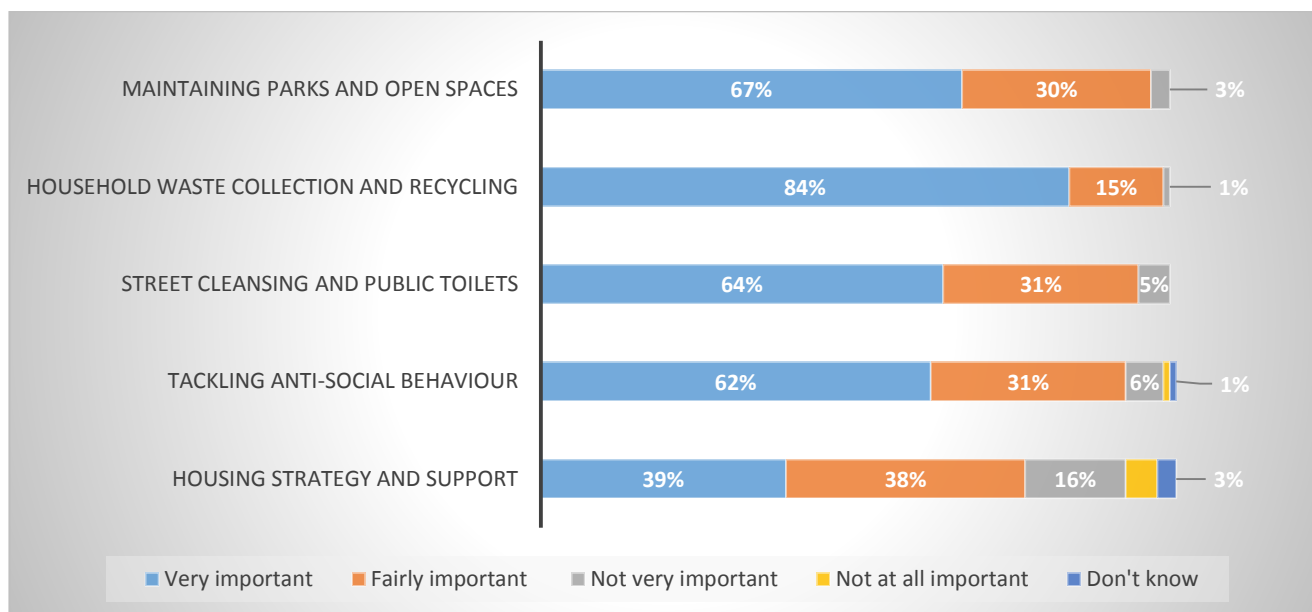
Enabling People

A high proportion of respondents (84%) felt Sports and Leisure were important. This ranked this area 10th in the overall list of priorities – the same as in 2020. There was also a high level of support attached to Homelessness (80%) and environmental health (90%). Supporting voluntary organisations was rated as high importance by 81% of respondents (up from 78% last year and ranked 12th out of 17 service priorities.



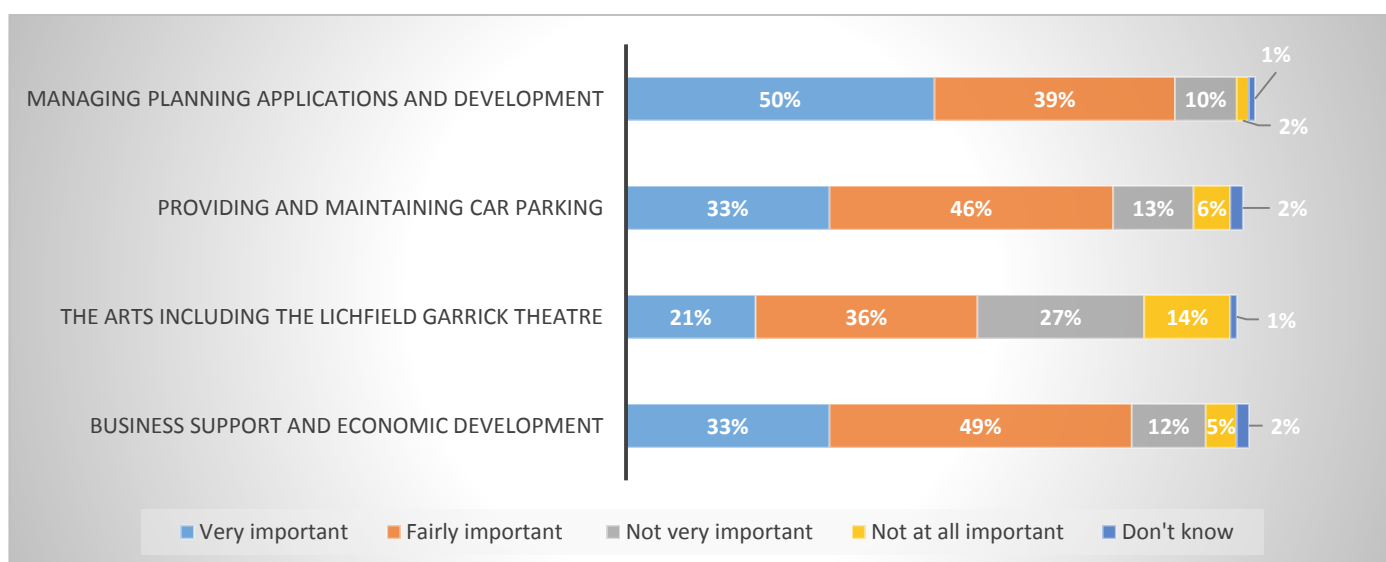
Shaping Place

Household waste and recycling received the joint highest importance score of all 17 priority areas with 99% of respondents rating this as high importance. This is consistent with the previous budget consultation survey where waste collection from homes was ranked as the highest priority with a score of 99%. Parks and open spaces (97% importance, 3rd highest priority), Street cleansing and public toilets (95% importance, 4th highest priority) and Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour (93% importance, 5th highest priority) also scored highly in the views of respondents.



