

Winchester City Council Budget/Medium Term Financial Strategy Consultation Results

Council Tax

Do you agree with the proposal to increase the Council tax by 3% rather than 2%?

Of those who agree with Council Tax increases:

- Spend Council Tax on visible improvements to the city – e.g. improving roads and pavements, crime, ASB
- Council Tax increases scaled to different bands, so that more expensive properties pay a bigger increase than smaller properties. Others would like to see the Council Tax bands revised altogether to add new bands
- Proposed increase is actually very small and could be raised further
- Council Tax increase is worth it to maintain funding local services
- Council Tax should be increased by more than 3%. Why has it been frozen for so many years in the first place?
- Council Tax should increase by 1% each year automatically
- Council Tax should be dramatically increased to pay for the Climate Neutral Action Plan

Of those who disagree with Council Tax increases:

- A clearer explanation of why this increase is required – what will it be spent on, is it enough, will it need to go up again next year? What will be cut if this increase does not happen? Without this information, many are sceptical that the increase is needed
- Unhappy with the proposed increase as they do not feel that they benefit from WCC services enough at present, especially those living outside the city itself
- The Council Tax increase is too much. It is already expensive and people are already stretched financially, especially because incomes are not rising at the same rate
- Council Tax should be reduced for people who don't use particular services

- Council Tax should not increase, instead the Council to be more commercially aware and to generate income through services
- Council staff are overpaid, there is excess bureaucracy in the Council and Councillors have exorbitant allowances. If this is addressed Council tax would not need to increase the Council Tax
- The new homes being built will contribute hundreds of thousands of additional Council Tax revenue, therefore an increase is not justified
- Council tax should be re-categorised after people have had building work done to increase the size of their house

Garden Waste Collection

Do you agree with the proposal to charge for garden waste?

Of those who agree with bringing in a wheeled garden bin service:

- Happy to pay for a better quality service. A common complaint is that bags go missing/break easily, whereas wheeled bins would be more robust
- Would like to retain the option of having a bag and free collection. Otherwise, this will discourage people on low incomes from using the service
- The bag works well as it is. It is sufficient for the amount of green waste and easier to move around the garden

Of those who disagree with bringing in a wheeled garden bin service:

- The new service will discourage composting, and that garden waste will instead end up going to landfill
- People do not have the room for a third bin and do not need the extra capacity
- The new service will have an environmental impact in that people will find alternative ways to dispose of their green waste. A possible increase in car trips to the tip, fly-tipping and bonfires. This could go against the Council's commitment to cleaner air and tackling the climate emergency
- It was questioned whether people who had paid for a additional green bags would be compensated/ refunded

Alternative suggestions:

- Reduce the green waste collection. Only have collections between March – November, it is not a necessary service in the Winter months
- Encourage people to compost more

Advertising

Do you have any other comments about the proposal to increase advertising opportunities?

Of those who agree with the proposal to increase advertising opportunities:

- The advertising should be responsible and promote the Council's ideals i.e. environmental awareness, climate control and healthy lifestyles
- The Council should identify other sites for advertising opportunities

Of those who disagree with the proposal to increase advertising opportunities:

- It is important not to spoil the character of the area, limit the impact that advertising will have on the look and feel of Winchester
- The Council should also be looking at other revenue streams

Asset Review

Do you have any other comments about the proposal to manage the council estate on a more commercial basis?

The comments were quite general and were similar from those who agreed or disagreed:

- It was questioned why this isn't already being done
- Selling property is seen as a short term fix and it was felt that it would be better to maintain and manage the property well
- Opinion was split as to whether property should be managed by council officers or by an external management company:
 - Council officers may not be experienced enough
 - Management companies can be costly
- There were several comments from people who felt unable to comment because they did not have enough information/ the knowledge to do so

Additional Income Options

Are there any other additional income options that the Council should be considering?

- Introduce a congestion charge in the City
- Increase parking charges for high emission vehicles
- Increase parking charges
- Charge coaches to enter the City
- Increase all rates and fees in-line with inflation
- Lobby central government
- Councillors and senior staff to take a pay cut
- Review contracts/ contractors

Any Other Comments about Income Options

Do you have any other comments?

- Review staffing cost
- The Council should be more accountable

Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) monitoring

Do you agree with the proposal to cease 24hr CCTV monitoring?

Of those who agree with the proposal to reduce 24hr CCTV monitoring:

- Do not need that level of CCTV
- It was questioned whether there was a need for human monitoring

Of those who disagree with the proposal to reduce 24hr CCTV monitoring:

- Safety is more important than money
- Job loses

General comments:

- Have 24hr manned CCTV at the weekends and for events like the Hat Fair
- Several people commented that they needed to know what difference CCTV makes to the level of crime. What would be the impact on crime if this service was reduced?
- The Police should be consulted for more information/ their opinion

Public Conveniences

Do you agree with the proposal to reduce the number of public conveniences in Winchester town?