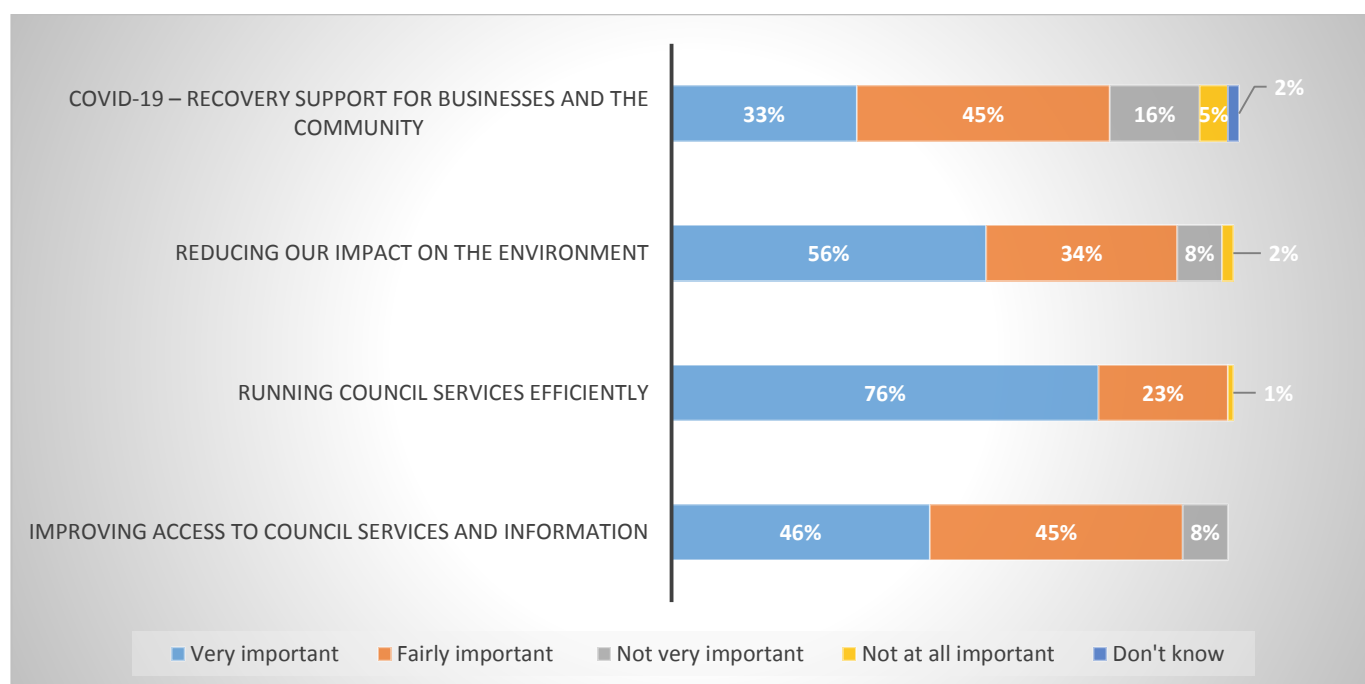
Developing Prosperity

Managing planning applications and development scored the highest importance score under this priority at 89%. Support for the arts and Garrick Theatre was rated as a moderate priority (57%) by respondent's lowest priority area. This is slightly higher than the previous survey where the Garrick was only a priority for some residents (54) when listed on its own.



Being a good council

Running the council and its services in an efficient manner was rated as the joint highest of all 17 priority areas with 99% of respondents rating this as fairly or very important. Improving access to information and customer services was also rated as high importance by respondents (91%). Two additional areas were added to this strategic priority area for the 2021 survey. Respondents rated reducing our impact on the environment as a high priority with a score of 90%. Investment in Covid-19 recovery scored lower at 78% importance.



4.3 - Spending Priorities

Using the same list of priority areas, respondents were asked to state whether spending in each service area should be;

- a) Increased
- b) Protected
- c) Reduced.

Keeping spending at the same level was the majority opinion for all priority areas except for the arts including Lichfield Garrick.

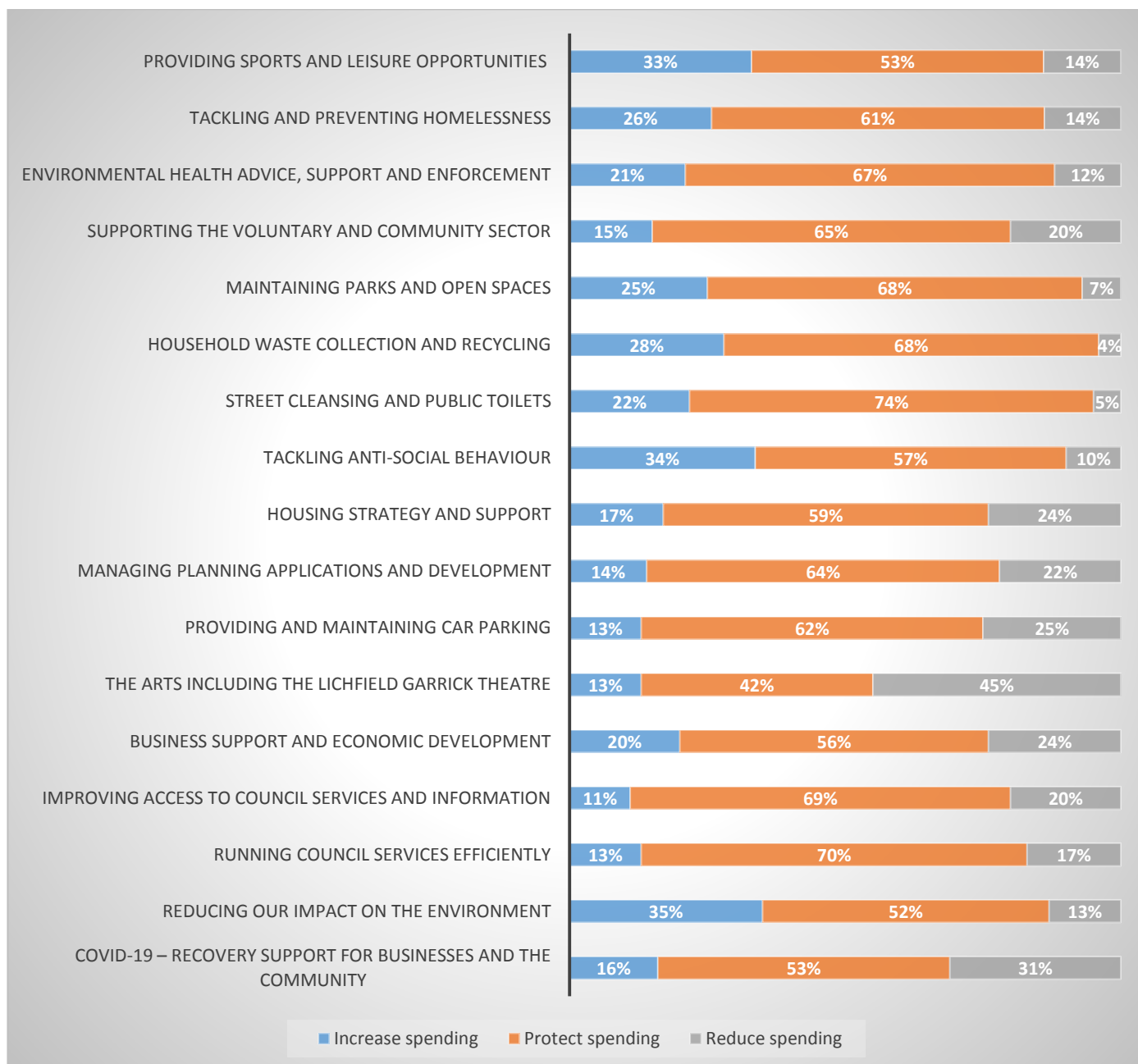
Reducing our impact on the environment (35%), tackling anti-social behaviour (34%) and parks and leisure opportunities (33%) gained the highest levels of support for increase spending. This compares to the following from 2020;

The top priority areas where residents selected to increase spending were;

- Homelessness and environmental health – 37%
- Tackling Anti-social behaviour – 34%
- Sports and leisure – 30%

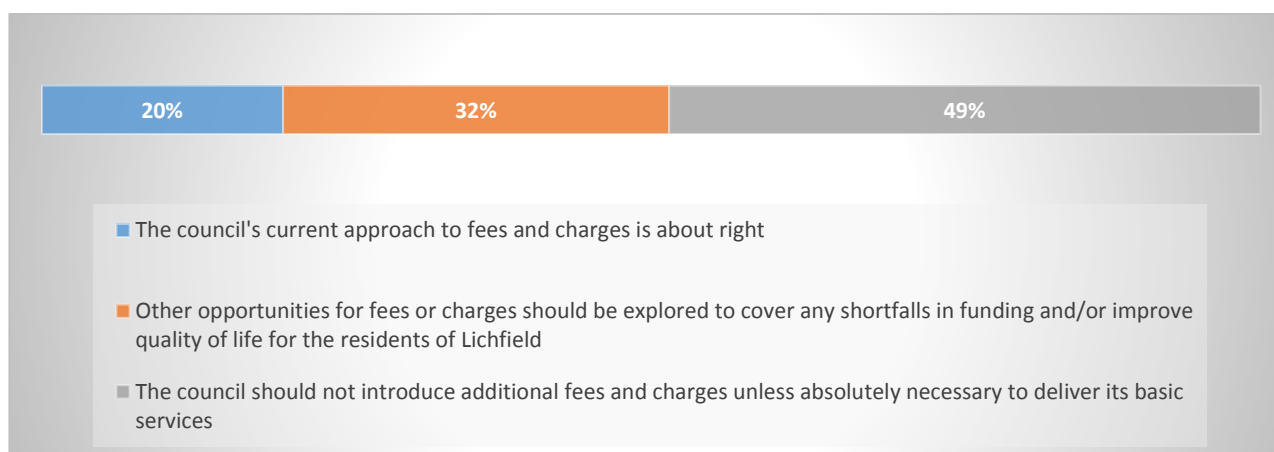
The areas with the highest number of respondents indicating that spending should be reduced were;

- The arts including the Lichfield Garrick – 45%
- Covid recovery support – 31%
- Providing and maintaining car parking – 25%



4.4 - Fees, charges, income and other opportunities

Respondents were asked for their views on Lichfield District Council's approach to setting fees and charges. The largest number of respondents (49%) expressed a view that fees and charges should not be increased. This is an increase from the previous survey of 45%. The same percentage of respondents as last year (32%) felt that other opportunities should be explored.



Respondents were also asked to put forward their own ideas on opportunities for alternative sources of income;

Business

- *Invest in supporting business's in city, new businesses are the future of the city*
- *Introduction of a business incubation unit or enterprise centre in conjunction with Universities or the private sector*
- *Offering services for a fee to businesses (e.g. by using the expertise of Council employees, such as environmental health, planning etc., offer cleaning services, expanding on your current waste collection service), support more events in public spaces of the city that organisers must pay a fee to the Council, charge more when people need to block roads to carry out works, although not a source of direct funding, you should demand more affordable housing as a proportion of all new housing development which in theory should impact on the need for statutory housing provision, lease property owned by the Council.*
- *Increase business rates revenue by encouraging higher end retail to locate to Lichfield e.g. M&S, Next and make retail space available for them instead of building houses where retail should be like on Eastern Avenue opposite Imperial Retail Park. Market the City to film makers more and charge for this if you don't already.*
- *Lots of empty property within the centre - encourage pop up activities - one off rentals - art / calendar events such as Halloween / Christmas.*

Streets and traffic

- *Road Traffic. Controlling speeding with more signs alerting people of their speed. This affects resident's lifestyle and being able to get out of side roads. More housing is making situation worse. There doesn't seem any fairness in the rates. We seem to be paying a lot more than anyone else.*

- Congestion charge for cars driving through the middle of Lichfield. Also, this would reduce traffic and pollution.
- Low emission zone, to clean our air on busy streets and raise funds. Food waste makes up a high proportion of the weight of general black bin waste. More should be done to either promote home composting, collection or local disposal. Use of anaerobic digestion plants should be prioritised.

Housing and Development

- Charge landlords full council tax on empty commercial properties
- The council, through appalling mismanagement, allowed a perfectly viable Ford Main Dealer to go out of business - losing jobs in the neighbourhood and local business taxes. All it did was knock the building down, make a big pile of rubble, erect tall fencing so no one could see it and decorate the fencing with fatuous slogans extolling how wonderful Lichfield is! Why not just get on and build the development and attract people in (right retail, social/other housing, social amenity) and bring in revenues!
- Ensure that all the mega building companies that are currently proliferating around Lichfield are not taking advantage and providing adequate services for the residents of the massive housing estates
- Increase fees from building companies before granting planning permission.
- Developers paying for infrastructure, schools, doctors etc.
- second homes tax, charge developments more to make sure that the forecasted traffic will not block up local roads, and to make sure that the additional bus service is viable for a long time not just 3 years.
- The high levels of new housing being built in and around Lichfield are putting a huge pressure on the infrastructure of the City- they must be made to make a higher contribution.
- Lichfield needs to control the number of new housing estates going up around the city as I do not feel that the provision of services has kept pace with the number of new houses being built. Can I suggest you double or triple your current charges for planning applications (especially for complex new housing estates), that you double or triple your charges for council building control inspections etc. - and that you double or triple your charges for Local Authority Searches. Construction of new houses places and resulting population increase places a huge burden on already overstretched local public services and I feel that developers etc. are not contributing enough to the costs incurred to councils by increased housing/ population.
- You should be getting huge income from CIL with all the current housebuilding in the District. It is a on-off bonus which needs to be spent wisely because in the longer term more houses (and more people) will need more ongoing revenue expenditure on maintaining services. Apart from selling land and increasing car parking charges (neither of which would be popular) I don't think you have any other realistic options to increase income when Council Tax is capped. But I think it is time to finally abandon Friarsgate that has wasted so much time and money over the past 15 years or more.
- Move and redevelop the Town centre
- A levy on large scale housing developments e.g. WIMPEY off Birmingham Rd

Car Parking

- *Argos car park in Lichfield should be brought back into council control - and raise money for Lichfield*
- *Empower parking attendants to issue fines for infringements of parking in residential roads, e.g. Parking within 10 metres of road junctions and on pavements and grassed areas. Enable within bounds, parking outside the existing car parks at Bunkers Hill and Shaw Lane on occasions of special events*
- *Car parking charges for evening night time visitors.*
- *business charges e.g. for using street disabled parking bays for tables and chairs to serve people - charge a higher rate if taking away to ability of disabled people to come into Lichfield*
- *Let contractors take over car parks for a decent fee to the council.*

Events

- *On non-market days, this area could be leased to businesses for exhibitions or promotions. 4 days @ £1000 per day is £200,000 per year.*
- *Organize a fireworks bonfire night as rugby club had to turn folk away this year. However, they made record funds.*
- *Maximise revenue from commercial and social events which use the city centre and parks. Extend use of parking restrictions to maximise demand for paid car parks, at same time lowering long-term parking charges Introduce parking fees for evening access to city centre.*
- *More events that people are charged to attend using the parks and Stowe Fields.*
- *Canvass central government*
- *Events, fines for littering/household waste abuse. Utilise the streets for seating but charge a small fee per business.*
- *Tourism, Leisure and Events*
- *Increase fees for public events such as food fairs or markets*
- *The running of events such as the proms in the park and Lichfield food festival is a real asset to Lichfield. The council should look at the opportunity to run more of these events and look at making money from these events by taking a percentage of food/drinks sold etc.*
- *Increase use of Beacon Park to third parties in exchange for fees and better use of any other assets like land or buildings owned.*
- *Charging for events such as Proms in the park*
- *Rent out park spaces for events*
- *Events and festivals; use of council assets (commercial uses); information and data*

Council management and services

- *THE COUNCIL SHOULD MERGING WITH ANOTHER COUCIL, THE 3 TIER SUSTEM IS OLD FASHIONED AND COSTLY GET RID OF THE TIERSYSTEM AND REDUCE COSTS.*
- *Sponsorship. Perhaps bedding plant displays in Beacon Park, minster pool and Stowe pool.*
- *We should be applying for levelling up funding. Public transport is poor in this area compared to Birmingham, Manchester and London. Senior citizen benefits in these*

urban areas is considerable to us in Staffordshire. Too much money seems to be wasted on high manager salary rather than individuals at the front end delivering services.