Of those who agree with the proposal to reduce the number of public conveniences:

- Encourage businesses to allow the public to use their facilities
- Alternative provisions would need to be made to compensate for the loss of the public conveniences
- Good signage would be needed for the public conveniences that stay open
- The public conveniences that do stay open should be better maintained than they are at present

Of those who disagree with the proposal to reduce the number of public conveniences:

- Consider charging to keep them all open
- Consider the aging population
- Consider tourists/ visitors to the City
- Possible increase in anti-social behaviour with people urinating in the street

General comments:

- People did not know that there are ten public conveniences in the City Centre

Grants

Do you agree with the proposal to review the grants programme?

Of those who agree with the proposal to review the grants programme:

- Grant funding should be based on ROI
- There should be a review of what types of organisations receive grants, i.e. cultural grants vs. charities or those looking after vulnerable people
- Crowd funding could be an alternative option

Of those who disagree with the proposal to review the grants programme:

- Agree with a proposed review but this should not necessarily mean a cut to the grants program
- A 20% reduction is too much,
 - Some people suggested a smaller reduction of 10%
 - Others suggested a tiered reduction of 10% to start with and a further 10% in the future

- This could be counter productive in that many organisations save the Council money by looking after vulnerable people
- Many charities/organisations rely on the Council grants and may have to close without the funding
- People questioned what effect it would have on the wider community

Making Council Services More Efficient

Do you agree or disagree that the focus for the transformation/ modernisation programme should be about...improving service quality/ accessing service 'online' through the Council's website or your mobile/ reducing the cost to the taxpayer

The comments about the Council transformation process are more general:

- The service still needs to be accessible to all
 - Not all people have access to a computer/ smart phone
 - Older people may not want to use an online service
- Look at staff efficiency and costs
- Better collaboration with local businesses/ Hampshire County Council/ third sector organisations

Review of community transport services

Do you agree with the proposal to review community transport and shopmobility services?

Of those who agree with the proposal to review community transport and shopmobility services:

- More information is needed to make an informed comment
- Public transport would need to improve if community transport is reduced

Of those who disagree with the proposal to review community transport and shopmobility services:

- Community transport can help to tackle the climate emergency as it can take some cars off the road
- Vulnerable people will lose out
- It is an important service for older people/ people living in rural areas who might become more isolated

Other Cost Saving Options

Are there any other cost saving options that the Council should be considering?

- More joined up thinking with Hampshire County Council
- Reduce staff salaries
- More accountability

Inflationary Parking Increase

Do you agree with the budget outcome for an inflationary increase of 3% to specific car parks?

Of those who agree with the proposal to an inflationary increase of 3% to specific car parks:

- Increase parking charges above inflation
- Encourage the use of Park and Ride
- Encourage people to use public transport
- Improve cycling and walking routes to get people out of their cars

Of those who disagree with the proposal to an inflationary increase of 3% to specific car parks:

- Winchester must remain competitive in terms of parking charges. They must not become so expensive as to discourage people from visiting the City and going to neighbouring areas such as Southampton or Basingstoke
- It will have a negative impact on the high street as it will deter people from visiting the City Centre

General comments:

- What measure of inflation is being used?
- Parking enforcement needs to be improved

New Parking Charges to Combat Congestion

Do you agree with the budget outcome to introduce an evening parking charge of a £2 flat rate fee in central car parks?/ Do you have any other comments about the two charging options for evening parking in central car parks?

Of those who agree with the proposal to introduce an evening parking charge:

- Public transport would need to be more reliable
- Extend Park and Ride running times

Of those who agree with the proposal to introduce an evening parking charge:

- Unsafe for the elderly/ women/ people on their own if they have to walk further away from the City Centre
- Charging would effect the evening economy
- It could deter people from coming to Winchester in favour of surrounding areas with cheaper parking and more to offer in terms of shopping and entertainment

- Congestion is a daytime problem, no need to charge for it at night
- Penalising people who live in rural areas and have to drive into town as they do not have an alternative

Sunday Charging

Do you agree with the budget outcome to introduce a Sunday parking charge of a £2 flat rate fee in central car parks?

Of those who agree with the proposal to introduce a Sunday parking charge:

- Why not charge for Sunday parking? We charge for every other day
- Public transport would need to be more reliable
- Park and Ride buses should run on a Sunday
- Sunday parking charges need to be in line with parking charges in surrounding areas, i.e. Southampton, Basingstoke, Portsmouth

Of those who disagree with the proposal to introduce a Sunday parking charge:

- People were concerned about being able to park for Church
- It will have a negative effect on the amount of footfall in the City Centre and have an adverse effect for shops and Sunday markets

Park and Ride Charges

Do you agree with the budget outcome to increase the Park and Ride charges by 50p per day: £3.50 (peak) and £3.00 (off-peak)?