- *Reduce the number of councillors and get what we the working getter together, politics must not yet in the way*
- *Look at wages paid, waste in administration, and duplication of roles in some areas.*
- *Start being more cost effective in the way the Council actually spends the monies it already receives from the local taxes we pay and less money on consultations and unnecessary non-productive ideas.*
- *Hiring out of council facilities at a commercially viable charge. Find the methodology to charge utility companies for substandard road repairs following groundworks that ultimately fail and prove a drain on resource when the council picks up the repair tab*
- *Hiring out the council chamber, charging admin support to local businesses*
- *Get Michael Fabricant to campaign government for funding for a decent sports facilities for our youth that seem relatively ignored in Lichfield. Tax property developers for developments in Lichfield to properly fund the community services required rather than letting them keep huge profits for the developments permitted by the council.*
- *Renting or selling the council house and other council buildings and using smaller spaces to accommodate staff.*
- *Increase use of premises and other facilities.*
- *Start to think outside the box...Besides looking at how to generate money maybe look a bit closer to home...Look at the waste in how Lichfield Council deliver services from inside the Council, e.g. not utilising there current resources efficiently, potentially wasting money on things like outsourcing website to external companies at a ridiculous price, when it could be done using OpenSource software internally. Look at your neighbouring councils to see how they have saved money internally while still delivering good, high quality services to their residents.*
- *Following a more commercial approach to the way we operate - we can't make a profit but we could enter into more partnerships to ensure we don't have to carry all financial burdens.*
- *Sell some of the land and buildings you own*
- *Use of council house*
- *Selling services to other authorities.*
- *Have the council looked into crowdfunding opportunities? It could be an individual or business model that finds local projects and initiatives funded by the locals that will potentially benefit from them.*
- *Look internally for savings to be made at the council by managing the serves more efficiently*
- *Maximising use of council assets*
- *Successfully bid for other funding*
- *Fees for accessing discretionary council services.*

Council Tax

- *Yes band D homes keep increasing and are not far off some much larger homes where there is wealth, this desperately needs looking into again. Lichfield Council tax is far*

higher than other areas and keeps going up larger homes should pay more council tax it's not fair

- *Review Council Tax of individual properties and adjust to bring in more revenue.*
- *I realise this is a National government issue but a review of Council tax bands is long overdue. It is blatantly unfair that I have been in a CT band 2 higher than all my immediate neighbours for 20 years, all because we bought our house fully developed whereas they bought theirs cheaply and did the development. I realise the band will change when they move but I have paid considerably more CT over 20 years.*
- *THE VERY HIGH VALUE PROPERTIES SHOULD HAVE MORE COUNCIL TAX CHAGED ON THEM I.E. THOSE OVERA £1 MILLION RATEABLE VALUE / WORTH NOW. LIASE WITH NATIONAL GOVERNMENT IF YOU NEED FOR THIS TO HAPPEN.*

Other comments

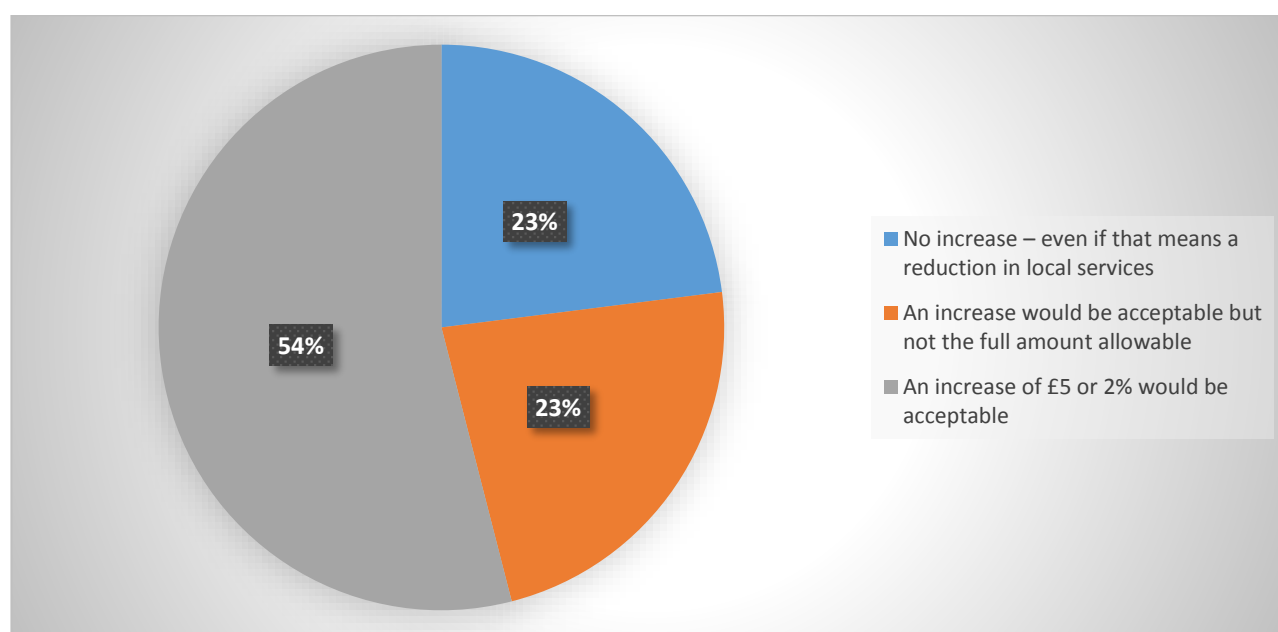
- *More use of volunteers to keep local environments attractive. Volunteer days and events to encourage families, the retired and young people to help, interact and talk whilst improving and greening our neighbourhoods. We must return to a more neighbourly society.*
- *There should be additional fees for services in matters multiple home owners in Lichfield. It's unjustified to have people buying new builds then immediately renting out.*
- *Every couple of months offer a collection service for metals (And take everything that is metal, fridges wheelbarrows pots and pans) The Swiss do this on given dates, people can put anything out on the paths (not food waste or green waste) by their house and the local council collects and recycles it. It also gives opportunities to put other things out that anyone can take if they can use it. At the end of the day anything left is removed by the household or in some areas collected by the council. This would help to cut down fly tipping as well.*
- *All unemployed people who are for and able, should work for the council in order to receive their benefits. Furloughed people should have done the same.*
- *Parking permits LITTER fines Fly tipping follow ups with fines Promote the Garrick theatre and use the facilities more. Reduce the amount of councillors*
- *A children's play group / nursery in Stonnall*
- *Establish community engagement projects with voluntary opportunities for local residents and young people to reduce the need to increase taxes and fees in some areas, e.g. parks and communal areas could be planted/maintained with the help of volunteer groups for mental health. Make use of volunteering and apprenticeships in development projects - prioritising opportunities for local people. Approaching pro bono opportunities to look at streamlining Council efficiency (e.g. operational research)*
- *Introduce a charge for using parks and facilities for people outside the council district*
- *The collection of large household waste items could be promoted with appropriate charges made. This service is very useful and efficient*
- *Broadband Energy- heat pumps, energy advice Low/ Zero Carbon Transport Zero Carbon affordable housing Local Food.*
- *Charging for access to council assets like street vendors and food events. Charge for library services.*
- *Charging fee to use Public Toilets Card/Cash*
- *Recycling*

- *Charge non-residents more for the Freedom Leisure Pass. Charge non-residents to use the Lichfield Recycling Centre*
- *Increase sponsorship and involvement from local businesses, in particular the major employers such as supermarkets - to tackle litter, regular maintenance of the roads, pavements and greenery in their locality including cutting back overgrowth from hedges alongside their premises - e.g. footpath and cycleway on Wood End Lane and Gorse Lane Fradley which run next to the Tesco Warehouse*
- *Anti-social behaviour at the dimbles*
- *Providing better facilities, shops and jobs for people in Burntwood*
- *If a "tat" man can make a living from collecting scrap off people's drive ways, why can't the council either charge them for the privilege or do it themselves and keep the money.*
- *Permits for street beggars! They even come in on the train it's so lucrative. More events on Market square.*
- *Charge beggars a permit, they seem to be onto a quick cash earner*

5. Setting Council Tax

Respondents were asked to give their views on what would be an acceptable level of Council Tax increase for the 2021 – 2022 financial year. The majority of respondents (54%) indicated that an increase of £5 or 2% would be acceptable. This is a reduction from the 2020 survey where 63% indicated that this amount of increase would be acceptable.

Almost one-quarter of respondents (23%) indicated that an increase would be acceptable but not to the full amount allowed by government guidelines. The same number (23%) of respondents indicated that their preference would be for no increase in council tax which is an increase from 14% in the previous survey.



6. Additional suggestions and ideas

At the end of the questionnaire, respondents were given the opportunity to provide additional comments and ideas on council priorities and budgets;

Enabling people

- *I feel that Lichfield's lack of leisure and sports facilities desperately needs investment as well as job creation and education for over 16s (not schools). I feel that continually building retirement homes is putting too much pressure on local health and social care services. We need more investment for working age people and families.*
- *New sports centre should be in the centre of the city to maximise usage and minimise environmental impact*
- *The provision of leisure facilities in Lichfield is absolutely woeful. A new leisure centre needs to be built in Lichfield. Along the lines of the newish Oak Park Leisure centre in Walsall - built some 4 or 5 years ago. Please go and take a look at it! Anti-social behaviour around Lichfield city centre seems to be on the increase with gangs of youth often hanging around the McDonald's in Lichfield town centre, Beacon Park and Stowe Pool (particularly the play area at Stowe Pool) after 5pm - making them EXTREMELY intimidating places for local residents and families to use - particularly in the evenings. The council needs to employ a few community wardens to do regular patrols of these areas - particularly after 5pm!*
- *Work more with volunteers to provide services such as street cleansing*
- *There is a lack of sporting facilities in Lichfield and if these areas were developed the council would be able to make addition income by offering these facilities to residents on a pay to play basis. For example; making badminton courts / football pitches available to rent.*
- *Build a new leisure centre as part of Lichfield sports club which has plans to expand onto adjacent land.*
- *There appears to be a lack of support for youth services. Youth clubs should be re-opened and supported- this will surely reduce antisocial behaviour.*
- *BUILD SWIMMING ETC FACILITY ON FORMER TEMPEST FORD SITE NOT WHERE PROPOSED, EASIER TO GET TO CITY CENTRE BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT FOR ALL. ALSO GET THE RAILWAY LINE TO WALSALL AND BOT OPENED NOT MADE INTO A CYCLE ROUTE USED BY LIMITED NUMBER OF PEOPLE.. ALSO HELP MORE GET CANAL OPEN 7? MILES TO BROWNHILLS*
- *Explore multi-functional leisure centre*
- *Use compulsory purchase rules to buy empty homes and then rent them out to people on the social housing waiting list. Build council houses to reduce the waiting list instead of agreeing to private developments. Attract independent traders/craft people/artists to Lichfield by opening an indoor market on the old Debenhams site. This would help make it an interesting place to shop and attract more visitors. Keep rents and business rates low so small independent traders have a chance to survive. Pedestrianise the city centre.*

Shaping place

- *I live in Boley Park. There is a large amount of grass verges which seems to get cut far too often. I am sure this frequency could be reduced with little real effect on quality. Ditto*

Street cleansing. I am very happy that this takes place on a regular basis but we are not a dirty lot in general and I am sure this too could be reduced. Finally I am a great supporter of the Lichfield Legends litter collection and feel this does a great service to the council at a very low cost. I would support putting more money into voluntary schemes like these

- *The planned changes to recycling collections are absurd and at no point communicated properly. Swapping bins for bags/boxes is a disaster on so many levels - generating unnecessary plastic waste through making bags and boxes is an irony when recycling is the aim. Boxes are not sufficient for the quantity of cardboard a household produces in two weeks - especially with the rise in online ordering. No one is stupid enough to believe this is anything other than a cost saving measure and absolutely nothing to do with meeting recycling or environmental targets.*
- *Clearly we are destroying our world. Priority must be recycling, awarding less use of plastic etc., encouraging use of public transport and returning to more simple pleasures. Good luck!*
- *You really should invest in food waste*
- *Ensure that income associated with new home is more clearly linked to development of infrastructure Make a once and for all statement about the council's total losses on Friarsgate and those responsible, to clear the way for a financial re-set based on public trust. Continue to support our strong local voluntary sector in providing supporting vulnerable individuals and groups.*
- *Save money by leaving some grass uncut in parks. It will help wildlife.*
- *Number 1 priority has to be reduce the amount of housing planned now and in the long term. Improve and increase services such as Doctors, increase the amount spent on park and open space maintenance.*
- *Do not eliminate or encroach upon open access areas.*
- *Mire spent on environmental issues. Faster approach to investigations. Issues related to private housing/housing associations supported more. Maintenance if other parks and green spaces addressed more.*
- *PLEASE can we see more proper local policing enforcing the law? Parking on pavements, riding bikes and e-scooters on pavements, driving through what are supposed to be pedestrian areas - Market Square and Bird Street used by takeaway drivers as if it's a main road and pedestrians shouldn't be on it!!*
- *New infrastructure, Drayton Bassett is always forgotten about!*
- *Ensure a vehicle free city centre. Install a bollard at the junction of Tamworth Street and Lombard Street*
- *increase Road maintenance, reduce development around Lichfield, see developers fulfil infrastructure and build schools, doctors to cater for increase in population*
- *Improve local junctions, A5 Birmingham road rbt. Excessive queues. Local developments are not even built yet, and the traffic numbers are not back to pre Covid levels yet.*
- *There is nothing about cutting the cost base rather than raising money. For example the funds being wasted on yet another go at bringing forward Friarsgate should not be spent. It is clear that a residential led scheme is the way to maximise land value.*
- *There is too much perception on what we need rather than finding out. Burntwood gets a very poor deal in terms of council spending.*
- *I would be happy to recycle my own waste if I got a reduction in my council tax*
- *Outsources waste services*

- *Bar and restaurant trades should pay a higher percentage of policing costs .High policing at night .There is no patrols in the daytime.*
- *stop building homes allowing more houses to be put up without enough infrastructure to sustain its current population*
- *At the moment these new properties will bring a pressure on the local GP services & the local council haven't thought ahead to work with the Health Authority to see more GP surgeries, it is hard enough to get an appointment now.*
- *Please can we have more children's play areas where there are large open spaces? My particular request would be on the open land on Wissage Lane, between the entrances to Rocklands Cres and Covey Close. Thank you.*
- *I don't have a problem with new housing developments but do have a problem with the lack of space on those developments. Roads are small, there are no or minimal front gardens, and a severe lack of parking considering most households have multiple vehicles. The planning department can influence that and should do. Plus the lack of public services and facilities to support the increase in residents.*
- *EV charging subsidies, hold business/developers to account, so that they install EV charging in any new construction. Less approval of new residential developments on green space, more focus on repurposing disused space (Debenhams, GKN factory unit, etc.).*
- *PLANT MORE WILD FLOWERS ON GRASS VERGES/PARKS TO IMPROVE AESTHETICALLY & WILDLIFE HABITATS WHICH WILL LONGER TERM REDUCE THE COST OF MOWING THESE AREAS. I do not believe you should charge for parking as this will increase foot fall which is good for the economy/ businesses.*
- *Cost effective maintenance would save future high expenditure, hedgerows, footpaths, drains etc. etc. are allowed to fall into disrepair which ultimately leads to higher repair bills in the long term*
- *Need to sort ASB, policing presence, totally inadequate. Roads need sorting by SCC, some are dreadful. Town centre paving is dangerous. Protect disabled parking.*
- *allocate more spending on Burntwood services and facilities as they are woefully neglected*
- *Reducing the impact on the environment should be a priority. More money should be spent on protecting the environment and wildlife and heritage.*
- *Install large community recycling facilities on street corners, in car parks. Tins, paper and card, bottles and glass. Promote as a way of community bonding.*
- *Housing development in Burntwood has grown at an alarming rate. Some has enhanced the area but we have no extra support services to accompany them. Please don't allow any more of our green areas to be given over to housing development. Bromford have a lot of new homes waiting to be filled. We need more school places for children and doctors to accommodate the new residents.*
- *Fix potholes. Provide more / better services for our youth.*
- *More dynamic action and funding on tackling climate change to reduce carbon emissions across the community - not just the Council's own operations and promoting biodiversity recovery*
- *One of the priorities must be to improve the standard of road surfaces and street cleaning. Both of these areas are poorly maintained by the Council.*
- *1. Urgently get work started on the failed 'Friarsgate' sites; this is an absolute priority and gives a very poor first impression to visitors. 2. It is of great importance that Lichfield gets its own public swimming pool/sports centre, not shared with a school. Exercise is important for mental health and fitness levels. 3. I am concerned about the over*