Of those who agree with the proposal to increase Park and Ride charges:

- The cost needs to be competitive enough to encourage people to use the Park and Ride and not use City Centre parking which is more convenient
- Introduce a discounted weekly, monthly or annual season ticket

Of those who disagree with the proposal to increase Park and Ride charges:

- A Park and Ride to the North of Winchester is needed
- Reduce the cost to make it a more attractive alternative/ incentivise people to use it
- Improve the Park and Ride service to be more frequent and less crowded
- It does not work for short term visits

General comment:

- Separate out the parking and bus fares, i.e. it could be a park and stride so it could be cheaper to park if people walk in rather than ride the bus

Low emission/ electric vehicle discounts

Do you agree or disagree with the option of offering discounted parking charges for electric/low emission vehicles?

Of those who agree with the proposal to offer discounted parking charges for electric/low emission vehicles:

- There would need to be more charging points
- Should only be for purely electric cars

Of those who disagree with the proposal to offer discounted parking charges for electric/low emission vehicles:

- This benefits the wealthy. People who can afford an electric car can afford to pay for parking
- Electric cars are not necessarily as environmentally friendly as people think
- It won't improve congestion
- How would it be implemented/ policed?
- People should be encouraged to use public transport/ walk/ cycle

Other parking related ideas

Are there any other parking budget outcomes that the Council should be focusing on?

- An additional Park and Ride to the North of the City
- Season tickets for Park and Ride
- Improved public transport
- Better parking enforcement
- Better provision for cycling and walking
- More facilities to store/lock-up bikes
- Work place parking levy. Companies to pay for parking spaces if they encourage their staff to drive into the City

Any other comments

Do you have any other comments?

- Improve public transport including cost, timings and cleanliness
- Reduce congestion by stopping deliveries on the one way system during the working day
- More cycle paths
- Consider the option of a ring road around the north of the city

Full table of results

PROPOSALS FOR INCOME GENERATION

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not answered
Do you agree with the proposal to increase the Council tax by 3% rather than 2%?	27.4%	33.8%	9.5%	10.7%	17.2%	1.5%
Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to introduce an improved wheeled bin garden waste collection service?	25.9%	29.2%	11.6%	13.3%	18.5%	1.5%
Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to take up advertising opportunities?	49.2%	34.9%	9.7%	3.3%	1.6%	1.3%
Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to manage the council estate on a more commercial basis?	30.8%	34.1%	22.0%	7.9%	3.4%	1.8%

PROPOSALS FOR COST SAVINGS

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not answered
Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to review the potential to implement a "recording only" CCTV service from 2022?	17.1%	29.5%	21.6%	16.7%	13.0%	2.1%
Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to review the potential to implement a "recording only" CCTV service from 2022?	17.1%	29.5%	21.6%	16.7%	13.0%	2.1%
Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to reduce the number of public conveniences by two in Winchester?	13.3%	32.3%	14.8%	20.7%	16.9%	2.1%
Do you agree or disagree with our proposal for a review of the grants programme?	16.4%	23.0%	16.7%	22.5%	19.8%	1.6%
Do you agree or disagree that the focus for the efficiency programme should be about improving service quality	32.6%	49.8%	11.8%	2.0%	1.0%	2.8%
Do you agree or disagree that the focus for the efficiency programme should be about accessing services 'online' through the Council's website/your mobile phone	24.8%	43.0%	19.3%	7.7%	2.5%	2.8%
Do you agree or disagree that the focus for the efficiency programme should be about reducing the cost to the tax payer	26.6%	27.9%	25.1%	12.8%	4.4%	3.3%
Do you agree or disagree that community transport services is a priority for the council going forward?	33.0%	33.9%	20.5%	6.1%	3.9%	2.6%

PROPOSALS FOR CHANGES TO PARKING CHARGES

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not answered
Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to fund improvements to parking related services through additional parking charges?	18.0%	28.2%	15.7%	17.4%	18.0%	2.6%
Do you agree or disagree with the proposal of increasing parking charges in line with inflation?	22.6%	35.9%	12.6%	15.1%	12.1%	1.6%
Do you agree or disagree with the option of extending charging to 8pm in central car parks?	14.9%	19.8%	9.0%	22.1%	32.5%	1.6%
Do you agree or disagree with the option of extending charging to 10pm in central car parks?	12.0%	11.3%	9.2%	23.0%	43.0%	1.6%
Do you agree or disagree with the option to introduce a Sunday parking charge at a flat rate of £2 in central car parks?	23.1%	33.3%	9.3%	10.7%	21.3%	2.3%
Do you agree or disagree with the option of introducing Sunday charges at the same rate as for weekdays and Saturdays?	16.1%	12.8%	10.7%	21.8%	36.7%	2.0%
Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to increase the daily Park and Ride fare by 50p to £3.50 (peak) and £3.00 (off-peak) per day?	28.0%	34.9%	16.4%	8.4%	10.8%	1.5%
Do you agree or disagree with the proposal of offering discounted parking charges for electric/low emission vehicles?	23.6%	23.8%	18.7%	15.1%	17.7%	1.2%