development of the City and that it is losing its character and charm. Greater scrutiny needs to be given to any future proposed housing/development. 4. Traffic levels are only going to get worse with all the new housing being built. The routes in and out of the City are already congested nose to tail at peak times. This is not good for the environment or people's health. Despite the new bypass I still believe there has not been enough infrastructure planned to cope with the increased traffic that will be generated. Greater priority should be given to infrastructure when at the planning stage. 5. Priority on footpaths and in the City's shopping areas needs to be given to pedestrians. Cyclists should dismount and there should be much better signage to indicate this. 6. People have reacted positively to the increase in pavement cafe seating and this needs to be maintained and possibly increased. 7. We need to attract new retailers into the City centre which seems to have a lot of empty shops, exacerbated by the pandemic. I do not think an indoor market is the answer. 8. There is too much traffic driving through the pedestrianised centre at all times of the day. This needs to be addressed.

- We need more cycle lanes
- Use of the old railway line as a general use path is a great idea adding value to area.
- Reduce major housing developments for at least 10years.
- The Council is far too focussed on Lichfield City and the 'image' of the council. The Council has wasted money on trying to get the Birmingham road site redeveloped which has resulted in nothing ever being built and now I've discovered that the current vanity project is a Leisure centre which should be left to the private sector to provide. It should be a priority to regenerate areas that need it more such as Burntwood town centre, Fazeley etc. which appear largely forgotten in the shadow of Lichfield.
- Please spend more on Burntwood!
- More spending in Burntwood!!
- I like to see Lichfield become a friendly place that will attract people to come here for shopping, food and theatre. I like to keep its charm and uniqueness and would hate it to turn into the box standard high street/ cinema complex type place. At the same time there is a need for community support i.e. a youth centre etc. to tackle ASB in a better and preventative way. No more housing developments without additional infra structure such as GPs etc.
- Reduce street lighting overnight
- Lichfield Council does nothing to improve Burntwood except to build more houses without improving infrastructure.
- I feel strongly that Burntwood is the poor relation. Anti-social behaviour is high, there is very little police presence or Community wardens.
- Given the current concerns about the climate, rather than planting trees the council planners should stop housing developers cutting down trees.
- Playing our part in tackling climate change and increasing biodiversity. Working to be net zero.
- Not allowing any more retirement homes, more pedestrian crossing. Sort out the land in front of the train station and don't turn it into flats. We need a department store replacement as well as a food shop like M&S in town. Improve roads before building more new homes.
- I think controlling speed is noticed the most by residents. They only slow down when they see the Speed van. This does not give you any idea of how bad it is for residents. Speeding through Armitage and Handsacre past Rowan Drive. Making it miserable for residents.

With all this tremendous house building it will only get worse. Why wait for a fatality doesn't make sense.

- *Should be spent more on housing and bulky waste collection so that you can reduce fly tipping*
- *Generally happy but occasionally confused about planning applications that are approved particularly on my road.*

Developing Prosperity

- *Investment into skill shortages. Happy to discuss. lan@belleartirepairs.com*
- *I would like to see lower parking charges in the city centre to encourage shoppers to come here. I don't think it unreasonable for city centre businesses to fund this in increased 'rates'.*
- *Given the ever rising population of Burntwood I would like to see a bigger cut of the budget go towards the public services in the area. At the moment Burntwood feels like a second class citizen.*
- *In my opinion the council this year need to address areas of bringing in new businesses and develop the area of land across from the station which is an outrage to me. Millions being lost. Why not use it?*
- *Free Parking will always be a winner to me. Stop outsourcing things that piss of your people, (ANPR Car Parks for private companies who make their money from fines - generally to the vulnerable). Make it easier to SPEAK to people at the council websites can't hold experience of knowledge in specialist areas.*
- *Increase rental charges and business rates for high street estate agents. Far too many taking up shopping areas within Lichfield.*
- *Really think you should be careful on parking charges because they deter us from going into the centre more.*
- *Do not reduce support for Garrick. The theatre contributes to job creation*
- *I think the questionnaire fails to address the area of planning/development for local businesses. The current high street is slowly diminishing and is in dire need of a strategy that enables new businesses to move in, to keep footfall high enough to retain the current businesses that we do have and to entice the bigger chains like M&S back to the town. Without this, local footfall is sure to fall and with it, the success of our local businesses and city as a whole. How local funding is allocated to help with this? We're not the only high street struggling across the country but there is surely a strategy to rebuild it that could impact many local lives positively.*
- *Supporting the economy to flourish and prosper is key. Support the BABC strategy/concept, a new vision and delivery plan, that is supported by both members and LT, would help staff have clarity on what is expected and where their focus should be*
- *Priority should be to get more high value shops into Lichfield (thereby increasing business rates revenue) through stopping building houses where retail could be e.g. opposite Eastern Avenue Imperial Retail Park, where Fords used to be on Birmingham Road. Lichfield is a beautiful city and should be marketed as such but when visitors arrive it's just full of charity shops, hairdressers and coffee shops.*
- *Improve the centre, support shops and businesses and create more doctors and secondary schools. Lichfield is becoming a giant housing estate without anything new to bring in shoppers or support healthcare.*

Being a Good Council

- *Stop finance the Lichfield Garrick. It's a Private Limited Company. There you have saved £305,120*
- *Stop throwing money at problems. I am a business improvement consultant and can provide evidence and opportunities to improve performance without always assuming that more investment is the answer.*
- *Forget 1-3 million in reorganising you own departments, that is inappropriate use of MY money. You are tasked to use my money to provide services to residents, not your own comfy office, chauffeur driven cars and other pay benefits. Use it responsibly or answer to the residents.*
- *Keeping taxes down is nothing to be trumpeted. Inevitably costs rise with an ageing population and infrastructure. Taxes/charges simply have to rise.*
- *Review salaries and consider reducing or removing high earning posts. Operate leaner, do posts really need deputies?*
- *Frankly since Nina Dawes was CEO you have gone downhill. The new CEO claims over his work in The Falklands is deceitful & "CV speak" - he was asked to leave before end of contract due to poor performance!!*
- *The council should consider relocating to the Debenhams site, perhaps also using that as the Enterprise Centre. The existing buildings could be sold alongside the Birmingham Road site as a larger package. The old buildings have potential as a hotel /wedding venue.*
- *Stream-line procedures, make procedures simpler as this should reduce cost and in turn fees. Cut back on staff training, use share skills instead of high cost training.*
- *Less management in the council*
- *Need to be more aware of things you get wrong. At present there seems to be a denial culture when things are handled badly (e.g. your counter-productive street-trading policy that has led to the collapse of the Lichfield markets and events), or you only accept things are wrong when forced to (e.g. the totally misguided proposal to sell Leyfields etc., or dealing with the woefully inadequate Planning Department) You need to look at how these things got through the system in the first place e.g. Leyfields was never a realistic housing site and the report showing the other 'available' open space in the area (which included churchyards, allotments and the even the surface of Stowe Pool) should never have been put out. I don't think there is still any acceptance of just how damaging these matters are to the Council's public image and reputation. And there is still far too much mumbo-jumbo in your reports etc. Cut down the words and focus on key issues. I accept that the Council has real problems with funding, but you don't get that message across to the public in any understandable way (e.g. your budget is pretty well incomprehensible). The public are always going to criticise the Council, but you could do a much better job at explaining the funding difficulties etc. You also need to explain better the limited amount of council tax that LDC spends - because you collect it all, the public think you spend it all. The County Council gets away with being extremely inefficient because it is so remote. And the increases in Police and Fire Service council tax over past years have been horrendous whilst the service they provide has declined.*
- *Do the job they are supposed to do within its budget and stop spending money on "airy fairy" non-productive and silly ideas because it wants to look popular to a very small minority of the population.*
- *The budget should be based on the rates charged, with increases made if necessary. In addition services not used should be cancelled*

- *Holistic approaches to budget setting are needed - cutting funding in some areas may have a disproportionate increase in costs in other areas - it is important that approaches to budgeting are not [Last year's budget] - X%*
- *Value for money, at the same time as charging extra for brown bin collection is a bit conflicting. Get basics right like filling pot holes and injecting imagination into green spaces.*
- *Develop strategies that have a positive knock in effect to other issues. For example leisure facilities and opportunities for young people can help minimise anti-social behaviour.*
- *Either get the council office reopened and staff back to work or close and sell. Stop wasting our money keeping it closed.*
- *Reduce expenditure on equality and diversity.*
- *This is a horribly loaded question. I don't think the council should introduce additional fees at all, but the least worst option I'm given is still supportive of such fees.*
- *Look at apprenticeships when recruiting*
- *Staff productivity at LDC needs to be sharpened up.*
- *There should be a far more equitable distribution of resources across the whole District. In particular, the ongoing costs of The Garrick need to be significantly reduced.*
- *Looking at the budget apportionment between services I'm astounded at the amount spent on collecting revenue, running elections and on councillors. I've long had the view that the Council was inefficient with officers more interested in themselves than responding positively to the community. I was not surprised to see the income from new homes - the council has managed to ruin Lichfield with vast, boring estates of indifferent housing and does not appear to have made much attempt to improve the infrastructure - roads, GP surgeries, schools, public transport. Clearly allowing unsuitable housing development suits the council because it brings in income and takes the eye away from what appears to be an inefficient administration. Look at Tamworth and Cannock which have both attracted businesses and shops and can still fund pleasantly planted roundabouts and public spaces whereas the 'welcome to Lichfield' on the A461 is a rickety sign and planter full of dead plants.*
- *Increase number of staff wfh, only front line staff need to be on site, how many people are claiming travel expenses and fuel allowance when zoom meetings / conferences could be utilised*
- *Yes people are fed up with Council tax going up on stealth taxes this whole banding should be looked at again its very unfair, it makes you think that money is being wasted in Lichfield Council. We are also fed up with the Green Belt land being eaten up for constant housing.*
- *I'm certain there are other council properties and buildings underused.*
- *Stop wasting money on consultants Reduce CEX and senior management team salaries*

Appendix 1 - Respondent Profile

Are you male or female?

	Number	Percentage	2016 MYE
Male	108	55%	49%
Female	140	43%	51%
Prefer not to say	6	2%	

What is your age?

	Number	Percentage	2016 MYE
16-24	0	0%	9%
25-34	15	15%	13%
35-44	37	15%	15%
45-54	52	20%	19%
55-64	68	27%	16%
65-74	62	24%	17%
75 – 84	18	7%	12 5
85+	3	1%	

What do you consider your race/national identity to be?

	Number	Percentage
White British	224	95%
White Irish	3	1%
Asian/Asian British - Indian	1	0.4%
Asian/Asian British - Pakistani	0	0%
Asian/Asian British - Bangladeshi	1	0.4%
Asian/Asian British - Chinese	0	0%
Black / Black British - African	0	0%
Black / Black British - Caribbean	1	0.4%
Multiple - white & black Caribbean	0	0%
Multiple - white & black African	0	0%
Multiple - white & Asian	1	0.4%
Other	7	2%

Do you have a longstanding illness, disability or infirmity that has troubled you for some time/likely to affect you in future?

	Number	Percentage
Yes	50	21%
No	186	79%

Appendix 2 – Summary of Business Survey Results

Management Summary



Economic Outlook

- Net gain of 0.49 staff over the past 12 months
- 59% of businesses expect number of employees to stay the same over the next 12 months
- 40% of businesses expect turnover to increase

Covid

- 61% of businesses have had supply chain problems
- 60% of businesses have had Decreased sales
- 49% of businesses have had cash flow issues

Brexit

- 19% of businesses experiencing Border delays
- 12% of businesses want support with transportation
- 9% want support identifying new suppliers

Business Support

- 53% of businesses want more networking activities
 - Sessions could include: finance, marketing & compliance
- 11% of businesses in unsuitable accommodation

© Cognisant Research

2

Methodology



- 2,000 businesses contacted
 - November 8th to December 17th
 - Called up to 5 times
 - 5% NA
- 194 telephone interviews achieved
 - 10% response rate across applicable businesses

© Cognisant Research

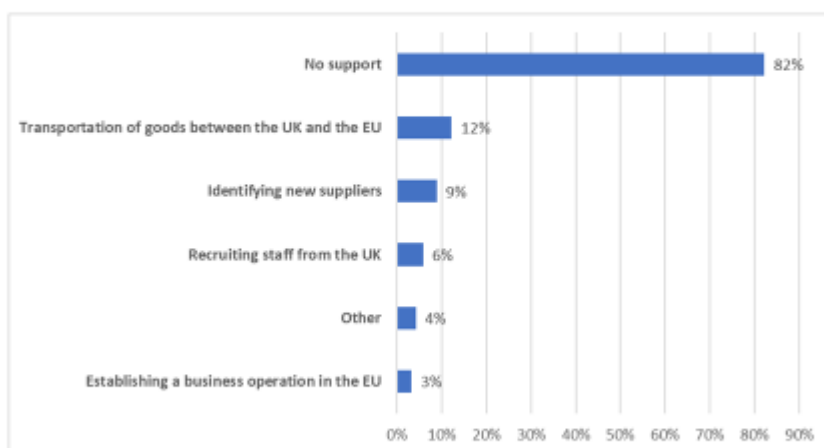
4

Response by Sector



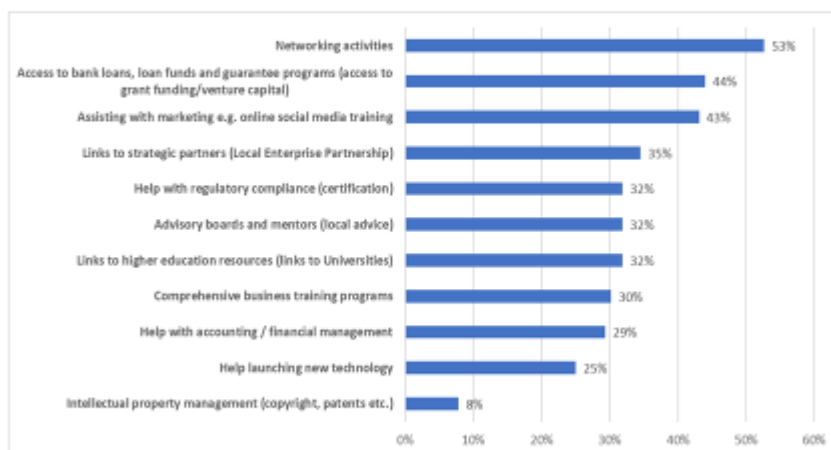
SIC 2007 Code	Population		Survey	
	No.	%	%	No.
Section A Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	38	2%	3%	5
Section C Manufacturing	294	15%	14%	27
Section E Water Supply; Sewerage, Waste Management and Remediation Activities	15	1%	2%	3
Section F Construction	244	12%	10%	19
Section G Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles	474	24%	24%	47
Section H Transportation and Storage	35	2%	1%	2
Section I Accommodation and Food Service Activities	221	11%	10%	20
Section J Information and Communication	70	4%	2%	4
Section K Financial and Insurance Activities	50	3%	1%	2
Section L Real Estate Activities	32	2%	2%	3
Section M Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	196	10%	13%	25
Section N Administrative and Support Service Activities	134	7%	7%	13
Section S Other Service Activities	197	10%	1%	2
Unknown	0%	0%	3%	7
Grand Total	2000			194

What support do you require, if any, as a result of the UK's departure from the European Union?



N = 194

Which of these support services would you be interested in using if they were readily accessible to you:

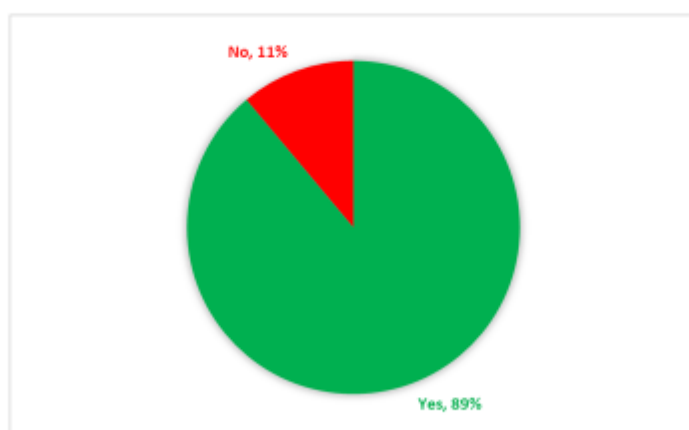


N = 194

© Cognisant Research

8

Do you consider your current accommodation to be suitable for your business activity?

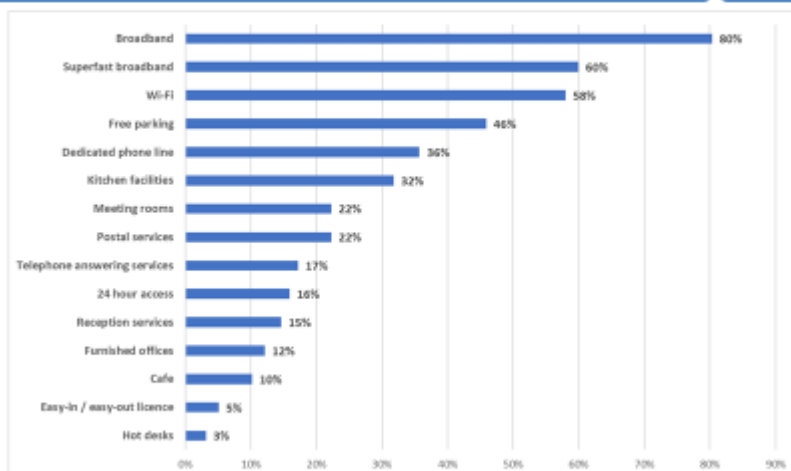


N = 194

© Cognisant Research

9

Which of the following facilities would help, or are helping, grow your business:

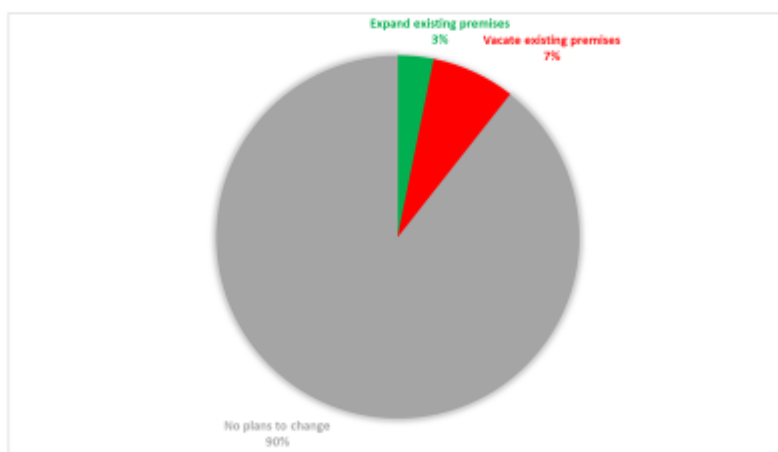


N = 157

© Cognisant Research

10

Do you have any plans to change premises:

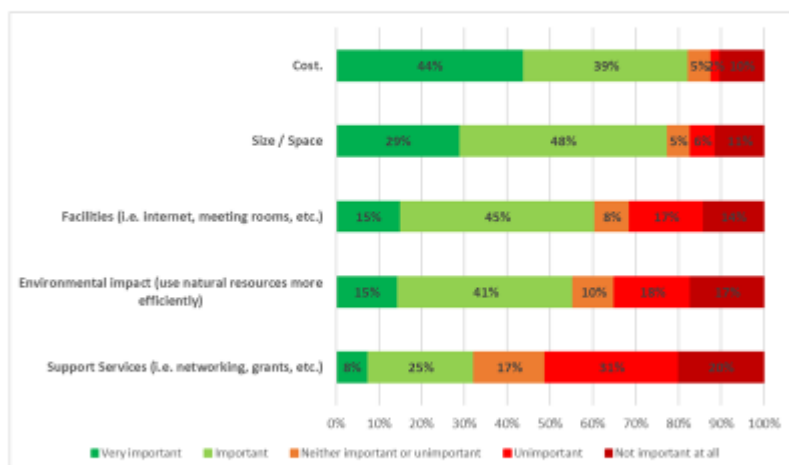


N = 194

© Cognisant Research

11

If you were looking for new premises, can you rank the following factors in order of importance:



N = 194

© Cognisant Research

14

Economic Outlook



- Net gain of 0.49 staff over the past 12 months
 - Biggest gain in Construction
 - Highest churn in Accommodation & food
- 59% of businesses expect number of employees to stay the same over the next 12 months
 - 25% expect to increase
 - 1% decrease
- 40% of businesses expect turnover to increase
 - 10% expect turnover to decrease
 - 31% don't know

© Cognisant Research

15

Covid



- Covid impact:
 - Supply chain problems - 61%
 - Decreased sales – 60%
 - cash flow issues – 49%
- 11% of businesses took more staff on because of Covid
- 8% made redundancies
- 65% of businesses believe business turnover will return to pre-lockdown levels within a year

© Cognisant Research

16

Brexit



- Border delays biggest impact of Brexit
 - 19% of businesses experiencing
 - 44% not applicable
- 15% experienced a decrease in availability of haulage transport between EU and UK
 - 44% not applicable
- 12% of businesses want support with transportation
- 9% want support identifying new suppliers
- 6% want support recruiting staff
- 82% of businesses don't want support

© Cognisant Research

17

Business Support



- 53% of businesses want more networking activities
- 44% want access to finance
- 43% need support with marketing
- 35% want access to strategic partners
- Broadband & WiFi identified as key by over half of all businesses
- 11% of businesses have unsuitable accommodation